



'Narrative based on falsehood': Sitharaman calls Mamata's 'mic off' claim 'unfortunate'

**Vatika Times**  
NEW DELHI: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman fended off West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee's charge that her mic was muted during the Niti Aayog meeting that took place in the national capital on Saturday. Rebuffing the TMC supremo's allegation that her "microphone was switched off after five minutes", the Union minister called the charge "completely false". "CM Mamata Banerjee attended the Niti Aayog meeting. We all heard her. Every CM was given the allotted time and that was displayed on the screen which was present before every table...She said in the media that her mic was put off. 1x1 polls That is completely false," Nirmala Sitharaman told news agency ANI. She also criticised the



Bengal chief minister for building a narrative based on "falsehood" and called it "unfortunate". "Every CM was given their due time to speak...It's unfortunate that the chief minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee has claimed that her mic was switched off which is not true...She should speak the truth behind this rather than again build a narrative based on falsehood," the Union minister said. 'Mic muted before allotted time,' says Mamata The controversy erupted after Mamata Banerjee stormed out of the Niti Aayog's

council meeting, claiming that her mic was muted before the allotted time and that she should have been allowed to speak for at least half an hour. "At the beginning, Rajnath ji said, 'five to seven minutes'... I was not allowed even (those) seven minutes. I would have completed all that I had to say, even if the seven minutes were allowed. But they rang the bell at five minutes, and I said, okay then I shall leave... and I left." Mamata, who was the only INDIA bloc leader and CM from a non-BJP state to attend the PM Modi chaired meeting, said she was "not an irre-

sponsible person to not have maintained the time limit". "I was the only one (from opposition-governed states) present there; they should have allotted at least half an hour for me... and I am not an irresponsible person that I will not maintain my time," she said. Mentioning that she felt "humiliated" at what had happened, Mamata said, "I have no issues if some states get a bigger share... but that cannot mean some states get almost nothing... If you paralyse the states, Centre will get paralysed in the coming days."

In kharif season, water levels at 2 Pakistan key dams near 'dead levels'

**Vatika Times'**  
NEW DELHI: Constant decrease in the flow volume of western rivers - Indus, Jhelum and Chenab - from India has left Pakistan discharging more water than what it's receiving to sustain its drinking water and irrigation needs. While this appears normal during the pre-monsoon season, the situation may turn grim in the coming weeks as regular desilting and flushing of dams by India in Jammu & Kashmir to increase its own storage capacity will further lessen the water flow to the other side. The daily water situation report, released by Pakistan's Indus River System Authority (IRSA), shows that the country on Wednesday had to discharge 11,180 cusecs more water than the inflow. Its collective outflow, measured at different



monitoring stations (Tarbela on Indus, Mangla on Jhelum, Marala on Chenab and Nowshera on Kabul river), stood at 2,52,791 cusecs compared to the inflow of 2,41,611 cusecs. More outflow than inflow will eventually lead to a further drop in water availability in two key provinces - Punjab and Sindh - which depend on waters from the western rivers of the Indus system. On Wednesday, Pakistan's Punjab province, where kharif farming has begun, received 1,4,600 cusecs of water compared to

1,43,600 cusecs on the same day last year - a decline of 20%. Pakistan is still nearly a month away from getting monsoon rains, but water storage in its two key dams - Mangla on river Jhelum and Tarbela on Indus - has already reached close to their respective 'dead levels' (there are no outlets to drain water from the reservoirs by gravity below the level). "This means further decrease in water flow from the Indian side may leave Pakistan with few options to facilitate

farming operations before the arrival of the monsoon," said an official. Pakistan's IRSA advisory committee, at its meeting last month, apprehended the crisis when it declared an overall shortage of 21% for the early kharif season (May 1-June 10), noting "sudden decrease" in Chenab's inflows at Marala "due to short supply by India". It expected shortages of 7% in the late kharif season (June 11-Sept 30). Though the situation will start improving from early next month when monsoon hits Pakistan, the authorities would find regulation of water for regular discharge difficult in the absence of water flow data from India following the suspension of Indus Water Treaty. India, which has kept the 1960 treaty in abeyance over the Pahalgam terror attack.

RBI defers exchange-traded currency derivatives rules

**MUMBAI:** RBI has deferred the implementation of its rules on exchange-traded currency derivatives by a month, resulting in traders scrambling to square off their positions. RBI's circular, which was scheduled to come into effect on April 5, said that only traders with an underlying forex exposure can trade in currency derivatives. Exchange-traded currency derivatives, like futures contracts, help companies hedge against currency risk. For instance, an Indian exporter expecting payment in US dollars in three months can use currency futures to mitigate potential losses from adverse exchange rate movements. By entering a futures contract to sell US dollars at a predetermined rate, the exporter locks in a viable exchange rate. The market for exchange-traded currency derivatives has been thriving for a decade because of positions taken by investors with a view on the currency. However, RBI said that its recent circular only reiterates its existing position. "The regulatory framework for exchange-traded currency derivatives has remained consistent over the years, and there is no change in RBI's policy approach," it said. The circular, issued on Jan 5, retained most of the earlier regulations, including a requirement that trades over \$100 million would require proof of exposure. This requirement of proof for higher value trades was being interpreted by participants to mean that those who did not have any exposure could participate in lower value transactions. However, the Jan 5 circular carried a footnote requiring exchanges to ask clients to trade only against exposures.

SC: Homebuyer seeking refund can't ask builder

**Vatika Times**  
NEW DELHI: Supreme Court has held that a homebuyer, who seeks refund due to delay in completion of a project, cannot claim that a developer also reimburse the amount paid as interest on home loan. The buyer is only entitled to the principal amount paid to a company and a 'compensation' in terms of the interest on the said amount as per the agreement, it said.



