



Inspiration: Late. Dr. L.C. Wallia

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'Operation Sindoor under way, no third party mediation in PoK issue': BJP

Government sources have dismissed these claims, stating that no trade-related discussions took place with US officials since the launch of Operation Sindoor. Despite addressing the nation twice since the ceasefire



Vatika Times
NEW DELHI: Bharatiya Janata Party pulled up Congress over its recent comments on India-Pakistan issue asking them to refrain from calling it a "ceasefire". The saffron party categorically said that there was "no possibility of third party mediation" in PoK issue after the grand old party announced "Jai Hind" rallies across country demanding Prime Minister Narendra Modi to speak up on US President Donald Trump's role in India-Pakistan truce. "On the issue of mediation, which the Opposition tried to raise, it is being very unequivocally expressed by the Government of India that the issue of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir is a bilateral issue. It is to be settled on the bilateral terms

between India and Pakistan. There is no scope for any mediation from any other country," BJP leader Sudhanshu Trivedi said, adding: "The government has not used the word 'ceasefire' with Pakistan anywhere, opposition should refrain from making unnecessary, unwarranted comments." "With due respect to all the countries of the world which have a positive outlook for India, we want to say that this issue of PoK is just a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan. There is no scope for any mediation by any country, including those countries which were said to be the guardians of democracy and were asked to interfere in the democratic

process of India. The Opposition should show its true spirit and shed the politics at least until the Operation Sindoor finishes. Still, if they want to go ahead, this poses a serious question on their intent and commitment on the issue of national security in the eyes of the public," he added. On the opposition's demands of a special Parliament session to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26, Trivedi suggested that it should wait for Operation Sindoor to get over. "This is now India's new established policy—a new normal. If the Opposition, including the Congress Party, claims to stand with the government, that commitment must be visible not just in words, but

also in actions. Unity in mind, speech, and deed is essential. Hollow words, contradicted by actions, only breed mistrust. I say this because Operation Sindoor is still underway. Raising questions during an ongoing operation casts doubt on one's intent. At a time when the nation must speak in one voice, such actions are not just inappropriate, they are irresponsible," he said. Trump announcing the truce before the India and Pakistan confirmed it has raised several eyebrows over a third party intervention into the matter. Moreover, the US president has repeatedly asserted that the States played a key role in brokering peace between the two nations following their military escalation, even claiming he threatened to halt trade with both nations to prevent further conflict. However, government sources have dismissed these claims, stating that no trade-related discussions took place with US officials since the launch of Operation Sindoor. Despite addressing the nation twice since the ceasefire, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has remained silent on Trump's assertions.



Army chiefs met the President and gave information about Operation Sindoor.

Shah hails elimination of 31 maoists on Chhattisgarh-Telangana border

Vatika Times
NEW DELHI: Union home minister Amit Shah on Wednesday hailed the elimination of 31 maoists in a counter-insurgency operation at Kurraguttalu Hill, a site he described as "once a stronghold of red terror," marking a major step in the Centre's push for a "Naxal-free Bharat." Taking to X, Shah said the joint security forces' action on the Chhattisgarh-Telangana border was a major operation against maoists forces, and a his-

toric moment in India's fight against it. "In a historic triumph towards the resolve of Naxal-free Bharat, security forces have achieved unprecedented success against naxalism, neutralising 31 notorious Naxalites in the largest operation to date at Kurraguttalu Hill (KGH)... The hill, once a stronghold of red terror, now proudly flies the tricolour," Shah wrote. Kurraguttalu Hill, according to Shah, served as a central base for various maoist outfits.

Bar council clears path for foreign lawyers, firms to practice in India

NEW DELHI: The Bar Council of India (BCI) has announced revised regulations permitting foreign lawyers and law firms to practice foreign and international law within India, under clearly defined conditions. Under the amended rules, foreign legal professionals may advise on foreign law and participate in international commercial arbitration conducted in India, provided such matters involve foreign.

'New normal' for Congress? Shashi Tharoor's praise for PM Modi's policies

Vatika Times
NEW DELHI: Has Shashi Tharoor set a "new normal" for the Congress post India's "Operation Sindoor"? Well, it seems so. The Thiruvananthapuram MP has been unequivocal and unwavering in his praise of the steps taken by the Narendra Modi government against Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack. So much so, the BJP leaders have cited Tharoor's strong defence of the government to school and shame the opposition, including the Congress. While the Congress has heaped praise on the armed forces over the success of "Operation Sindoor", it has questioned the Modi government's decision to announce sudden ceasefire, which, ironically, was first announced by US President



Donald Trump. While making the ceasefire announcement, Trump also claimed that India and Pakistan had agreed to talks at a neutral venue. Later, Trump went on to claim, not once but twice, that he used trade deal as a leverage to force India and Pakistan to agree to the ceasefire. While India did not react to Trump's claim publicly, the external affairs ministry made it clear that trade was never a part of any discussions with the US.

India also categorically declared that it was Islamabad that had approached us for ceasefire after the May 10 strike by our armed forces which destroyed many air bases in Pakistan. The Congress raised tough questions for Prime Minister Modi in the light of these US claims. Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said: "The Prime Minister did not speak one word on the claims made by President Trump.

Vatika Times

Qatar

US president Donald Trump's acceptance of a luxury Boeing 747 from Qatar has triggered alarm within the intelligence and diplomatic circles, with experts warning of major security and ethical risks. The lavish 89-seater aircraft, once used by senior Qatari royal Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, features opulent interiors designed by Parisian firm cabinet Alberto Pinto, including Tai Ping rugs, rare wood fixtures, and original artwork. But behind its elegance lies a growing concern among intelligence veterans and lawmakers: potential foreign surveillance and compromised



communications systems. "If we had built the plane, knowing it was going to a foreign government, we would probably have bugged it," former CIA station chief Thad Troy told Bloomberg, recalling Cold War-era espionage tactics used by adversaries. Troy said any aircraft provided by a foreign power

could easily be embedded with covert tracking or listening devices, an intelligence threat that's difficult to neutralise. The concern is not hypothetical. He cited how the American embassy in Moscow was once dismantled brick by brick to remove hidden surveillance tools. US senator Mark Warner, chairman

of the Senate Intelligence Committee, echoed those fears, calling Trump's acceptance of the jet "incredibly reckless." "A foreign-provided aircraft presents a host of potential security risks, from surveillance equipment to compromised communications systems," Warner said in a statement to Bloomberg. "Thoroughly inspecting a plane like that for espionage tools or safety concerns would be nearly impossible," he added. The plane, built in 2012, would need to undergo extensive retrofitting to meet Air Force One standards, including explosion-resistant surfaces, secure communications, and aerial refueling capabilities.

US shuts down Pakistani reporter who accused PM of 'not welcoming' ceasefire

Vatika Times
NEW DELHI: A Pakistani journalist faced a sharp rebuff from the US state department official after attempting to question Prime Minister Narendra Modi's stance on de-escalation talks between India and Pakistan. During a briefing on Wednesday, the Pakistani journalist portrayed former US President Donald Trump as a peace broker in the India-Pakistan standoff and claimed that India, particularly PM Modi, did not welcome Trump's sup-



posed ceasefire efforts. "Pakistan welcomed President Trump's efforts for bringing the ceasefire between Pakistan and India, and they believe that President Trump could win a Nobel Peace Prize

if he were to bring peace between Pakistan and India on the Kashmir issue. But Prime Minister Modi did not welcome this effort... Does that disappoint this building at all, the attitude of

Narendra Modi of not welcoming this peace deal," the reporter asked Tommy Pigott, principal deputy spokesperson at the US department of state. Sidestepping the pointed query, Pigott emphasised that the US was focused on maintaining the ceasefire. "That is what we are happy to see. That's where our focus remains. And we want to see a ceasefire be maintained, and we want to encourage direct communication. That is our focus here.

Our focus is the ceasefire," he said. Pigott reiterated that both India and Pakistan should maintain direct communication and pursue peace. While Trump has repeatedly claimed that his administration facilitated the India-Pakistan ceasefire, India has asserted that it was Pakistan's Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) who reached out to his Indian counterpart seeking a truce, driven by pressure after Indian strikes.

Kohli retires not just as a central force but India's greatest Test captain

Vatika Times
New Delhi: Virat Kohli's retirement announcement created quite the stir on Monday, even if it did feel like coming to some. Over the past few days, as TimesofIndia.com had reported, the right-hander had hinted at stepping away in Australia. Yet, he harboured hopes of leading in England with Rohit Sharma stepping down a couple of days ago. When that bid was turned down, with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) opting for Shubman Gill, the writing was on



the wall. "As I step away from this format, it's not easy — but it feels right. I've given it everything I had, and it's given me back so much more than I could've hoped for," wrote 36-year-old Kohli on Instagram. With Kohli retiring, India lost not just a mainstay at No. 4 spot — a position that had Sachin Tendulkar first

and Kohli next for over three decades — but one of the batting forces. Sure, his powers were on the decline in the last couple of years, but his overall tally of 9,230 runs puts him in fourth place among India's highest Test scorers. The list is helmed by Sachin Tendulkar (15,921 runs), Rahul Dravid (13,265 runs) and Sunil Gavaskar (10,122 runs). Above and beyond the pure run-scoring, Kohli's leadership skills is another aspect that will be sorely missed. He might not have led the team since 2022.