It set aside a consumer court order directing the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority to reimburse the interest paid by a homebuyer to a bank on home loan in addition to refunding the principal amount with 8% interest. SC: How buyer funds flat buy not developer's consideration A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and

Prasanna B Varale said there cannot be multiple heads to grant damages and interest over and above what is agreed upon between the homebuyer and the builder. Referring to various SC verdicts, the bench said there were no exceptional or strong reasons for directing GMADA to pay the interest on the loan taken by the homebuyer. The bench said, "Whether buyers of the flat do.

Top US general calls Pakistan 'phenomenal partner': Congress targets PM

**Vatika Times**  
NEW DELHI: The Congress on Wednesday stepped up its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought answers from him on the country's post-Pahalgam security and foreign policy challenges. The Congress also cited the remarks of a top US general who called Pakistan a "phenomenal partner" in the counter-terrorism world and asked PM Modi if this was



not a "diplomatic setback". The Congress offensive came a day after Prime Minister Modi met the 50 global envoys who were part of the seven multi-party delegations that visited 32 countries to expose

Pakistan's role in sponsoring cross-border terrorism. Tharoor-Led Delegation Member Reveals Truth On Pak Delegation, Colombia's Remarks On Op Sindoor "Now that the PM has himself met.

Meghalaya honeymoon murder: Sonam may be actual mastermind, Investigators

**Vatika Times**  
INDORE: Investigators in honeymoon murder case involving Sonam Raghuvanshi and her alleged lover Raj Kushwaha, are now suspecting that Sonam may have been the actual mastermind behind the entire plot and Raj was just used to commit the crime. Senior police officials closely monitoring interrogation of all accused said that Sonam appears to have manipulated each one of them, luring Raj through promises of love and possibly enticing others with financial gains. Contrary to earlier speculations that Raj was the main conspirator, sources now suggest he might have been used as a



pawn in a bigger plan. They suspect that Sonam was planning to elope with someone else and Raj, unaware of the larger game, ended up facilitating her escape. Senior police officials claimed that Raj made payments to cab driver who dropped Sonam in UP on June 6. Crime branch officials believe that Sonam had premeditated her hideout and had even arranged for a flat in Indore where she intended to stay for a few

days after executing the plan. She selected the location, made necessary payments, and kept her stay under wraps. Interestingly, no one apart from Sonam seems to know where this flat is. Even other accused are believed to have been kept in the dark about it. Officials now suspect that Sonam remained in Indore for most of the time while police teams and her family searched for her, with her kin

even staging protests against the Meghalaya government. When she realized that their plan was falling apart, she allegedly asked Raj to book her a cab and fled to Uttar Pradesh, where she was finally traced on June 8. Indore crime branch officials have confirmed that they currently do not have address of the flat where Sonam stayed during her disappearance. They, however, said that Meghalaya police plan to bring her back to Indore for evidence verification. "Meghalaya officials will bring the accused to Indore to collect evidence and Indore police will provide all logistical and technical help.

Techie-lover stabs mom of two to death in Bengaluru hotel

**Vatika Times**  
BENGALURU: A reunion of a 33-year-old married woman and her 25-year-old lover at a hotel in South Bengaluru's Poornaprajna Housing Society Layout recently ended in the murder. The youth stabbed the woman, mother of two children, 13 times after she revealed her decision to end the relationship. The accused, Yashas from Kengeri Satellite Town, informed police about the murder after stabbing himself. The deceased is Harini R, a resident of Hemmigeppura in Banashankari 6th Stage.

Yashas, a BCA graduate and employee of a private firm, attacked Harini with a knife while she was resting in the room at 9.30pm on June 6, police said.

Canada busts drug racket financing anti-India activities



**Vatika Times**  
NEW DELHI: Project Pelican, a major investigation conducted by Peel Regional Police, has busted a big narco-terror network based out of Canada and individuals suspected to be Khalistan sympathisers. While the operation led to the largest ever drug seizure there with 479 kg of cocaine valued at \$47.9 million, nine individuals including seven Indian-origin men settled in Canada have been arrested. The investigation has revealed that the network exploited commercial trucking routes from the US to Canada, with ties to Mexican cartels and US-based

distributors, the Peel police said. The proceeds from drug trafficking were being used to finance anti-India activities, including protests and referendums besides funding for weapons, sources said. Intelligence sources pointed towards an ISI-backed plan where Khalistani groups in Canada are being funded to traffic high value Mexican cocaine. The ISI has also been found pushing Afghan-grown heroin. The arrested men include Saigith Yogendrarajah, 31, of Toronto; Manpreet Singh, 44, of Brampton.





Editorial

Halal certification is turning into a scam. It’s creating a Muslim-only economy

Ritu Walia

Halal is the latest Islamic fad. The internet is buzzing with content on Halal living, Halal dating, and even Halal sex. Halal certification is a booming global industry created by New Islam. A religion that has so far been proudly political is becoming brazenly commercial too. And why not, when catchphrases like “Islam is the complete way of life”—making detailed prescriptions for politics, economy, and every imaginable aspect of life—go unchallenged?In an ongoing Supreme Court case, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that while nobody had any objection to Halal certification for meat, nowadays even cement, iron rods, and bottled water were being certified as Halal. Since such certification comes at a cost—charged by private agencies in the Halal certification business—even customers who have no interest in such labels are being made to pay higher prices for the commodities thus certified.Halal certification preys on the naïveté of the newly prosperous Muslim masses. The Indian economy has been steadily growing, and Muslims have shared in this prosperity as much as anyone else. But this upward mobility has to be matched by enhanced self-esteem and social respectability, which, for a Muslim, still comes through overt piety and demonstrative religiosity. The Halal industry sows such fervour and reaps a good harvest from it. In the process, not entirely unwittingly, it also fosters a narrow and rigid religious attitude among Muslims—one that leads, inevitably, to radicalisation.The growth of the Indian economy has placed unprecedented purchasing power in Muslim hands too. And though the Halal certification business is aimed at tapping into the vast and growing Muslim market, it is bound to have some insidious and unforeseen consequences.For one, it will result in economic separatism, creating a Muslim-only parallel economy. In effect, it will lead to the systemic economic boycott of other communities.Stray calls to boycott Muslim street vendors, which keep circulating on social media, are a red herring compared to the harm the Halal market is insinuating into the political economy. Its normalisation and mainstreaming will have far-reaching consequences for inter-community relations—even greater than what Muslim Personal Law or vote bank politics have had so far.If a non-Muslim were to buy and sell in the Halal market, he would have to comply with the terms prescribed by Sharia, as interpreted by the agents of Halal certification. In such a market, they would be second-class citizens. Dhimmis. We would have the economic version of an Islamic state. Having suffered from the Two-Nation Theory, are we now sleepwalking into a Two-Economy reality? The path is nearly charted as a parallel economy develops around Islamic banking, Halal stocks, Halal mutual funds, Halal investments, and Halal travels.This trend will eventually lead to demands for the Halal certification of India itself as a country fit for Muslims. Then for the Constitution as a document that doesn’t conflict with Sharia. And, as has already been happening informally, Halal certification for political parties—determining whether it is right for a Muslim to vote for some of them.One wonders, why should the religious lens be used to look at everything from iron rods and cement to electric wires and batteries? How will someone who looks at iron and cement through an Islamic filter see people of other religions? An outlook like this, even if genuinely Islamic, would have no place in the modern world.But as I will show in the latter part of this article, this isn’t even Islamic. It has no precedence in history or theological feet to stand on. It’s pop Islam—faux piety, driven by pseudo-Islamic power theology that seeks to paint the world in garish green. It divides the world



Deep State is the convenient bogeyman of modern politics. It’s entered India too

Suman Sharma

Circa 1900: Rudyard Kipling wrote Kim, placing the eponymous hero at the centre of the Great Game of espionage between the British Empire and Russia in the 19th century. The book is set after the Second Anglo-Afghan War, which ended in 1881, but before the Third, likely in the period 1893–98. Kim, short for Kimball O’Hara, is an impoverished Irish orphan who lives on the streets of Lahore and works for Mahbub Ali, a Pashtun horse trader. He later befriends an aged Tibetan lama, accompanies him on his journey along the Grand Trunk Road, learns about the Great Game, and is eventually recruited by Mahbub Ali, who works for the British Secret Service in their quest to extend influence in both Afghanistan and Tibet.Whether or not the Great Game—the expression used by British imperialists to describe the perceived expansion of Russian influence in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Tibet—actually existed, the fact remains that surveys were undertaken, expeditions mounted, spymasters recruited, and novels written, even as soldiers lost their lives. Taking a cue from Viceroy George Curzon, all pro-establishment papers—from the Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore to The Pioneer of Lucknow, The Statesman of Calcutta (now Kolkata), and The Times of India of Bombay (now Mumbai)—concurred that Tsarist Russia posed a real threat to the jewel in Britain’s crown. A hundred



and twenty years later, historians remain sceptical of Curzon’s assertions.Is the hue and cry about the Deep State similar to the Great Game? Whether or not it exists, whether it operates in all countries, and whether the ‘deep state’ of one country is connected with others through the dark web or entrenched corporate interests remains unclear, as the discourse is more ideological than empirical. Sometimes, those who claim to be part of the deep state ascribe to themselves a larger-than-life role in state affairs—for example, AS Dulat and Asad Durrani in their 2018 book The Spy Chronicles: RAW, ISI and the Illusion of Peace. Their claim to be arbiters of one of the most tense and difficult relationships in the region has been widely critiqued by reviewers.The term first gained wide currency in the context of Türkiye as derin devlet, which literally translates to “deep state” in English. In Türkiye, it refers to a non-elected military elite dominating elected governments, especially when they attempt to dismantle the secular foundations of the Republic, established by

Mustafa Kemal Pasha after the abolition of the caliphate in 1923. In Pakistan, “deep state” refers to a government controlled by powerful military leaders, as documented by Stephen Cohen in The Idea of Pakistan and Ishtiaq Ahmed in Pakistan: The Garrison State. Elected governments in Pakistan have rarely exercised real control over defense and foreign policy.In the US, Democrats and Republicans accuse each other of controlling the ‘deep state.’ Democrats claim the pro-Republican arms lobby and military-industrial complex constitute the deep state, while Republicans argue that Ivy League universities promote ‘wokeism’ and diversity, equity, and inclusion narratives that, according to Donald Trump, undermine America’s greatness. Trump has accused the deep state within the Democratic regime of election interference, citing the Freedom Medal awarded to George Soros as evidence. However, skeptics argue that if the deep state were so powerful, how could Daksh Patel dismantle it simply by firing ‘interns and associates’

whose tenure is co-terminus with that of President Biden? Ultimately, the deep state serves as a convenient scapegoat for anything that goes wrong or for political parties losing popular support.If Republicans and Democrats are battling it out in Washington, India faces a similar scenario, with Left liberals and Right nationalists accusing each other of leveraging the ‘deep state’ to gain or retain power. Publications like The Caravan and Organiser Weekly lead these respective narratives. Left liberals claim the RSS is India’s deep state, while Right nationalists accuse the Ford Foundation and George Soros’ Open Society Foundations of attempting to discredit the democratically elected Modi government. Left liberals find support in the speeches of Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, while Right nationalists, led by Vice President Dhankhar, minister Kiren Rijju, and BJP spokespersons like Sambit Patra, vehemently counter these claims.In a pre-budget article for The Indian Express, economist Surjit Bhalla, a former member of the PM’s Economic Advisory Council, alleged that India’s deep state comprises “major industrialists, senior IAS babus, and their friendly influencers in the media”, slowing down economic growth. This claim was firmly repudiated, point by point, by Vivek Kaul in Newsland, who questioned the logic behind such allegations.