Editorial

The context of other fiscal policy moves the Modi government

Ritu Walia

The budgeted capital expenditure is the same as the revised estimates for 2024-25. The tax cut should be seen in the context of other fiscal policy moves the Modi government has made in the last decade to boost growth. Since 2016, the Indian economy has struggled to sustain rapid growth. From 2016 to 2019, it was in a relentless showdown, with GDP growth falling to 3.9 per cent in 2019-20. The GDP then fell sharply in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. After this sharp decline, high GDP growth numbers created a false sense of complacency, but the compound annual growth rate between 2019-20 and 2024-25 is only 4.8 per cent. The latest GDP estimates suggest that the economy is slowing down again—with growth clocking at 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2024. Even if we set aside the critiques of GDP estimation in India, growth remains a topic of concern in policy conversations. The government’s response to an economic challenge depends on what it considers to be the root cause. The Modi government’s actions over the past decade suggest that it seeks to address India’s economic growth pangs through fiscal policy. Consequently, fiscal policy has done much of the heavy lifting in the government’s growth strategy over the past decade. In the economic slowdown from 2016-17 to 2019-20, the government sought to maintain its expenditure. To do so without increasing the reported fiscal deficit, from 2017-18 to 2019-20, it transformed a significant part of its on-budget expenditure into off-budget expenditure done by public enterprises. It also sharply raised cesses and surcharges on petroleum products, which are not shared with the states. These unusual tactics allowed the government to spend more, and expenditure continued to outpace GDP growth. These tactics also allowed the government to introduce new cash transfer schemes such as PM KISAN and increase allocations to existing schemes. In 2019, in an effort to stimulate investment, the government announced major tax breaks for corporates, especially in manufacturing. At the time, corporate tax collection had been growing rapidly while other taxes were struggling to deliver the budgeted increase. The tax cut led to a sharp reduction in the corporate tax to GDP ratio in the subsequent years. As the pandemic hit, fiscal policy became even more central. The pandemic allowed the government to suspend its concern for deficits and bring the off-budget expenditure to the Budget in 2020-21. For a few years, revenue expenditure as a percentage of GDP was higher than its pre-pandemic levels. Among other things, this allowed the government to increase subsidies and cash transfers, and introduce production-linked incentives for manufacturing in India. Total subsidies as a percentage of GDP have now gone back to their pre-pandemic levels. The most important change in expenditure since the pandemic has been in its composition. Of the Union government’s total expenditure, the share of capital expenditure has increased. Its share rose from 12.5 per cent of total expenditure in 2019-20 to 22.2 per cent in 2023-24. In 2019-20, capital expenditure was 1.67 per cent of GDP. It rose to 3.21 per cent. In 2023-24, before moderating to 3.14 per cent in 2024-25 (revised estimates). It is again budgeted to be 3.14 per cent of GDP in 2025-26. At the same time, there was a reduction in capital expenditure by public enterprises in these years. If we consider the combined capital expenditure by the Union government and its public enterprises from the pre-pandemic years, there has been a decline. Between 2017-18 and 2019-20, the combined capital expenditure was 4.94 per cent of GDP.



Drug smuggling is continuously increasing

Saariq Hussain

Recently, news of school going children taking drugs has come to light in Gujarat. And this matter came to light when parents took two children to the doctors after their strange behaviour and their sleeping at home after tuitions, when the doctors got the urine test of both the children done. Actually, these children used to drink coffee somewhere while returning from tuitions, after which they used to hit the bed and sleep as soon as they came home. These children neither ate food on time, nor studied properly, nor talked to anyone properly, nor listened to anyone in the family. On this, the family members showed them to the doctors and then it was found out that both of them take drugs. Living in a tower of Jhanda Lal Chowk, they were caught stealing bicycles in school uniform and it was revealed that they had started taking drugs, they were stealing to buy drugs. Actually, about a week ago, Gujarat Police arrested 5 people with about 500 kg of cocaine under a joint operation. Earlier in June this year, hybrid ganja and other drugs worth about Rs 3.5 crore were hidden in children's items in Gujarat, which were seized by the police. And before that, more than 3 thousand kg of drugs worth crores were recovered from Gujarat at Adani Port. Similarly, drugs worth crores are recovered every year in Gujarat and apart from arresting a few people, the police or AIIMS department is unable to take any action that can



completely stop it. And today, not only in Gujarat, but in other states as well, the business of drug smuggling is increasing. The question is who is behind this? And the second question is why children, especially those studying in schools, are being made victims of drugs? Till a few years ago, it was seen that only children who pick garbage take drugs? But now the cases of children from well-off families taking drugs and other types of intoxication are increasing. The increase in the number of child patients coming to de-addiction centers is no small matter. In the year 2022, the Modi government of the Centre itself told the Supreme Court that 1 crore 58 lakh minor children in the country between the ages of 10 and 17 years are consuming some form of intoxication, most of whom consume a particular type of dangerous intoxication. For example, they are taking drugs etc. The government had also told the court that minor children of this age are consuming many types of intoxicants including

cocaine, hashish, marijuana, alcohol, heroin, LSD, morphine, opium, cannabis. Citing a survey, the Modi government of the Centre had told the Supreme Court that among all types of intoxicants, the people of India consume alcohol the most, about 16 crore people, out of which more than 5 crore 7 lakh people are seriously addicted to alcohol. After alcohol, they prefer cannabis and opium intoxication, the population of those who consume them is more than 3 crore 1 lakh, out of which the number of cannabis addicts is about 25 lakh. This matter came to light when a petition was filed in the Supreme Court by an NGO named Bachpan Bachao Andolan and the Supreme Court had sought a reply from the Modi government at the Centre. In this matter, the Modi government at the Centre also provided many other information about drug addicts, but did not take any concrete steps to stop drugs and other types of intoxicants. Anyway, every year on 8 June, National Drug Destruction Day is celebrat-

ed on a large scale in India and every year on 26 June, International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is also celebrated at the international level and on both these occasions, children are the victims. Not only the Central Government, its de-addiction centres, but also the state governments and their de-addiction centres and all the government institutions working in the name of de-addiction spend crores and billions of rupees, but despite this, the number of drug addicts is increasing in India from drug trafficking to drug addiction, in which the most worrying thing is children getting addicted to drugs. While the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre of the Central Government has launched a very ambitious scheme like Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (NMB A) across the country, whose de-addiction centres are running in every district of the country, despite this, the increasing number of drug addicts, especially children, is not only a matter of concern, but it also seems clear that the gov-

ernment is wasting money on these de-addiction centres. The responsibility of the police is also to stop drug smuggling, but it is also almost a failure in this matter, and even if some honest policemen catch drug smugglers somewhere, then nothing much happens to the drug smugglers. Many times they get released easily on the basis of money or on bail. The job of the Drugs Department is to stop drug smuggling, but it also seems almost unsuccessful in this. Anyway, drug smuggling is continuously increasing and so is the number of drug users. The Central Government should pay full attention to this and drug smugglers should not be spared under any circumstances. The police should keep a close watch on such gangs outside or around schools, who smuggle drugs and make innocent school children their victims. It is surprising and sad that not only minor boys studying in schools fall prey to these drug smugglers, but minor girls also fall prey to this. Not only the Modi government at the centre, the state governments, the drug department, de-addiction centres, the police, but also the teachers teaching in schools and the parents of the children should pay attention to this. Because a small negligence can ruin the lives of children who are considered the future of the country. And I think this can be felt the most by those parents whose children have themselves or are ruining themselves by getting addicted.

Explain the applicable tax rates

Shweta Sharma

While this may seem like a trivialisation of GST, it actually lays bare how the system has now rebounded on its initial promise of bringing ease of doing business in the country. The Finance Minister's four-minute explanation on the taxation of popcorn highlighted how complex the system has become. It shouldn't take anybody that much time to explain the applicable tax rates on a single product. Since then, GST has been ridiculed, derided, lamented about, and generally panned by laypeople and even former government officials who worked on its implementation. That is why India's Goods and Services Tax is ThePrint's Newsmaker of the Week. So, what is the issue behind GST on popcorn? You see, as per the taxman, depending on your taste preferences, popcorn can either be a namkeen (salty) or a mithai (sweet) — forget that those two terms have never been used by anyone to refer to popcorn. Ready-to-eat popcorn, salted and spiced for taste, and sold loosely attracts a GST rate of 5 per cent. That same pop-

corn, if packaged and labelled, attracts a rate of 12 per cent. One wonders what happens if the vendor tears open the packet and sells loose popcorn to the customer. Perhaps the universe will explode, who knows? Things get even trickier when you talk about caramel popcorn. Those who prefer this flavour will have to shell out 18 per cent GST, regardless of whether it is packaged or sold loose. Then some head to the movie hall and ask for salted and caramel popcorn mixed together. What happens to them? Over the week, one particular meme stood out among the lot. It was a picture of salted caramel popcorn. Packets with questions along the lines of "What now, taxman?" What now, indeed. Most of the memes were at Sitharaman's expense, but she's just the face of the decisions. Every state finance minister at the GST Council is equally responsible, as are all of the civil servants in the various rate fitment committees. The complexity of the tax system is perhaps best captured by the fact that the GST Council had to deliberate.

Massive and well-synchronised attack by drones

Suman Singh

A girl walks next to a tent sprayed with a message in solidarity with pro-Palestinian university students, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, March 2, 2025. The war in Gaza is due to complete seven months on May 7, marking the longest war in Gaza since Israel's voluntary vacation of Gaza in 2005. Contrary to expectations, borne more out of Israel's enormous military superiority against Hamas as well as past conflicts in Gaza, the conflict has not ended swiftly. During this time, however, Israeli strikes have flattened Gaza to the ground, making it completely uninhabitable, perhaps for decades. The stench of death and decay overwhelms the thin strip straddling the Mediterranean Sea, with estimates of over 34,500 deaths, including 13,000 children, and over 77,500 injured and maimed for life. Medical aid, food, and water have been severely restricted, and most international aid agencies, including UNRWA as well as WCK (World Central Kitchen), have been targeted and prevented from delivering lifesaving aid. Despite a UN Security Council resolution of March 25 calling for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of hostages, neither of the warring parties has been able to come to a common understanding. In the midst of it, there was a period of dangerous escalation when an Israeli strike on targeted the Iranian Consulate building in Damascus, Syria, resulting in the deaths of seven members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including General Mohammad Reza Zahedi, the senior-most commander in Lebanon and Syria. Outraged by the attack on its 'sovereign territory', Iran retaliated on April 13 with a

massive and well-synchronised attack by drones and missiles. While most of the drones were intercepted mid-air, some of the missiles found their mark and struck the Nevatim Israeli air base in the Negev desert. Nevatim is the air base from which Israel launched its F-35 fighters that attacked the Iranian consulate in Damascus. Despite decades of hostility between Israel and Iran, this was the first time that Iran had launched strikes directly on Israel from its territory. Israel and its allies, though forewarned by Iran of the retaliation, were surprised that Iran had actually called the bluff this time. Israel, under pressure at home, responded with a strike into Iran on April 19, when loud explosions were heard in the vicinity of the city of Isfahan in the early morning hours. It was reported that Iranian air defences had shot down 'three drones' over the skies of the city. Although some media outlets later presented satellite pictures to show that some part of the Air Defence Battery in Isfahan was damaged, neither Iran, Israel, nor the US commented on it. With tit-for-tat strikes into each other's territory, there is a general sense that both countries have called it quits as far as targeting each other directly is concerned. With this threat of escalation over, the focus has shifted back to Gaza and finding means to put an early end to the war. As a part of the effort, US Secretary of State Blinken was in the region recently to hold talks with Arab leaders. He also stopped over in Israel, meeting PM Netanyahu in an effort to convince him to agree to a ceasefire and also to deter him from launching a ground offensive in Rafah. Whether Blinken was successful in convincing Netanyahu on it or not is a different question all together.