Kaul argued that neither the IAS, corporates, nor the

media benefit from economic deceleration. Instead, he pointed out that the real cause of economic slowdown is the compulsion of all political parties—BJP, Congress, and AAP—to allocate budgetary resources to freebies rather than long-term investments in social and physical infrastructure, which are crucial for sustained economic growth.Journalist Josy Joseph, in his book The Silent Coup: A History of India’s Deep State, argues that the deep state is actually led by the IPS. He claims that in the name of combating terrorism in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northeast, as well as ‘Left-wing extremism’ (LWE) in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh, the triumvirate of the NIA, CBI, and ED have consolidated unchecked power, with neither the legislature nor the judiciary exercising adequate oversight. He documents human rights violations of individuals caught in the crosshairs of state action.Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Steve Coll offers another perspective, alleging that India’s deep state mainly comprises serving and retired IFS officials. However, if the IAS, IPS, and IFS were truly dominant, why would they have allowed the creation of the Department of Military Affairs under the Chief of Defence Staff, effectively relegating the Defence Secretary (an IAS officer) to a largely ceremonial role? A completely contrarian view is presented by Sandhya Ravishankar, news editor.

Those who designed it also are confused

Vyom Sharma

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 on this issue because GST officials were themselves confused. “There is no new imposition of any tax in this regard and is merely a clarification as certain field units were demanding different tax rates on the same,” the official press release said. “Therefore, it is a clarification being recommended by the GST Council to settle the disputes arising out of interpretation.” Spare a thought for the poor customers if the tax officials themselves can’t wrap their heads around taxes on a single product. However, the complexity of the GST system when applied to food products is not a new thing. ThePrint has previously reported on how the GST rate on food can change based on

where you buy it, how you buy it, what its chemical composition is, and sometimes even what temperature it is at. Businessmen and the common man aren’t the only people ranting about GST. It is now so complicated that even those who designed GST and those who usually refrain from criticising the government also weighed in to lambast the system. Former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian — who held the post from 2014 to 2018 and was involved in the birth of GST as it was implemented — took to X following Sitharaman’s press conference to say: “This is a national tragedy, violating the spirit of the Good & Simple Tax the GST was meant to be.” “The folly is compounded because instead of at least moving in the direction of simplicity we are veering to greater complexity, difficulty of enforcement & just irrationality,” he added. His successor, KV Subramanian, was more circumspect, but equally scathing in his X post.

Tax cuts won’t fix low growth. Govt must look beyond fiscal policy

Radhika Singh

The Modi government’s main move in the Union Budget 2025 has been to cut personal income tax. As finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her speech, it is meant to boost demand in the economy. However, the government doesn’t expect a higher-than-usual increase in other non-debt receipts and has budgeted a decline in the deficit. 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.

Why Syrians Are Between A Rock And A Hard Place

Abhishek

The replacement of the much-reviled Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria by a so-called “rebel force” that is actually just an Islamist offshoot of al-Qaeda and ISIS—which, remember, was headquartered in the Syrian city of Raqqa from 2014 to 2017—once again underlines how the turbulent history of that region is painted in countless shades of grey. As if the ongoing war between Israel and the equally Islamist Hamas left you in any doubt about that, of course. The Assads had ruled Syria with a mix of fear and murderous brutality for over 50 years. But that family, their Ba’ath Party and that general cohort were

not religious fanatics. In fact, they professed the sort of secular socialism which evolved into the crony socialism-cum-authoritarianism seen in many countries ruled by similarly inclined people and parties. Even India and the Congress Party of the mid-1970s were not unlike Syria during that same period. The difference, of course, is that the Emergency in India marked the apogee and also the end of authoritarianism. India never degenerated into a single-party rule—which appears to be the main cause of the rise of the Islamist factions all over West Asia today. Ironically, authoritarian secularism (and in Syria’s case, also minority rule by the Shia

Alawite tribe of the Assads) has led to the ascent of doctrinaire Sunni Islam and power being captured by its adherents. As the news channels broke the news of the fall of Assad’s government in Syria, I saw London’s Oxford Street become an impromptu victory procession of cars with young men honking, shouting and hanging out of windows brandishing their homeland’s distinctive opposition flag. It continued for well over an hour without any of London’s uniformed finest visible. Maybe the Metropolitan Police were just relieved it was not yet another fraught pro-Gaza demonstration. But having lived in Syria during the regime

of this just-ousted socialist dictator’s father, I had mixed feelings. How would those fashionably puffer-jacket-clad Syrians cheering in London fare under the country’s new rulers whose roots are in the Salafijihadist school although they profess to have “moved” to a more accommodating position? Do Syrians not know what’s happening in Afghanistan, whose Taliban rulers mouthed similar lines and then recanted? When my father was India’s ambassador to Syria, the then President Hafez al-Assad ordered the Hama massacre in 1982, triggered by a long-brewing uprising in that city 200km north of Damascus by the Muslim.



Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Company Limited has partnered with Policybazaarto offer SUD Life NIFTY Alpha 50 Index Pension Fund.

**Vatika Times**  
**GURUGRAM:** Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. Ltd. (SUD Life) has partnered with Policybazaar to offer SUD Life NIFTY Alpha 50 Index Pension Fund, a new, high-potential equity fund designed for its ULIP Pension product, SUD Life Pension Plus. This innovative fund is set to empower customers by offering a strategic avenue for long-term wealth creation, aiming to deliver superior returns that can significantly bolster their retirement savings and help build a more resilient financial future. SUD Life NIFTY Alpha 50 Index Pension Fund brings a focused approach to long-term wealth creation by investing in 50 high-performing stocks selected from the Top 300 companies. The fund strategically diversifies across a spectrum of vital and high-growth sectors,



including Financial Services, Consumer Goods, Capital Goods & Infrastructure, Healthcare, Technology, Oil, Metals & Mining, Automobiles & Ancillaries, and Construction & Realty. To stay aligned with dynamic market opportunities, the portfolio undergoes a strategic refresh every quarter, ensuring consistent relevance and optimal performance. SUD Life's Fund tracks the benchmark "NIFTY Alpha 50 Index" which boasts a proven track record, having demonstrated strong performance over its 12-year market

presence. Notably, a benchmark has achieved a 5-year CAGR return of ~ 33.29% (as on 30/04/2025) showcasing its ability to generate substantial value. By combining strategic sector allocation with rigorous stock selection, SUD Life's fund offers investors a powerful channel to build a robust retirement corpus while actively participating in India's market growth story. Commenting on the launch, Abhay Tewari, MD & CEO of Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Company Limited, said "With the SUD Life NIFTY Alpha 50 Index Pension Fund.

Youth Take Pledge to Eradicate Superstition and Blind Faith

**Jasbir Singh Duggal**  
**Kurukshetra:** At the ongoing Provincial Arya Veer Dal camp in Gurukul, the sacred Yajnopaveet Sanskar (sacred thread ceremony) was performed today for all Arya Veers. Under the guidance of Acharya Dayashankar Shastri, the young participants donned the sacred thread amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras. Acharya Shastri explained that the three strands of the Yajnopaveet thread serve as a reminder of the debts we owe — to the deities, to the sages, and to our parents. He said the first is the debt to parents (gurus), and the third is the debt to sages (rishis). To repay these debts, one must perform noble deeds. In Vedic culture, the Yajnopaveet ceremony holds great significance. He cited the example of Veer Shivaji, who during the Mughal era, went to great lengths and spent nearly 9 lakh rupees to earn the right to wear the sacred thread. Following the ceremony, all the young Arya Veers took a solemn



pledge to eliminate superstition, blind faith, and social evils. In a powerful symbolic gesture, the youths removed black threads from their wrists and necks, as well as charms and amulets, to send a strong message against superstition. Present on this occasion were Bhajanopadeshak Mahashay Jaipal Arya, Training Head Sanjeev Arya, Maniram Arya, Senior Yoga Teacher Suryadev Arya, Physical Training Instructor Sandeep Vaidik, and other trainers. Addressing the gathering, Jaipal Arya said that virtues and vices exist in

everyone, but those who strive to eliminate their flaws and cultivate virtues are the ones who contribute to the welfare of society and reach the pinnacle of success in life. He emphasized that we should bring sweetness in our conduct and treat others the way we wish to be treated. He encouraged the youth not to get disheartened by minor setbacks or failures, but instead to make the most of every moment and stay focused on their goals — success will surely follow. It is noteworthy that this provincial Arya Veer Dal camp, being held under the inspiration.

Partnership between Noida Airport and Uber to provide on-site ridesharing

**Delhi :** In order to provide visitors with transportation options right from the airport, Noida International Airport (NIA) has partnered with the ride-hailing company Uber. According to NIA, as part of the strategic partnership, Uber will run designated areas for driver partners to be picked up, as well as provide on-site assistance and special parking. According to the airport operator, the partnership will provide several benefits to customers using Uber at Noida International Airport, including the ability to follow their rides in real-time and get projected arrival times through the app, as well as the opportunity to pay without using cash, which is more convenient. Speaking about the importance of app-based taxi services like Uber, Christoph Schnellmann, CEO of Noida International Airport, stated that it is crucial for travelers to have access to last-mile transit alternatives. that are convenient, dependable, and safe. A variety of connectivity alternatives, including app-based taxis, will be available at the airport to meet the needs of all travelers, according to NIA. An easy booking experience through the Uber app, backed by dedicated on-ground support, and smooth and comfortable last-mile connectivity are the goals of our partnership, according to Arnab Kumar, Director, Business Development, Uber India and South Asia.