Territorial dispute, as well as youth exchanges

Rashi Singh

Miles away in Kazan, a culturally, politically, and economically significant city in Russia's Tatarstan, an Indian Prime Minister met a Chinese President for the first time in five years this week. Geopolitics is often unpredictable, yet this development was only partially surprising, as it was an anticipated move both countries knew would eventually occur. The last time the two leaders met was at an informal summit in Mamallapuram, in southern India, in 2019, just months before the countries clashed in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in 2020. While the

world was grappling with the effects of a once-in-a-century pandemic, China launched a brutal assault on Indian soldiers in Galwan Valley, where 20 Indian troops lost their lives. This incident shattered the 1993 Peace and Tranquillity Agreement signed to maintain the status quo and peace at the border. It was also the first time in 45 years that blood had been shed in a China-India border conflict; the last such instance was in 1975, when four Indian soldiers were ambushed at Tulung La in Arunachal Pradesh. The Galwan Valley incident changed a significant reality that India had come to

take for granted—peace at the border with China had become a daily assumption. To be fair, there were frequent Chinese incursions—hundreds, in fact—but at least no lives were lost in resolving the resulting standoffs. Since 2020, relations between India and China had gone into a deep freeze. First came India's diplomatic response with serious condemnation, followed by rallying support from its Indo-Pacific partners, and then a complete halt to economic cooperation, marked by a blanket ban on Chinese investments. In the post-Galwan period, India suspended over 30 dialogue processes

with China, including high-level discussions such as strategic dialogues between foreign ministers, the annual defence dialogue, meetings of special representatives on the territorial dispute, as well as youth exchanges, media, and think-tank dialogues. Relations reached their lowest point in this century, with the Indian side reiterating on various occasions that ties with China were far from normal. Fast forward to October 2024, and we see Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi holding a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia.

Angel Tops School with 473 Marks; Deepanshi Secures Second Place with 460, Isha and Bhanu Joint Third with 448



Jasbir Singh Duggal

Kurukshetra: Students of Navyug Senior Secondary School delivered an outstanding performance in the Class 10 CBSE results recently declared. A total of 120 subject-wise merits were achieved, and the overall results of all students were commendable. 20 students scored above 80% and secured merit positions, while 35 students scored over 75%, 40 students scored over 70%, and all other students obtained more than 60% marks. Angel

topped the school with 473 marks, Deepanshi stood second with 460 marks, and Isha and Bhanu shared the third position with 448 marks each. Other students who made it to the Top Ten list include Sana (444), Tania (442), Geetu (440), Barnpreet (438), Shivam (437), Vanshika (434), Simarpreet (425), and Jasmeet (415). The principal and teachers celebrated the success by distributing sweets among the students. Director of the School Management

Committee, B.D. Gaba, along with all the teachers, extended heartfelt congratulations to the students and their families on clearing the board examinations and wished them a bright future. On this occasion, Administrator Vikas Gaba, Principal Dr. Devendra Arora, Vice Principal Riddhima, Headmistress Preeti Mishra, Coordinators Ritu Chaudhary, Anjali, Komal, Geeta, Madhu, along with teachers Jasmer, Shakti Prakash, and Eshant were present.

NCH eases homoeopathy college teachers' rules

Delhi: The National Commission for Homeopathy (NCH) recently amended MD Homeopathy rules. NCH tightened postgraduate faculty rules in March 2024. However, these requirements were altered again. Colleges might have one assistant professor, an associate professor, and a professor for each PG specialization Delhi: provided by the institute after last

week's reforms. Since March last year, specialized departments need two associate professors and a professor, according to Careers360. The regulator has also relaxed the guide or examiner qualification, allowing assistant professors to do so again. Only associate professors or professors might guide in 2024. Entry-level teachers have a student-guide ratio of 11,

while associate professors and professors have 2.1 and 3:1, respectively, following 1989 guidelines. A National Medical Commission (NMC) proposal to ease medical college instructor qualifications precedes the reforms. Diploma holders and non-teaching consultants and specialists can become institute faculty under the new draft regulations.

Students say the food in the IIT-D mess caused them ill

Delhi: According to an internet post, almost half of the students in a hostel at IIT Delhi were admitted to the hospital after reportedly eating food from the institute's kitchen. IIT-D refuted the accusations, claiming that the meal in question was ordered from an outside vendor rather

than being provided by the hostel mess. The message, which went viral on social media, claimed that many students became very ill after eating litti chokha from the dorm mess. The message, which generated a flurry of responses on social media, read, "I'm stand-

ing in line as I type this out, already waited for over 45 minutes and still six people ahead of me." The post went on to say, "Everyone ate the litti chokha that was provided at the hostel meal last night. People were getting sick like flies by dawn, which caused havoc. fever, chills.

Nurses Day Celebrated at Sardar Kartar Singh Nursing College



Jasbir Singh Duggal

Shahabad (Kurukshetra): International Nurses Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Sardar Kartar Singh Hayer Nursing College. On this occasion, college students gave various performances. Dr. Gurdeep Singh Hayer, the college manager, was the chief guest at the event. He honored all the students with awards and encouraged them to keep striving continuously. College Principal Mrs. Renu congratulated the students and spoke about the importance of nursing. Staff members including Baljinder Kaur, Aman, Rubal, Neetu, Ankush, Sonu, and others were also present on this occasion. Aman spoke to the students about the oath of the nursing profession and also explained the contributions of Florence Nightingale. During the event, a poster-making competition was held in which Devika (B.Sc. Nursing, 6th semester) secured the first position, Nancy (B.Sc. Nursing, 3rd semester) came second, and Neetika (B.Sc. Nursing, 5th semester) was awarded third place.

Operation Sindoor Triumph of Indian Army's Courage & Dedication: VC KUK

Jasbir Singh Duggal

Kurukshetra: Dean, Students' Welfare Kurukshetra University organised Vijay Tiranga Yatra to commemorate India's victory over terrorism as part of a campaign in support of Nation First. While flagging off this slogan rally, Vice Chancellor Prof Som Nath Sachdeva said that Operation Sindoor stands as a testament and defining victory in India's fight against terrorism, showcasing the Indian Army's valour, courage, and unwavering dedication. Prof Sachdeva added that with remarkable precision and restraint, Indian forces showcased the global stage, delivering a decisive blow to terrorism while sending a powerful message to the world under the



firm leadership of Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi. The operation reaffirmed India's commitment to combating terrorism anytime, anywhere, ensuring that only terrorist hide-outs were eliminated—without targeting military bases or civilian areas.

Dean, Students' Welfare Prof AR Chaudhri informed that this Vijay Tiranga Yatra started from the premises

of the Vice Chancellor's office with slogans like Bharat Mata Ki Jai, Vande Mataram and passed through various departments, branches, institutes, library, Dean Building and many other places of the university in which the teachers, officers, volunteers, students and employees of the university participated enthusiastically. Registrar Dr. Virender Pal, Dean Academic Affairs Prof. Dinesh

Kumar, Dean of Colleges Prof. Brajesh Sawhney, Prof. D.S. Rana, Prof. Ramesh Bhardwaj, Prof. Sanjeev Arora, Prof. Pradeep Mittal, Prof. Sunil Dhingra, Prof. Preeti Jain, Prof. Jasbir Dhanda, Prof. Neelam Dhanda, Prof. Rita, Prof. Mahabir Ranga, Prof. Anil Gupta, Prof. Vivek Chawla, Director, Public Relations, Prof. Maha Singh Poonia, Deputy Director Dr. Jimmy Sharma, Dr. Krishna, Dr. Ramesh Sirohi, Dr. Pritam Singh, Dr. Nirupama Bhatti, Dr. Ankeshwar Prakash, Dr. Rajratan, Dr. Meenakshi Suhag, Dr. Ritu Saini, Lieutenant Dr. Ajay Jangra, OSD to VC, Pawan Rohila, Rajwant Kaur, Vinod Verma, Dr. Jitender Jangra were present during the slogan rally.

A draft measure to monitor budgets, ensure accountability,

Delhi: A draft bill to establish rules governing school fees for all public and private schools in the city has been approved by the Delhi government. In order to prevent capricious increases and guarantee equity for parents, the bill, which was adopted by the Delhi cabinet, aims to create a clear and transparent process for school

fee structures. According to the draft, schools that raise fees without authorization risk fines of up to Rs 10 lakh and the possibility of having their status revoked once the bill becomes law. According to Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, each school will establish a fee regulation committee that will provide parents direct decision-

making authority. Committees will be established at the school, district, and state levels as part of a three-tiered committee structure for appeals pertaining to fee disputes. During talks with Gupta, a number of parents brought up the subject of capricious fee increases by schools, which led to the decision.

Nishtha Tops Shahabad Block with 99% Marks from Divine Public School

Jasbir Singh Duggal

Shahabad (Kurukshetra): A wave of joy swept across the students of Divine Public School as the CBSE Class 10 board exam results were announced. School Principal Rajinder Khubbar shared that 164 students appeared for the Class 10 board exams this year. Nishtha brought great pride to the school, teachers, and parents by securing 99% marks and topping the Shahabad Block. Prateek stood second with 96.4%, while Rashmita secured third place with 96%. A total of 17 students scored above 90%. Furthermore, 41 students scored over 85%, and 5 students achieved above 80% marks. Other high achievers included Harsimran (95.4%), Japneet (94%), Pranvat (93.2%), Yashika



(93.2%), Harkirat (93.2%), Jashan (92.8%), Riddhima (92.8%), Kangna (92%), Lovedeep (91.8%), Anshul (91%), Akshat (90.2%), Tanushka (92.2%), Gurleen (90.4%), and Ekampreet (90.2%). In total, 59 students scored more than 80%, 76 students scored over 75%, and 122 students achieved more than 60%, bringing honor to the school. In subject-wise achievements, Nishtha scored 98 in Hindi, 96 in English, and along with Prateek, 98 in Mathematics and Science. She also

scored 99 in Social Science. Both Rashmita and Nishtha scored a perfect 100 in Punjabi, and Japneet and Nishtha also secured a perfect 100 in IT reflecting their dedication and hard work. School Manager Dr. Gurdeep Singh Hayer and Vice Principal Manish Malik congratulated all students and attributed this excellent result to the combined efforts of the teachers, students, and their parents. The entire school staff was present to celebrate the success.

A group of educators is against UGC's plan to hold admissions twice a year

Delhi: A group representing educators has spoken out against the University Grants Commission's plan to hold undergraduate and graduate admissions twice a year. The idea was criticized as "impractical and destabilising" in a lengthy letter sent to the UGC chairperson by the Indian National Teachers' Congress (INTEC). "No serious consultation was held with universities or colleges," the letter adds. "What looks like flexibility on paper will, in practice, deeply disrupt the academic framework of higher education institutions," according to it. A single admission cycle is already a significant challenge for many institutions.



"What looks like flexibility on paper will, in practice, deeply disrupt the academic framework of higher education institutions," according to it. A single admission cycle is already a significant challenge for many institutions. Classes did not begin in July as usual due to the Common University Entrance Test's implementation "

Classes did not begin in July as usual due to the Common University Entrance Test's implementation, which notably pushed back the start of the academic year to September or October. Professor Pankaj Garg, chair of the INTEC, stated that adding a second cycle will further

complicate existing delays and disrupt the entire academic year. The teachers' union voiced concerns that having admissions twice a year would disrupt class schedules, make evaluations more difficult, and put too much administrative work on teachers and staff all year long.

The Anti-Corruption Branch charges AAP's Sisodia and Jain with Rs 2,000 cr corruption

Delhi: The Delhi government's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has charged top Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain with irregularities in the construction of over 12,000 government school classrooms. The scandal allegedly cost the exchequer Rs 2,000 crore. In the Prevention of Corruption Act case, BJP leaders Harish Khurana, Kapil Mishra, and Neelkanth Bakshi filed complaints. The trio claimed that 12,748 classrooms were built at 24.86 lakh each room, when they should have been built for Rs 5 lakh. A preliminary investigation by ACB chief Madhur Verma found that the project, which had a set cost and a deadline of June 2016, had major cost overruns and delays. "Not a single work was completed within the prescribed period, and significant deviations and cost escalations were observed," Verma. He added that 34 contractors, most of whom were supposedly AAP-affiliated, won project tenders. Initially awarded for Rs 860.63 crore, contract values climbed 17% to 90% due to enhanced material standards. Verma said the increase was 326.25 crore, of which 205.45 crore was due to costlier specifications, or 24% of the award value.



India-made Micron Tech semiconductor chips to launch globally in 2025



Delhi: Micron India Managing Director Anand Ramamoorthy said that Micron Technology's packaging operation in Gujarat's Sanand will produce the first Indian semiconductor chips in the first half of 2025. "We expect to have products roll-out early next year, in the first half, which is a very good turnaround given that we had announced this whole engagement in the middle of last year," he said. Sanand may become a worldwide semiconductor powerhouse since Ramamoorthy predicted most of its chips will be exported. The chips will be utilized in data centers, smartphones, notebooks, and IoT devices, said Ramamoorthy. Demand, cost, and customer needs will dictate chip allocation closer to manufacturing. Micron also wants to explore two-wheeler electric vehicles and Indian government contracts. Micron's semiconductor supply chain is moving to India, with Simmtech opening operations in Gujarat. Ramamoorthy said the company is working with the government and suppliers to capitalize on India's semiconductor ecosystem. Micron is building an ATMP plant in India under the government's \$10 billion semiconductor production and assembly incentive program. The initiative, funded by central and state governments, will create thousands of direct and indirect jobs, boosting India's semiconductor industry.

AI reduces the lowest-fare luggage limit to 15kg

Delhi: Air India economy class domestic fliers on reduced fares can now check in 15kg of baggage instead of 25kg. AI's substantial allowance for economy fliers within India was its USP, and it would help make up for the long-awaited enhanced cabin product on the airline's outdated planes. All major Indian airlines give 15kg check-in for free. AI spokesperson: "Last year, we adopted a menu-based pricing strategy for branded fare families to comply with worldwide airline industry standards. Air India's 'comfort', 'comfort plus', and 'flex' fare families offer distinct features and limits at varying prices. We offer tariff families to help guests choose the finest meal and services for them." "Bundled fares provide passengers more value and choice for less. On a domestic sector like Delhi-Mumbai, the price difference between 'comfort plus' and 'flex' fares is typically about Rs 1,000,



with the 'flex' fare offering nearly Rs 9,000, including 10kg extra baggage, zero change or cancellation fees, more loyalty points, and more free seats." On domestic economy class routes, 'comfort' and 'comfort plus' price families allow 15kg baggage, while 'flex' allows 25kg. Domestic business

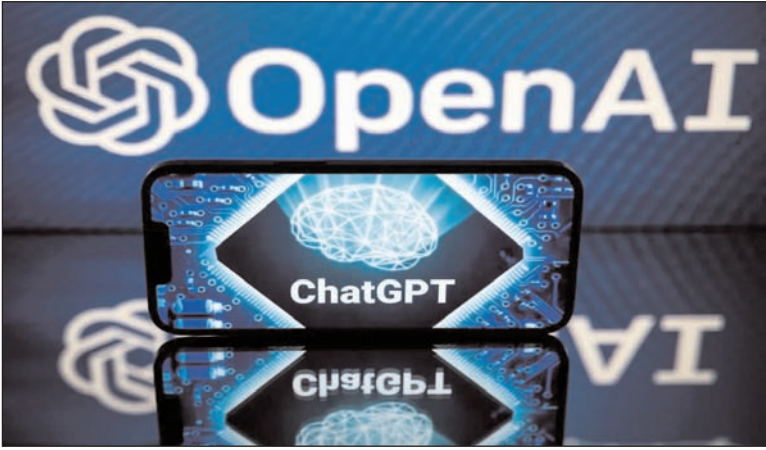
Apple may employ 5 lakh Indians

Delhi: Government sources that Apple will significantly increase its vendor workforce in India. In the next three years, Apple's suppliers and component makers might employ nearly 5 lakh people, up from 1.5 lakh. Apple's Indian vendor with the most jobs is Tata Electronics,

which runs two factories. A senior government official "Apple is hiring faster in India. They may employ five lakh people through vendors and component suppliers in the next three years, conservatively." Apple has not commented on this forecast. Apple's ambitions to boost Indian manufacturing coincide with this announcement. The corporation aspires to surpass five-fold manufacturing production in India, aiming for USD 40 billion (3.32 lakh crore) in the next four to five years. This surge aligns with Apple's Indian success.

OpenAI and Microsoft are being sued by eight US newspapers for "purloining millions"

Delhi: OpenAI and Microsoft are being sued by eight US newspapers for "purloining millions" of copyrighted news stories to train its artificial intelligence chatbots. New York federal court received the lawsuit from the Daily News, Chicago Tribune, Denver Post, and others. The MediaNews Group and Tribune Publishing executive editor Frank Pine wrote, "We've spent billions of dollars gathering information and reporting news at our publications, and we can't allow OpenAI and Microsoft to expand the Big Tech playbook of stealing our work to build their own businesses at our expense." The lawsuit also



names MediaNews Group's Mercury News, Denver Post, Orange County Register, St. Paul Pioneer-Press, and Tribune Publishing's Orlando Sentinel and South Florida Sun Sentinel. Alden Global Capital owns all publications. Microsoft declined comment. A request for comment from OpenAI was delayed. The New York Times sued OpenAI and Microsoft in December for Copyright infringement in ChatGPT's construction and training. Teams of wealthy lawyers seeking to stop us from publicizing their stories. Lobby groups with unclear funding that debunk climate emergency and other science. Authoritarian regimes that disregard press freedom. Bad actors propagating online falsehoods to subvert democracy. Something powerful is on our side. We got you. The Guardian is funded by Indian readers like you, and our editor selects what we publish. This week is the 31st World Press Freedom Day, a time to reflect on free expression as the foundation of all rights. It's also a chance to assist independent media worldwide.

Jio Financial Services will hire the head of consumer banking at Standard Chartered Bank

Delhi: Kusal Roy, the head of Standard Chartered Bank's consumer banking division in India, has tendered his resignation and is anticipated to join Jio Financial Services. The news of upcoming consumer-focused initiatives that Jio Financial Services would soon offer coincides with the development. Roy is a seasoned banker who joined StanChart Bank in 2020 after heading Tata Capital. He had previously worked for Citibank and ICICI Bank.



Roy's departure was verified by StanChart in response to an email inquiry. Following the release of the company's most recent financial results on April 19, Jio Financial Services announced a number of initiatives, which were unveiled concurrently with the announcement of Roy's resignation.

Godrej & Boyce to own Godrej land bank exclusive construction

Delhi: According to sources and regulatory filings, Jamshyd Naoraji Godrej and his sister Smita Crishna Godrej-controlled Godrej & Boyce will have exclusive construction rights over a vast land bank, including a prime 3,000-acre property in Mumbai, they received as part of the family agreement that split the Godrej empire. Deal splits the 127-year-old organization into two groups commanded by Adi Godrej and his brother Nadir and their cousins Jamshyd and Smita. The former would oversee Godrej Industries Group, which includes listed firms Godrej Industries Ltd, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd, Godrej Properties Ltd, Godrej Agrovat Ltd, and Astec Lifesciences Ltd. Jamshyd Godrej, 75, will manage Godrej Enterprises, which includes Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co., which operates in aerospace, aviation, defense, energy, construction, IT, and software. His niece Nyrika Holkar will be executive director. Both groups will use the Godrej brand, but they have a six-year non-compete arrangement to avoid each other. According to sources and the regulatory filing, they can enter other domains after the non-compete period, but not use the Godrej name. Sources indicated the separation was done through share transfers, not value. Adi and Nadir Godrej will sell their Godrej & Boyce shares to the other branch. Jamshyd Godrej and his family will pass GCPL and Godrej Properties to their cousins through a family agreement. A separate agreement will regulate ownership rights for thousands of millions of rupees of real estate in affluent Mumbai areas under Godrej & Boyce (G&B).

Bandhan Life hires 1,000 avatars

"Most of our partner distribution operations are tech-enabled, so once a consumer knows what they want to buy, it's quick "said"

Delhi: After acquiring Aegon Life Insurance, Bandhan Financial Holdings rebranded it Bandhan Life. The new company plans to become a multi-channel life insurance in five years as part of its expansion strategy. It will hire 1,000 people soon. After buying BCCL and Aegon Indian Holding's shareholding in February 2024, BFHL became the promoter.

"Our vision for the next five years is set," stated Bandhan Life MD and CEO Satishwar B. We will grow into all important product areas to improve our offerings." He continued, "To support our technical enablement approach, we have extensively invested in technology and data-driven operations. This combination will enable us to develop with the new Bharat." Given their size and scale, Bandhan Bank may be the largest distribution partner initially. Satishwar said it serves mass and conventional banking customers. We sell offline too, even though we're mostly on the internet. Most of our partner distribution operations are tech-enabled, so once a consumer knows what they want to buy, it's quick "said."