Grand Nagar Kirtan Organized on the Occasion of Prakash Purab of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji Echoed with "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal"

**Jasbir Singh Duggal**  
**Kurukshetra:** On the occasion of the Prakash Purab (birth anniversary) of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji Maharaj, revered as the master of Miri-Piri, a grand Nagar Kirtan was organized starting from the historic Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Chhevin in Kurukshetra. Under the divine presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj and the leadership of the Panj Pyare, the Nagar Kirtan resounded with the spiritual chants of "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal"



and melodious Shabad Kirtan. A massive gathering of devotees bowed their heads in devotion and participated enthusiastically

in the service. Before the Nagar Kirtan commenced, prayers were offered at the feet of the Guru. Among those present were

President of Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC) Jathedar Jagdish Singh Jhinda, Executive

Committee member Kuldeep Singh Multani, members Inderjit Singh, Harmanpreet Singh, Baldev Singh Habri, Gurnam Singh Laddi, Bhupinder Singh Laddi, Bibi Kartar Kaur, Bibi Jasbir Kaur Masana, former Vice President Bibi Ravinder Kaur Azrana, former spokesperson Kawaljeet Singh Azrana, former members Beant Singh and Sukhjinder Singh Masana, Preaching Secretary Sarbjit Singh Jammu, along with Satpal Singh Dacher, Rajpal Singh Dunia Majra, Narender

Singh, Amarinder Singh, Roopinder Singh, Shamsheer Singh, Jas Singh (Head of Gurdwara Inspection Wing), and Manager Harmeet Singh. A large number of devotees marked their attendance at Sri Darbar Sahib. Addressing the congregation, President Jagdish Singh Jhinda urged everyone to unite and serve the Guru's house with dedication. He stressed on connecting children with Nitnem (daily prayers) and teaching them

about the historical significance of Sikh festivals. He also emphasized taking children to visit historical Sikh places and educating them about the importance of the Dastaar (turban) and Gurbani. Following the Ardas (prayer) by Bhai Gurdas Singh, the Nagar Kirtan began with Shabad Kirtan and chants of "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal". Devotees bowed before the beautifully decorated palki sahib carrying Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj, showered

with flowers. As the Nagar Kirtan moved forward under the canopy of the Guru and led by the Panj Pyare, massive crowds gathered for reverence. Sangat from Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and various districts of Haryana took part with full devotion. The local community of Kurukshetra also enthusiastically joined the Nagar Kirtan along with their families, offering refreshments.

Sewa Trust UK (India) Launches "Say No to Polythene, Save the Environment" Campaign

**Jasbir Singh Duggal**  
**Barara:** Sewa Trust UK (India) launched its "Say No to Polythene, Save the Environment" campaign under the Green India, Green Earth initiative at Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Barara. The event was conducted under the guidance of Pooja Agrawal, National Coordinator of the I Hate Polythene movement. Pooja Agrawal emphasized that nature has gifted us all the resources and amenities necessary for a happy life, and that we have received countless invaluable gifts from nature free of cost. Hence, it is our duty to stop using polythene to keep the environment clean



and safe. She urged everyone to unite in this mission, stating that only through collective efforts can we completely eliminate the use of polythene. Pawan Parashar, President of Sewa Trust UK (Haryana), and member Baljinder Kumar administered an oath to all women present, pledging not to use polythene. The trust also announced its resolve to conduct this campaign across ten districts of Haryana to spread

awareness about environmental protection and inspire society to contribute toward conserving nature. As part of the program, the trust distributed Dabur Real Juice as a gift to all participating women, sponsored by Dabur India Ltd, the campaign's co-sponsor. Prominent attendees at the event included Karan Singh, Jitendra Kumar, Madan Dhiman, volunteers Lakshya Dhiman, Harshita Sharma, and other dignitaries.

Under PM Narender Modi's Leadership, India Rose from 10th to 4th Largest and Fastest-Growing Economy: Education Minister Mahipal Dhanda

**Jasbir Singh Duggal**  
**Kurukshetra:** Haryana Education Minister Mahipal Dhanda stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has progressed from being the 10th to the 4th largest and fastest-growing economy in the world over the past 11 years. He added that in the financial year 2024-25, India recorded a historic export figure of \$825 billion in goods and services. Dhanda highlighted that the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has resulted in ₹1.61 lakh crore in investments, ₹14 lakh crore worth of production, ₹5.31 lakh crore in exports, and has generated 11.5 lakh new jobs. He also pointed out



that the ₹29.8 lakh crore Aatmanirbhar Bharat package introduced during COVID-19 provided significant support to MSMEs and businesses. Furthermore, the number of patents granted in India has seen a 17-fold increase, rising from 5,978 in 2014-15 to 1,03,057 in 2023-24. Minister Dhanda was addressing a press conference at the BJP district office on

Wednesday to mark the completion of 11 years of the central government's achievements in service, good governance, and welfare of the poor. After the media briefing, he also held a meeting with district-level BJP office-bearers. He emphasized that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, the government is committed

to transforming India into a developed nation by 2047. Former Haryana Minister Subhash Sudha also spoke on the occasion, stating that the achievements of both the central and state governments are being promoted effectively under the guidance of Minister Dhanda. He assured that every party worker would diligently fulfill their responsibilities and

help disseminate information about the government's policies and achievements to the public. District BJP President Tejender Singh Goldy welcomed the chief guest and other dignitaries and emphasized that the government's welfare initiatives and developmental work will be communicated to every household in the district. He affirmed that each worker would dutifully carry out their assigned tasks. Present on the occasion were former minister Subhash Sudha, district president Tejender Singh Goldy, Zila Parishad Chairperson Kanwaljeet Kaur, Chairman Dharmveer Mizarpur, Dharmbir Daggar and several other officials.