Currently, Australia is monitoring Indian spices

Delhi: In order to determine whether a food recall is necessary, Australia's food safety regulator is gathering data on potential contamination of spice mixes produced by Indian businesses MDH and Everest. Three MDH spice blends and one Everest mix were taken off the market in Hong Kong earlier this month. The same Everest mix was recalled by Singapore as well due to excessive quantities of ethylene oxide, which is dangerous for ingestion by humans and can cause cancer if exposed to high levels over time. "We are working with international counterparts to understand the issue and with federal, state and territory food enforcement agencies to determine if further action is required," stated Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.

Children under 12 must sit with parents on flights without charge

Delhi: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered airlines to seat children under 12 with a parent or guardian. This change follows many complaints from consumers, particularly group travelers, who were seated separated from their children after opting out of extra seat selection expenses. Under the new rule, airlines must seat children under 12 with their parents or guardians on the same booking reference. The DGCA stressed the need of recording seating arrangements for compliance. "Airline shall ensure that children upto 12 years are allocated seats with at least one of their parents/guardians, who are travelling on the same PNR and a record of the same shall be maintained," a revised DGCA rule stated. Passengers can opt out of opt-in services including premium seating and meals. Airlines may automatically assign seats before departure if passengers do not pick seats during web check-in. "Airline 'opt-in' unbundled services are optional. Auto seat assignment is available to passengers who have not selected a seat for web check-in before departure.

Industrial output grows 5.8% in, slows a tad in

New Delhi: The country's industrial output growth slowed marginally in March but manufacturing and electricity sectors remained robust, offsetting the slowdown in mining, while growth for the full fiscal year remained stable, data showed. Numbers released by the National Statistical Office on Friday showed the index of industrial production (IIP) rose an annual 4.9% in March, slightly lower than the downwardly revised 5.6% in Feb but above the 1.9% posted in last year. For the 2023-24 fiscal year, industrial output growth rose to 5.8% from 5.2% in the previous year. Industrial output grows 5.8% in FY24, slows a tad in March. The manufacturing sector rose 5.2% in March, higher than the 1.5% posted in last year, while the electricity sector grew 8.6% compared with a 1.6% contraction in the same month a year earlier. The mining sector grew 1.2% in March, slower than the 6.8% recorded in last year. The manufacturing sector expansion was consistent with other data such as the PMI for manufacturing, which had predicted stable expansion for the sector on the back of robust domestic demand. The consumer durables sector grew 9.5% in compared with a contraction of 8% in the year earlier period, while consumer non-durables grew 4.9% during the month compared with a contraction of 1.9% in the year earlier period. The capital goods sector, which is seen as a gauge for investment



activity, rose 6.1% in March, slower than the 10% recorded in last year, while the infrastructure/construction goods sector rose 6.9% during the month, slightly slower than the 7.2% in last year. "On the consumption front, output of consumer durables grew by 9.5% whereas non-durables output growth turned positive, rising by 4.9% following two consecutive months of contraction. However, the sustenance of this trend remains to be monitored in the upcoming months," said Rajani Sinha, chief economist at ratings agency CareEdge.

ED attaches 53cr assets of Navi Mum developer

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached immovable properties worth Rs 53 crore located in Navi Mumbai in the case of Monarch Universal Group. The ED initiated an investigation based on multiple FIRs registered by the police under various sections against Monarch Universal Group, Gopal Amarlal Thakur, Hasmukh Amarlal Thakur, and others for allegedly cheating flat buyers by



collecting money from them for flats and not registering the same in their names. ED investigation showed that Gopal Amarlal Thakur diverted and siphoned off a huge amount of investors' money by various sister entities

and, through a complex web of money trails, parked substantial proceeds of crime with various builders in Navi Mumbai. Gopal Thakur of the group was arrested in July 2021. He is currently in judicial custody.

Zomato's renaming's impact on biz, investors

Delhi: Industry experts say Zomato Ltd's plan to create a separate identity for its parent business will let it pursue its goals without risking everything and give investors more detailed information about the company. Four years after Facebook changed to

Meta Platforms Inc. and a decade after Google's parent became Alphabet Inc., Zomato announced that its board had approved the changing of its corporate identity as Eternal Ltd. The name change needs shareholder approval. Zomato's renaming reflects a long-

term growth ambition, focusing on Blinkit (rapid commerce), Hyperpure (restaurant supplies), and District (events platform), industry executives stated. Anupriya Saxena, a partner at JMJA & Associates LLP, a corporate consultancy, said.

No bail to DHFL promoters seeking relief for spending half of term in jail

MUMBAI: Refusing to grant bail to DHFL promoters Dheeraj and Rakesh Wadhawan, who sought the relief on the grounds that they had already spent more than half the maximum sentence of seven years in jail, a special PMLA court said the one year that the duo consumed in stalling their bail pleas had to be deducted from the computation of the time they had spent as undertrials. The brothers were arrested in 2020 in a money laundering



case in which Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor and others are also accused. In Dec last year, Kapoor was granted bail in the case after the judge pointed out

that he had spent more than the minimum punishment period of three years, without the framing of charges and a trial. In an 83-page order, the judge had cited a

table chronicling 207 dates in the case, emphasising that Kapoor was not responsible for the delays. Section 436A of the Criminal Procedure Code allows the release of undertrial prisoners upon completion of half of the maximum jail sentence. In the case of the Wadhawans, the judge, though, said the section does not provide an absolute right of bail and it may be denied where the trial is delayed because of the accused.

Centre plans pension scheme for gig workers, employers to contribute

Delhi: The labor and employment ministry is creating a transaction-based pension strategy to improve gig workers' social security, requiring aggregators to contribute 1-2% of their yearly turnover. The effort is targeted at almost one crore platform workers across India, a govt source stated. Each gig worker will get a global account number, allowing deductions based on wage transactions across platforms. Employers will pay per bill. The insider said, "State govern-



ments are being consulted, and the plan will soon go to the cabinet. "The effort tackles the issue of employer accountability owing to gig workers' use of numerous platforms. This policy matches the e-Shram platform, which was introduced

in Aug 2021 to register unorganised sector workers. As of January 27, 30.6 crore workers have signed up for the platform, which has 12 social security plans. India had 77 lakh gig workers in 2020-21, and today has over 1 crore, says a 2022 NITI Aayog

report. Currently, 47% of gig jobs are medium-skilled, 22% high-skilled, and 31% low-skilled. The 2020 Social Security Code suggested a National Social Security Board to advise gig workers. Aggregators may give 1-2% of their yearly turnover, limited at 5% of gig workers' total remuneration. Also, the government aims to extend PMJAY health insurance to gig workers. The plan should give gig workers the financial stability they need.

TISS student moves HC against suspension for attending protest

MUMBAI: Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) research scholar, Ramadas KS, has moved the Bombay High Court against the institute's suspension order. He was suspended for two years from the institute and debarred from entering all the four campuses, in an order passed last month. In his petition, Ramadas has appealed to the court to set aside the inquiry report of the institute's empowered committee and the revocation of the suspension order and restore his entitlements as a student. He said that he was 'unlawfully, arbitrarily and unfairly suspended by the institute'. Ramadas has also asked for the withdrawal of the public notice issued by the institute on April 20, two days after the suspension order was

passed. The public notice, stated the petition, was 'malicious' and 'defamatory' in nature and 'puts his life and academic pursuits under grave threat'. He also pointed out that his legitimate participation in student life and exercise of his constitutional rights has been deemed as 'anti-national' by the institute. The petition also seeks directions to the union ministry of social justice and empowerment to ensure the continuation and monthly disbursement of the national fellowship he was entitled to. In his petition, Ramadas mentioned that he did not receive the fellowship amount for April 2024, in pursuance of the suspension order. Ramadas has also set an interim stay on the suspension order and the continuation of the fellowship pending the hearing.

and the final disposal of the petition. UGC is also one of the respondents in the petition, as the guidelines for students' entitlements allows him freedom of thought and expression. The petition mentioned that he moved the court as the students' handbook of the institute does not provide details on the internal appeal process against an empowered committee's order. It also added that the public notice was issued by the highest authority and therefore, he would not get an independent or fair hearing in the appeal. The research scholar was suspended on April 18 based on the recommendations of the empowered committee. He was accused of participating in a protest march in New Delhi in January and also for urging people.

With the help of silicone models and photoshop, ma comes to life again

Glittering lehengas, elaborate rituals, and sumptuous food. The wedding of Gujarat-based real estate developer Piyush Patel's twin daughters in February last year had it all. Yet, one absence loomed large: that of their mother Daxaben, who passed away months before the event due to a brain stroke. The void was hard to fill, but Patel was determined to plug it a little. He decided to commission an artist and give his daughters a surprise they'd remember the rest of their lives: a life-size hyper-realistic silicone model of their mother, adorned in a bright turquoise saree, real gold jewellery, and a warm smile. Seeing it, not just the daughters, but many other guests present cried, he recalls. "It was like she was really there, blessing our daughters," he

adds. From photographs to pooja rituals, Daxaben's model marked her presence at the wedding ceremony. It sits in their home even today, with fresh clothes and makeup, for occasions like birthdays, festivals, and more. **MODEL MOM** Vadodara-based artist Vibha Patel, who made the statue, says she gets many requests to make silicone models for people who've lost near and dear ones, but they often back out after getting to know the cost. Such models typically cost around Rs 3-5 lakhs to make. While not everyone can afford a silicone model, people are finding different ways of keeping the memory of their late mothers alive. From rings made from strands of their hair that were preserved for years, to using

technology to photoshop them into wedding albums, the modes adopted are many. **FRAMED IN** Noida-based digital artist Divyanshu Garg, who goes by the name @ind_cyborg on Instagram, has received multiple such photoshop requests over the last few months. Earlier this year, he received one such request from Ami Kaur, who is from a Sikh family living in Thailand. Kaur's younger brother got married two years ago, but their mother was alive to only attend the engagement, and then succumbed to cancer. As his second marriage anniversary was approaching, Kaur decided to approach Garg to recreate a photograph of the wedding: one with their mother present in it. It was a surprise

not only for her brother, but also their father, she adds. In the 'reaction' video uploaded on Garg's channel, there are plenty of tears and long hugs, as they hold the photo. "For a person who has lost their mother, the grieving period is never over. But this really helps. We got many copies made," Kaur says. While photoshop technology helped Kaur and her family make their mother a part of a big day, some opt for live paintings of their late moms. Instead, in a reel that went viral in February, a California-based painter Kim-Vi Tran captured her journey of painting an Indian American bride's late mother into the surroundings. She also added a rainbow behind the late mother, "to remind the couple

Spending on online gaming increased 16 times

Delhi: According to a Visa white paper on payments, spending on online gaming increased 16 times in smaller areas between 2019 and 2024. The pattern indicates that digital consumption is becoming more and more prevalent in India's non-metropolitan regions. Spending on digital services, such as gaming, online education, and entertainment, has increased ninefold and sixteen fold since 2019, respectively, among consumers in smaller towns. In smaller towns, the number of consumers spending more than Rs 2 lakh a year with a single card has increased by over four times, while in category A cities, the figure has increased by 1.4 times. This change has led to a 175% increase in total card expenditure in category C+ cities since 2019 and suggests that affluence is spreading outside of metropolitan areas. According to Niko Partners' India Market Report, the country's video game market .

Donald Trump asks US Supreme Court to delay ban on TikTok

US President-elect Donald Trump has requested the Supreme Court to delay legislation that would ban TikTok unless its Chinese parent company ByteDance sells it. President Trump previously opposed TikTok due to national security concerns but has since reconsidered, indicating he supports TikTok for competitive reasons. His successor Joe Biden also supports the prohibition. Donald Trump asks US Supreme Court to delay ban on TikTok

US President-elect Donald Trump submitted a brief on Friday requesting the Supreme Court to delay a law that would ban TikTok if its Chinese parent company ByteDance does not sell it before his January 20 inauguration. "In light of the novelty and difficulty of this case, the court should consider staying the statutory deadline to grant more breathing space to



address these issues," Trump's legal team wrote, to give him "the opportunity to pursue a political resolution." The Republican during his earlier term strongly opposed TikTok and tried to ban the application, citing national security concerns. Trump expressed worries, shared by political opponents, about potential Chinese government access to American TikTok users' information or manipulation of content displayed on the platform. Additionally, American officials expressed concern regarding the application's popularity amongst youth, suggesting its parent organisation answers .

Pakistan plans to purchase 40 J-35 stealth fighter jets

Islamabad: Pakistan is set to acquire 40 of China's much-anticipated J-35 stealth fighters, a Chinese media outlet reported, signalling Beijing's first export of fifth-generation fighter jets to a foreign ally. The acquisition of fifth-generation jets is expected to impact the military balance between Pakistan and India, the Hong Kong-based "South China Morning Post" reported. The land-based J-35A will make its first public debut on Tuesday.

How Bangladesh is redefining 1971 Liberation War narrative

The educational curriculum in Bangladesh is undergoing significant changes. The revised textbooks will attribute the declaration of independence in 1971 to Ziaur Rahman instead of 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. They have also eliminated Mujib's title as 'Father of the Nation'. "The new textbooks for the 2025 academic year will state that 'on March 26, 1971, Ziaur Rahman declared the independence of Bangladesh, and on March 27, he made another declaration of independence on behalf of Bangabandhu'," Prof AKM Reazul Hassan, chairman of the National



Curriculum and Textbook Board, told The Daily Star. The information has been included in the free textbooks where the matter of the declaration was mentioned, he added. Ziaur Rahman established the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and was married to current BNP leader Khaleda Zia.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was the father of recently removed Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina, spearheaded the country's liberation movement. According to the report, writer and researcher Rakhai Raha, who was involved in the process of making changes in the textbooks, said.

Germany says latest undersea cable cut a 'wake-up call'

Germany said on Saturday the suspected sabotage of an undersea power cable linking Finland and Estonia this week was a "wake-up call" that demanded new EU sanctions against Russia's "shadow fleet". The Estlink 2 cable that carries electricity

from Finland to Estonia was disconnected from the grid on Wednesday, just over a month after two telecommunications cables were severed in Swedish territorial waters in the Baltic. "Almost every month, ships are damaging major undersea cables in

the Baltic Sea," German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock said in a statement to the Funke media group. "Crews are leaving anchors in the water, dragging them for kilometres along the seafloor for no apparent reason."

Pakistani Grooming Gangs: Musk tries to link Keir Starmer to Rotherham scandal

Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and owner of the X platform, has turned his attention to UK politics, sharply criticizing Prime Minister Keir Starmer for his role during the Rotherham grooming gang scandal. Musk's critique focuses on Starmer's tenure as head of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) between 2008 and 2013, a period when systemic failures allowed the exploitation of over 1,400 children to go unchecked. Musk posted on X, questioning Starmer's accountability for the CPS's inaction, and criticized Labour MP Jess Phillips for her reluctance to push for further investigation. "Who was the head of the CPS when rape gangs were allowed to



exploit young girls without facing justice? Keir Starmer, 2008–2013," Musk wrote. He implied that exposing these failings would reflect poorly on Starmer, now leader of the Labour Party as well the premier. The Rotherham scandal, detailed in the 2014 independent report by Professor Alexis Jay, revealed horrifying systemic abuse spanning 16 years from 1997 to 2013. Over

1,400 children, some as young as 11, were sexually exploited in Rotherham, a town in South Yorkshire. Victims were subjected to rape, trafficking, and physical violence, often by networks of men. Systemic Failures: Agencies, including the police and CPS, failed to act on credible reports of abuse. Frontline workers who raised concerns were often ignored or silenced.

How Pakistan 'copied' design of India's 1960 Cirus reactor

MUMBAI: A little-known incident in the history of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme is a purported attempt made by the country in the early '70s to copy the design of India's Cirus reactor — a 40 MW thermal neutron research facility, which first achieved criticality at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Trombay, near Mumbai, on July 10, 1960. An acronym for Canada India Reactor Utility Services.

The United Kingdom's defence ministry announced Thursday that a secret laboratory is creating the nation's first "revolutionary" atomic clock using quantum technology to enhance military intelligence and surveillance capabilities. "Military personnel will use groundbreaking quantum technology to conduct more secure and precise operations, thanks to a new high-tech atomic clock," stated the UK government's press release, describing it as "a leap forward in improving intelligence." "Developed at the top-secret



Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, (Dstl) the quantum clock will be a leap forward in improving intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance by decreasing the reliance on GPS technology, which can be disrupted and blocked by adversaries," the government added in the statement. According to

official announcements, this advanced timepiece maintains accuracy within one second over billions of years, enabling exceptional temporal measurements, adding that "It is the first device of its kind to be built in the UK and will be deployable on military operations in the next five years." "The administration elaborated on quantum timekeeping advantages, including accurate independent navigation systems reducing GPS dependence, ensuring protection against interference or attacks."

Cybertruck bomber Matthew LinkedIn profile shocks social media

Matthew Livelsberger, or Matt Berg, the 37-year-old suspect bomber of the Las Vegas cybertruck was an active army member and has many feathers in his crown. A LinkedIn profile believed to be belonging to the Colorado Springs military details all his deployments since he joined the Army in 2006. It also claims he was a Special Forces soldier, Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems qualified implying that he had trained to be a drone pilot. Livelsberger joined the Green Beret as a communication specialist in January 2006, before becoming an operations manager and team sergeant in February 2023. Going by his LinkedIn profile listing, his most recent role from November 2024 was as a Remote and Autonomous Systems Manager for the Army. Livelsberger was awarded with a



summa cum laude, an award for the students earning the highest grades in their class. He studied at Norwich University in Vermont, where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis. Old news articles of Livelsberger helping children in Afghanistan. News articles about Livelsberger spending time with Afghan kids during his deployment in Afghanistan surfaced on social media. "Livelsberger, 21, is starting a collection of clothes, toys, recreational and educational items for kids ages 1

to 14, and he needs local help," the newspaper report said. "How does such a person get convinced to do this???" a user commented. "He has a broad skill set in technology, operations etc," the comment read. **Terror attack or suicide?** The cybertruck explosion took place hours after the New Orleans attack and both the attackers used Turo app to get rented cars. Since there was no casualty in the Las Vegas case apart from the driver, several questions have been raised as to whether it was an attack.

Police reveals how Cybertruck limited explosion damage

The incident, which saw significant support from vehicle telemetry, involved large fireworks or a bomb, raising concerns about possible connections to other recent attacks. 'I have to thank Tesla CEO': Police reveals how Cybertruck limited explosion damage, Musk's role in tracking driver

Police behind the investigation of the explosion of a Tesla Cybertruck outside the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas expressed gratitude towards CEO Elon Musk on Wednesday citing the strong construction of the vehicle body that limited the explosion. Police noted that the attack could have been worse but the vehicle limited the blast and its damage. Cybertruck helped contain the damage

Speaking to CNN, Kevin McMahon, sheriff of the Las Vegas



Metropolitan Police Department, said that the structural design of the Cybertruck helped contain the damage in the hotel valet area, directing the explosion's force upwards and preserving the building's front glass windows. "The fact that this was a Cybertruck really limited the damage that occurred inside of the valet because it had most of the blast. Up through the truck and out," he said. "You'll see that the front glass doors at the Trump Hotel were not even broken by that blast which they were parked directly in front of," he added. He

further elaborated on how the Tesla Motors' CEO helped the police to track the driver. "I have to thank Elon Musk specifically," McMahon expressed gratitude towards Tesla's CEO, saying that Elon Musk provided "additional information", including surveillance footage from charging stations to assist in tracking the suspect. "We have now confirmed that the explosion was caused by very large fireworks and/or a bomb carried in the bed of the rented Cybertruck and is unrelated to the vehicle itself," Musk said in a post on X.

New Orleans attacker Shamsud was divorced multiple times, court filings point to financial strain

New Orleans attacker terrorist Shamsud Din Jabbar who killed 15 on New Year Day at the city's famous Bourbon Street before being gunned down by the police had a disturbed family life with a record of two divorces, reports said. In court filings for the divorces, financial difficulty was mentioned, though Jabbar worked with Deloitte, Ernst & Young and was also an Army veteran.

The 42-year-old Texas man was making close to \$125,000 a year but reports claimed that a lot of his earning was chipped away by the court-related payments for his children from his past marriage. Details of Shamsud Din Jabbar's ex-wives According to court documents, the New Orleans attacker's first divorce was finalized in 2013 when his gross monthly resources were about \$3,990 and he was ordered to pay \$660 in child support. His first wife Nakedra Jabbar was granted majority custody. In 2016, Jabbar filed for divorce from another wife Tiera Symone Jabbar in Georgia, ABC News reported. The complaint form said the two married in 2013 and got separated in 2016. Under grounds for divorce, Jabbar checked the box on the form that read "our marriage is irretrievably broken," adding that the pair "can no longer live together and there is no hope that we will get back together." Then in 2020, Jabbar filed for divorce from wife Shaneen Jabbar whom he married in 2017. But the pair jointly sought to dismiss the suit only a month after it was filed.