## Yogi govt transforms Dalits' lives through a slew of initiatives, ensuring their dignity

**L u c k n o w** Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh's double-engine government has taken several commendable steps for the upliftment of Dalits and the underprivileged. These efforts are not only inspiring, but are laying the foundation for a new era of social transformation. As part of this commitment, the Yogi government is setting up leather parks in two districts named after Sant Ravidas, which will generate employment for communities associated with the leather industry. Under the Sant Kabir Das CM Mitra Park Yojana, 10 textile parks are also planned. Additionally, canteens and rest houses will be built in all krishi mandis in the name of Mata Shabari. In line with the vision of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, the Yogi government has undertaken several initiatives focused on education, economic empowerment, and social dignity to integrate the Dalit community into the mainstream. In March this year, CM Yogi inaugurated a sat-sang bhawan constructed at a cost of ₹1.15 crore by the state government at the Ravidas Temple in Ayodhya. Sant Ravidas' campaign to free India from invaders, uphold Sanatan values and ideals, and build a self-reliant and awakened society remains an inspiration today. Similarly, the construction of the Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Memorial and Cultural Centre in Lucknow is becoming a source of pride for the Dalit community. CM Yogi also announced that the "Zero Poverty Programme" would be named after Babasaheb—a historic step in this direction. The Yogi government has made education the most powerful weapon for Dalit empowerment. The Sant Ravidas Shiksha Sahayata Yojana provides financial assistance to children of laborers through scholarships to ensure uninterrupted education. Atal Residential Schools have been established at all 18 divisional headquarters to provide free residential education for underprivileged children. Narayan Vidyalayas, meritorious poor students are receiving quality education, with 60% of seats reserved for Scheduled Caste/Tribe students.

## Govt drafts comprehensive action plan to strengthen Uttar Pradesh

**Lucknow** Under the guidance of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a comprehensive plan has been prepared to expand and strengthen Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) in order to bolster pollution control and environmental protection across the state. The proposal is currently under review at the administrative level and, once approved, is expected to bring transformative changes in environmental governance in the state. To further strengthen UPPCB's financial base, the fee structure for applications will be revised, and a tech-enabled portal will be launched to simplify and bring greater transparency to its operations. It is worth mentioning here that in light of Uttar Pradesh's rapid industrialisation and urbanisation under CM Yogi's leadership, pollution levels have also gone up in the state. To address the issue, a plan has been drafted to make UPPCB more effective by expanding its presence across the state. As per the proposal, regional offices of the Board will be established in all divisional headquarters and key industrial districts, while district-level offices will be opened in the remaining districts. This decentralisation aims to ensure better local monitoring and management of pollution. Additionally, dedicated cells will be set up to manage different types of waste—solid waste, liquid waste (STP and CETP), hazardous waste, e-waste, and bio-medical waste—making waste management more structured and efficient. To encourage environmental research and development, a dedicated cell will be created within UPPCB to work on innovative technologies and solutions for pollution control. A separate cell will also focus on environmental awareness and public outreach. Furthermore, a proposal to amend the fee structure of applications is also included to strengthen the financial resources

of UPPCB. The proposal recommends an increase in the existing fee structure—last revised in 2008—based on capital investment and pollution load. The new structure proposes a reduction in classification from 12 to 7 categories, simplifying the process and ensuring better transparency. A modern portal equipped with IT and AI capabilities is also part of the plan to make UPPCB's functioning more efficient and transparent. Industrial units will be able to upload their compliance reports directly through the portal. Automated e-alerts will notify them of consent renewals and report submission deadlines. Post-inspection reports will be uploaded instantly, and AI will be used to cross-verify compliance reports. The initiative marks a major step towards transforming environmental management in Uttar Pradesh. Once approved and implemented, it will significantly improve environmental protection, promote industrial compliance.



## Despite US student visa interview freeze, these 5 countries offer easier processes

**Delhi:** Student visa applicants have been hampered by US embassies canceling interviews due to the Trump administration's social media profile screening process. Some countries simplify student visas. Five countries offer faster visa approvals and post-graduation jobs to international students: Germany is a popular destination for overseas students since its public universities forgo tuition. Student visas are also simplified. Applicants must show they can afford €11,904 per academic year to support themselves. Visas are easy to get after a German institution's admission letter. Students must show admittance, health insurance, and finances. Germany permits students to work part-time and gives them 18 months to find work after graduation. Indian students must apply for a "D Study visa" to study in Ireland. This visa is for students studying in Ireland for longer than 90 days. The process comprises applying online through AVATS, providing papers, paying the visa fee, and maybe biometrics. Most Irish applications are handled in four to eight weeks. Part-time work is allowed, and post-graduates have two years to find work. France has a surprisingly easy non-EU student visa process.

## The need to shape an economically viable and sustainable rice cultivation system

**Panipat :** The Bayer ForwardFarm in India will demonstrate innovative farming techniques tailored to the needs of 150+ million small-holder farmers in the country, with a particular focus on sustainable rice cultivation, thus promoting the transition towards regenerative agriculture. Natasha Santos, Head of Sustainability & Strategic Engagements at Bayer, stated, "Creating value for farmers is at the heart of what we do. We are excited to bring Bayer ForwardFarming to India, a country that is pivotal to global food security. By supporting and empowering local farmers, we aim to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability, increasing food



security for all." **Direct Seeded Rice: A Comprehensive Approach to Regenerative Agriculture** For Bayer, regenerative agriculture is an outcome-based crop production model with improving soil health at its core. Strengthening resilience

is a key objective, alongside mitigating climate change, maintaining or restoring biodiversity, conserving water, and increasing yields. Ultimately, the combination of regenerative practices aims to improve the economic and social well-being of farmers and their

communities. The potential of regenerative agriculture in India is particularly high in rice cultivation given its role as the world's second largest producer of rice.

The need to shape an economically viable and sustainable rice cultivation system has never been more pressing. Rice production is not only impacted by climate change but also contributes to it. Bayer's Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) system is the most comprehensive and tangible example of regenerative agriculture in action. DSR touches on almost every outcome of regenerative agriculture that Bayer is focusing on, including improving soil health, reducing water usage.