More than 50% of patients face delay in discharge due to time taken to process mediclaim: Study

GURUGRAM : A new study from healthcare provider Pristyn Care found that 5 out of 10 patients face delays in discharge due to the time taken to process medical insurance claims. To alleviate the hassle experienced by health insurance policyholders, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is likely to introduce a 100% cashless hospital network that will include both empanelled and non-empanelled hospitals. The study indicates that over 40% of individuals attribute delays in health insurance claims in India to hospital administrative processes, while 25% cite a lack of coordination between hospitals and insurance providers. Complex documentation procedures also significantly contribute to these delays. Furthermore, the survey underscores various challenges encountered by patient families throughout the insurance claims process, with nearly 4 out of 10 respondents reporting difficulties with customer support regarding the claims process. The study also found that 6 out of 10 individuals never initiated the health insurance claim process. Among those who did, 34% expressed dissatisfaction with the paperwork, while 40% faced challenges in receiving timely responses from their insurance providers. Roughly 3 out of 10 patients encountered discrepancies between pre-approved and final claim amounts. Additionally, around 38% of respondents reported that the discharge process took over 8 hours, with hospitals requiring a similar timeframe to process claims. Approximately 4 out of 10 individuals lacked clarity on their policy's terms and conditions. Furthermore, about 18% expressed dissatisfaction with the communication received from their insurance providers regarding claim statuses. Commenting on the findings, Dr. Vaibhav Kapoor, Co-founder of Pristyn Care, said, "There is a huge gap between the intended ease of cashless health insurance and the reality experienced by policyholders. Despite 75% of survey respondents having cashless insurance, a significant number still face challenges during the claim process. This creates additional stress for patients and families already dealing with a medical emergency. However, it's encouraging to note that insurance providers have already started digitizing and using tech to make the process quick and smooth. By embracing technological innovations, insurance providers are not only addressing the current challenges faced by policyholders."

Karnataka govt has sent its ordinance to governor, proposing severe penalties for microfinance institutions

Bengaluru: After multiple iterations, Karnataka govt has sent its ordinance to governor Thaaawar Chand Gehlot, proposing severe penalties for microfinance institutions (MFIs) found guilty of coercive loan recovery practices. Under the revised draft, it will be considered a criminal offence for MFIs to use violence, intimidation or any form of coercion against borrowers or their families. The ordinance also prohibits use of external agencies to threaten or pressure borrowers into repayment and bans the frequent visitation of borrowers' homes or places of work. The Karnataka Micro-Finance (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Ordinance, 2025, which has already received the cabinet's approval, has suggested up to 10 years in prison and a fine of Rs 5 lakh for MFIs involved in harassment. "It was three years (in the initial draft), now we have increased it to 10 years. This is to ensure that the heat of the law is felt (by violators)," home minister G P a r a m e s h w a r a announced the revision Tuesday. The ordinance, which has seen eight revisions in the past few weeks, is now awaiting the governor's assent. The decision to issue the ordinance comes in the wake of rising suicides and widespread complaints about predatory loan recovery practices used by MFIs. These firms have been accused of using coercive methods which have pushed borrowers, particularly farmers, women and self-help groups, to the brink of financial ruin. "The ordinance aims to protect and provide relief to economically vulnerable groups and individuals. from undue hardship caused by usurious interest rates and coercive recovery methods," Parameshwara added. Any attempt to force-seize documents that entitle borrowers to government benefits is also deemed illegal. Violations of these provisions will allow borrowers to file complaints with local police stations, and a police officer not below the rank of DySP will have the authority to file a suo motu case. The ordinance ensures any loan from unlicensed and unregistered MFIs, including interest, will be considered fully discharged, and no civil court can entertain a suit to recover such amounts. "The government is committed to protecting the interests of borrowers while ensuring responsible lending," said Parameshwara, highlighting that an ombudsman may also be appointed to mediate between lenders and borrowers for resolving disputes.



Apple's first iPad Pro redesign uses an AI-focused M4 processor

Delhi: Apple introduced an artificial intelligence-focused iPad Pro and a bigger iPad Air to revitalize its tablet lineup after two years. The firm launched the first redesigned iPad Pro since 2018 at "Let Loose" online. The new model boasts a smaller body, a sharper Ultra Retina XDR screen with OLED technology, and a quicker M4 CPU for AI. The new iPad Air looks like the previous model but has a bigger screen and M2 CPU. Apple claims the 13-inch iPad Pro is the thinnest apple device ever at 5.1 millimeters. The larger model is a quarter-pound lighter than its predecessor, while the 11-inch weighs under one. It breaks Apple's longest iPad release gap since co-founder Steve Jobs debuted it in 2010. In October 2022, Apple refreshed the iPad Pro with a speedier CPU and a revamped low-end model. Apple wants to get the iPad out of a slump. Apple expected that iPad sales will return this quarter after they fell 17% last quarter and failed analysts' projections. The graphics engine is four times faster and the CPU is 50% faster than the iPad Pro. Apple stated the chip uses second-generation 3-nanometer technology. Main innovation is the neural engine, which the business claims is 60 times faster than its 2017 version. This will assist the iPad Pro perform AI jobs. Apple will discuss its AI aspirations at its Worldwide Developers Conference on June 10. The iPad Pro's OLED screen reproduces colors more accurately and crisply.

KARAM Safety acquires Midas Safety India to strengthen its leadership position(PPE) India

Faridabad: KARAM Safety, a leading global PPE player and fall protection solutions provider, is pleased to announce the successful acquisition of Midas Safety India, a prominent player in the hand protection safety products industry. This strategic move marks a significant milestone in KARAM Group's journey towards expanding its presence and enhancing its product offerings. The acquisition of Midas Safety India strengthens KARAM Group's position as a market leader in the safety industry, combining KARAM's expertise in fall protection and personal protective equipment (PPE) with Midas Safety India's extensive portfolio of hand protection safety products. This synergy will enable



KARAM Group to offer customers a comprehensive range of high-quality safety solutions to meet their evolving needs. The 25-year-old KARAM Group, with a turnover of INR 1000 crore, has acquired the operations of Midas Safety India having a top line of INR 110 crore through a slump deal. Hand protection products are a major revenue contributor to Midas Safety India which was established 16 years ago. Today, KARAM proudly carries out.

HC junks Cong substitute nominee's plea for Indore fight

INDORE: A division bench of Madhya Pradesh high court on Friday upheld a single-judge bench's order dismissing a plea by Congress' Moti Singh Patel for his candidature to be accepted as the party nominee for Lok Sabha elections after official candidate Akshay Kanti Bam pulled out of the poll race at the last minute. The Indore bench, comprising Justice SA Dharmadhikari and Justice Gajendra Singh, said Patel's application was "bereft of merit and substance". Patel had approached the division bench after a single-judge bench of Justice Vivek Rusia on April 30 turned down his plea to overturn the rejection of his nomination by district election officer and to be allotted the Congress 'hand' symbol to contest polls. Indore votes in the fourth phase on May 13. Patel's candidature was rejected during scrutiny on April 25. Bam's papers were cleared as the 'approved Congress candidate', but he suddenly pulled out on April 29, the last day for withdrawal of nominations. It left Congress without a candidate in Indore for the first time ever. Patel's counsel Vibhor Khandelwal contended before the division bench that the returning officer may have been right in rejecting Patel's nomination on April 26 since at that time he was not the approved Congress candidate and his form was not signed by 10 proposers. But in view of the proviso to subsection (5) of Section 36 of the Act, the returning officer ought to have given a day's time to Patel to get signatures of 10 proposers and examine the nomination form the next day, he said. Since Bam withdrew his candidature, Patel's form should be scrutinised and accepted so that he can contest the election, Khandelwal contended. Election Commission counsel Mini Ravindran submitted that the writ petition itself is not maintainable, arguing that Supreme Court had earlier held that any interference by high courts entertaining petitions under 226 of the Constitution and issuing directions after commencement of the electoral process.

The National Critical Mineral Mission gets 16,300 crore from the cabinet

Delhi : The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with a 16,300 crore expenditure and a projected ₹18,000 crore investment from PSUs and other businesses. "Several crucial decisions have created new scientific and technology prospects for our children, future generations, and the economy. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told a Cabinet briefing that PM Modi approved the National Critical Minerals Mission today. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced NCMM's creation in the 2024-25 Union Budget. The Atmanirbhar Bharat mission seeks to assure India's crucial mineral sector self-reliance, recognizing its importance in high-tech industry, lean energy, and defence. The Mission will encompass exploration, mining, processing, and end-of-life product recovery in the essential mineral value chain. It aims to speed up mining project approvals, incentivize exploration, and recover minerals from overburdens and tailings. The mission encourages Indian PSUs and private enterprises to buy vital mineral assets abroad and strengthen economic ties with resource-rich nations. The plan also calls for a national stockpile of essential minerals to secure supply. The Mission will promote mineral processing parks and crucial mineral recycling. A Centre of Excellence on Critical Minerals will encourage critical mineral technology research. India has 24 critical minerals: Beryl, admium, Cobalt, Gallium, Glauconite, Graphite, Indium, Lithium,

Cong to review 'anti-people laws', says Ramesh, mum on CAA repeal

Bengaluru: Under CBI scanner for alleged bribe-for-grades scam, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is looking to change the current accreditation system to binary system and maturity-based system with different metrics, while keeping at least 400 academicians away from campus visits in the past one year over fears of corruption. The binary system involves grading a college 'accredited or not', without A+, A++ grades. The maturity-based system is an evolving accreditation process which improves a college's rating over the previous level based on its improvement in performance. The current process – which is likely to be shelved – involves a 70:30 metrics formula: 70% quantitative and 30% qualitative metrics. The latter consists physical inspection



of higher educational institutions by a peer-review team. The NAAC's plan to shift to the new twin systems follows recommendations from the Dr Radhakrishnan committee, which has suggested reforms in the accreditation process. Anil Sahasrabudhe, chairman of NAAC executive committee, said they will expedite the rollout of reforms soon. "The committee has debarred offline, physical visits and will do everything online through validation of

the documents. We plan to launch both binary system and multigrade system in March. Now that this (scam) has come to light, we will expedite the process, finalise recommendation of the committee, and then adopt them soon." The premier grading agency has come under the central probe agency's lens for alleged corruption while assessing a college in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur. A NAAC source clarified, "There is no proof

against these 400 teachers. We received feedback from trustworthy sources on their conduct. Since we have no evidence against them, we could not take any action. Instead, we prevented them from making any more physical visits." The peer team is randomly selected by the system. Sahasrabudhe said if there is no grading (like A+ or A++), institutions will not try to engage in unethical activities. "The committee is currently working on a maturity-based.

New military dental care centre in Ahmednagar to benefit veterans

NEW DELHI: This facility will provide advanced oral health care to the sizeable community of army personnel serving with the town's Armoured Corps and Mechanised Infantry schools and centres. In addition, individuals from the Marathwada region will have access to health care services offered at the centre. The dental centre is of significant historical importance as one of the oldest dental units in the Indian Army. In 1942, it moved from Multan (now in present-day Pakistan) to Ahmednagar. The centre's commanding officer, Colonel Vivek Saxena, said, "This premium oral health care establishment features contemporary dental care services, including implant-based treatments and a state-of-the-art cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) machine for early oral cancer diagnosis." The upgraded centre.

Teachers improve their skills with an app to engage students

Delhi: Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launched the TeacherApp in New Delhi today to improve education in India by empowering educators with 21st-century classroom abilities. Bharti Airtel Foundation, Bharti Enterprises' philanthropy arm, created the Platform. Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises Shri Rakesh Bharti Mittal, CEO of Bharti Airtel Foundation Smt. Mamta Saikia, education luminaries, school principals, teachers, and B.Ed. students attended. In his speech on "Elevating Teachers, Elevating India," Shri Dharmendra Pradhan said this app will empower teachers through continual capacity building using creative course content, technology, and community-building elements. This user-centric, free app designed with teacher input is available on the Web, iOS, and Android, enabling smooth



access for educators nationwide. Over 260 hours of high-quality courses, learning bytes, short videos, podcasts, and interactive webinar formats like thematic fests, webinars, competitions, and quizzes are available on the platform to improve future readiness, pedagogy, and student engagement. Live expert sessions provide practical teaching ideas, and the app highlights instructors' remarkable impact stories to develop a community of teachers. The app transforms education with tech and 12 state partnerships. Teaching Kits, 900 hours of content, is unique to this platform.

Key DU committee to discuss Gita, Viksit Bharat courses

Delhi: Officials said Delhi University's (DU) standing committee will review proposals for numerous value addition courses (VAC), including four Bhagavad Gita-based and one An Introduction to Viksit Bharat. The committee's agenda emphasizes incorporating contemporary Indian philosophy and development issues into the curriculum. The Bhagavad Gita is featured in four of the six VACs, including "Gita for Holistic Life.

Find unlawful Bangladeshis: MCD

Delhi: Delhi schools must detect unlawful Bangladeshi migrant children and deny birth certificates. All zones were ordered by the MCD to remove illegal Bangladeshi encroachments.

The extra commissioner and deputy commissioner represented the MCD Commissioner at a December 12 virtual meeting led by the senior secretary (Home), GNCTD, to discuss these directions. As decided in the VC meeting, MCD department heads and zonal officials were asked to take precautionary steps. If illegal Bangladeshi migrants are admitted to municipal



schools, the education administration must take precautions. The undocumented Bangladeshi migrant children in schools should also be identified and verified "B P Bhardwaj deputy commissioner MCD stated. "Public health department should take all precautions while registering and issuing birth certificates and ensure no unlawful Bangladeshi migrants are awarded birth certificates. They would also identify/verify Birth Certificate registrants issued to unlawful Bangladeshi migrants "MCD added.

Philippine Medical Act amendment bill gives Indian medical students hope

Delhi: The Philippines government has amended the Medical Act to allow foreign doctors to practice. International students, including Indians, can now practice medicine in the Philippines. The amendment also establishes the Medical Education Council and the Professional Regulatory Board of Medicine to improve academic standards, promote ethics, and keep the island country competitive in medical education. The Ministry of External Affairs reported 9665 Indians studying in the Philippines in 2024. English-based instruction, US-aligned curriculum, and inexpensive tuition attract thousands of students annually. Study abroad consultants say low tuition, quality education, US-recognized syllabus and degree, extensive clinical practice, English as the teaching language, and climatic factors are attracting international students, particularly Indians, to the Philippines. "Allowing foreign nationals to practice medicine in the country, the Philippines is strengthening its appeal as a destination for aspiring medical professionals," The Philippines, along with Russia, Ukraine, and China, may attract Indian medical students. Some medical students told The Indian Express why they chose the island nation over the big four for medical school. A Telangana student selected the Philippines for its affordability and great education. Aditya and other students said the number of Indian students is rising, from 380 in 2019-19 to 1200 today. The Philippine MBBS program takes six years, with the last year dedicated to internships. Before taking the NMAT and enrolling in the MD program, international students must complete a three-semester BS.



UGC creates RPL to enable candidates to use informal learning

Delhi: The University Grants Commission (UGC) announced draft guidelines for prior learning recognition, a critical component of the NEP 2020. RPL recognizes informal, non-formal, and experiential learning abilities and competencies. Students can earn up

to 30% of their degree credits using RPL. RPL for university admissions and job placements is planned by UGC for 2026. A BCom graduate with work experience can join in a one-year PG study with exemptions in a few areas after being examined for skills. "RPL

connects real-world experience to formal education. UGC chairperson M Jagadesh Kumar said it boosts career chances. Portfolio assessment—work samples, projects, coursework, certificates, standardised tests, interviews, , skill demonstrations,

The PhD program at IIT-D is launched in Abu Dhabi

Delhi : At its new international campus in Abu Dhabi, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has begun offering a PhD program in energy and sustainability. Interviews will take place following the deadline of December 31, 2024, for online applications. It is anticipated that chosen applicants would begin work by the final week of January 2025. "The energy and sustainability program will concentrate on tackling innovative issues associated with achieving net-zero goals. According to an official, this includes studies on renewable energy, decarbonization, process intensification, sustainable process engineering, micro-



" For their doctoral dissertations, students will work on cutting-edge subjects that tackle global issues in environmental sustainability, energy transition management, and technology "

grids and power distribution in the changing energy landscape, and the application of

artificial intelligence and data science to support the energy transition.

IIT-D has 1,200 open positions, with more than 50 of them being international

Delhi: With over 1,200 job offers (including PPOs), the placement season at IIT Delhi for the academic year 2024-25 has started off on a strong note. According to IIT Delhi, approximately 1,150 students have been chosen at random. Recruiters from all walks of life have shown up on campus, and they're offering tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships. The following companies are among the most prominent in their respective industries.

Admittance lists will be published

Delhi: Marked the end of nursery enrollment for the 2025-26 academic year in 1,741 Delhi private schools. The Delhi Directorate of Education's Nov. 12 circular said that registration forms were due Dec. 20. The first general admission lists will be released on 2025. "This year, we received more than 2,000 registrations for nursery admissions, which is quite satisfactory and exceeds last year's numbers." The DoE requires schools to upload selected application informa-

tion by Jan. 1, 2025. Principal of Venkateshwar School, Dwarka, Manisha Sharma remarked, "We have received around 3,600 nursery registrations this year, which is a significant increase compared to previous years." Private schools must reserve 25% of seats for economically disadvantaged, disabled, and disadvantaged students. The circular states that these categories would have separate admission lists. The DoE also regulates admission age.

Children must be three years old for nursery, four for KG, and five for Class 1 by March 31, 2025. Upper age limitations for nursery, KG, and Class 1 are under 4, 5, and 6 years old. On Feb. 3, 2025, the second list of selected students and marks will be announced. Any subsequent admittance lists will be published Feb. 26, 2025. . The admission procedure, including parent visits for questions and mark distribution, ends Feb. 14, 2025.

Credit courses from AICTE drone labs

Delhi: AICTE and AVPL have signed an MoU to create AVPL AeroVision Drone Labs in AICTE-approved colleges nationwide. This strategic alliance will first establish 50 AVPL AeroVision Labs to improve technical education and give students and faculty hands-on experience with innovative drone technology. In the announcement, AICTE Chairman T.G. Sitharam stressed the importance of this endeavor. "AVPL AeroVision Drone Labs transforms drone technology education for students. Our goal is to improve technical education and industry-relevant training to prepare our kids for the global employment market. Sitharam hopes this relationship will motivate other



business leaders to support similar programs, generating an industry-ready workforce and providing hands-on training for students. AICTE Vice Chairman Abhay Jere and Member Secretary Rajive Kumar attended. AITMC Ventures Limited (AVPL) Founder and Managing Director Preet Sandhu said: "AVPL aims to empower the future workforce by providing drone technology.

Exam centers to get CCTVs from NIOS to reduce malpractices

Delhi: To ensure transparent and seamless assessments, the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) will use AI-powered CCTV cameras and webcasting of the annual High School Certificate (HSC) exam 2024. Pauses, violations of rules, such as logistical issues in storing or distributing question papers, cheating, malpractice.

DU students may soon finish a semester of international university finals

Delhi: Delhi University (DU) seniors may soon be able to study abroad for a semester. Twinning programs will be discussed at the December 27 academic council (AC) meeting. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and UGC regulations for twinning programmes with international universities support this approach. The plan would have students spend the semester abroad and earn 12-26 credits. They'd graduate from DU when they returned. A committee determining the twinning degree arrangement will offer its suggestions during the council meeting. Students can study abroad for a semester under this program. Some educators say this proposal benefits pupils. Students who



" Despite its appeal, the idea lacks details. To complement the twinning concept, DU will launch a one-year postgraduate (PG) program in 2026. A draft proposal will be discussed during the academic council meeting"

studied abroad while doing their primary course could not merge their credits. Students will choose a university and field depending on DU's MoUs with international institutions. After picking a university, students can apply to DU, where a commit-

tee will assess their applications and determine feasibility. Economically disadvantaged meritorious students can also join the twinning program. "This does not limit it to EWS pupils. Other students who match economic .

IIT to teach Gen AI

Delhi: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi offers a diploma in generative AI to meet the growing demand for AI competence. Through the institute's Continuing Education Programme (CEP), this six-month advanced AI course teaches professionals broad AI skills. Today's IT, entertainment, healthcare, and finance industries want this expertise. Developing generative AI skills boosts career opportunities. The programme also gives students hands-on exposure with practical tools and algorithms to stay competitive and meet the growing demand for AI-driven innovation "an official added. The new project examines advanced AI techniques, focusing on Large Language Models (LLMs) including GPT, BERT, and T5. Modern issues including Reinforcement Learning with Human Feedback (RLHF), Vision-Language Models (VLMs), and responsible AI deployment are covered. The curriculum offers six specialized modules: mathematical foundations for machine learning, machine learning, natural language processing, generative AI for text, vision, and responsible AI. Students will also use industry-leading Python, NumPy, Pandas, PyTorch, and TensorFlow. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has launched a certificate program.