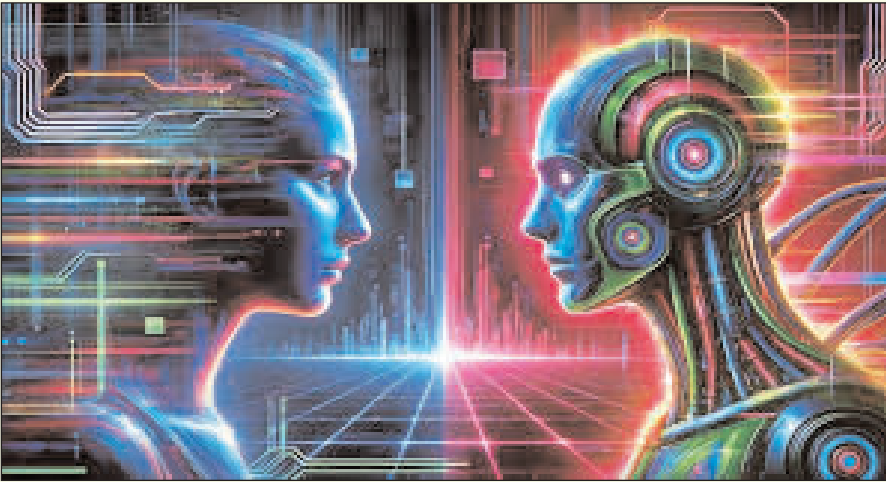
## CM Yogi hails renaming of Port Blair to Shri Vijaya Puram as a historic milestone

**Lucknow** The central government made a significant decision on Friday, renaming Port Blair, the capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to Shri Vijaya Puram. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath hailed this move as 'historic,' stating that it resonates with the sentiments of 140 crore Indians. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), CM Yogi wrote, "Renaming Port Blair as 'Shri Vijaya Puram' under

the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi aligns with the sentiments of 140 crore Indians. This historic step, advancing the Prime Minister's vision of freeing the country from all remnants of colonial rule, is a unified tribute from the entire nation to the martyrs and freedom fighters of India's independence movement." He further added, "The name 'Shri Vijaya Puram',

symbolizing the Andaman and Nicobar Islands' pivotal role in the freedom struggle, reconnects us with the sacred memories of India's glorious past and the sacrifices of legendary figures like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and 'Swatantryaveer' Veer Savarkar. Heartfelt gratitude to the Prime Minister for this decision during Amrit Kaal, and congratulations to the people of India."

## HDFC Bank Signs MoU with Indian Coast Guard

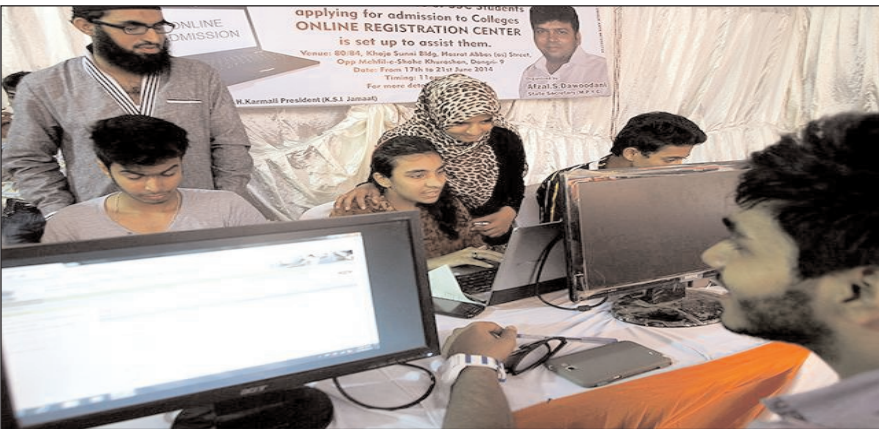


**Delhi:** Officials at India's premier tech university, IIT Delhi, have issued a set of rules for the responsible application of artificial intelligence (AI), Delhi reports. The goal is to ensure that researchers can utilize the technology for their intended purposes without fear of unforeseen repercussions. The rules are based on the suggestions of a panel that looked at data from an

internal poll that showed that 77% of teachers and 80% of students have been utilizing AI tools. Thanks to their capacity to produce information that is contextually fitting in many cases, GenAI technologies are becoming increasingly popular in academic areas, where they are welcomed by both students and staff. "Educators and administrators are rethinking how they reshape

classroom teaching, design assignments, and exams, and determine more effective methods of assessment," said Rangan Banerjee, director of IIT Delhi, in response to the tools' widespread adoption. There are legitimate worries, but there are also potential advantages, like a more tailored learning experience and immediate, individual feedback, to these technologies.

## After the First Round, Minority Colleges Can Refuse to Accept Any Remaining Quota Seats



**Delhi :** An important development for the Maharashtra FYJC Admissions 2025 is that minority junior colleges can now willingly relinquish their empty reserved seats right after the first round of admissions. Until the third admission round was finished, these seats could only be forfeited. Junior colleges in several regions, including Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur,

now have more leeway to handle seat distribution efficiently thanks to this new regulation. Extra leeway is provided by the announced alterations. Registration for the Maharashtra FYJC Admissions 2025 can now be done online till 2 PM on June 5, 2025, at 11thadmission.org.in, rather than on June 3, 2025, as was originally scheduled. This extension is to

allow for the smooth implementation of these new standards. This add-on lets parents and students modify their in-house quota choices and lets junior colleges update information about linked schools, junior colleges in various divisions, enabling them to manage seat distribution more efficiently, including Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur.

## As hundreds of Chinese items lose tax exclusions

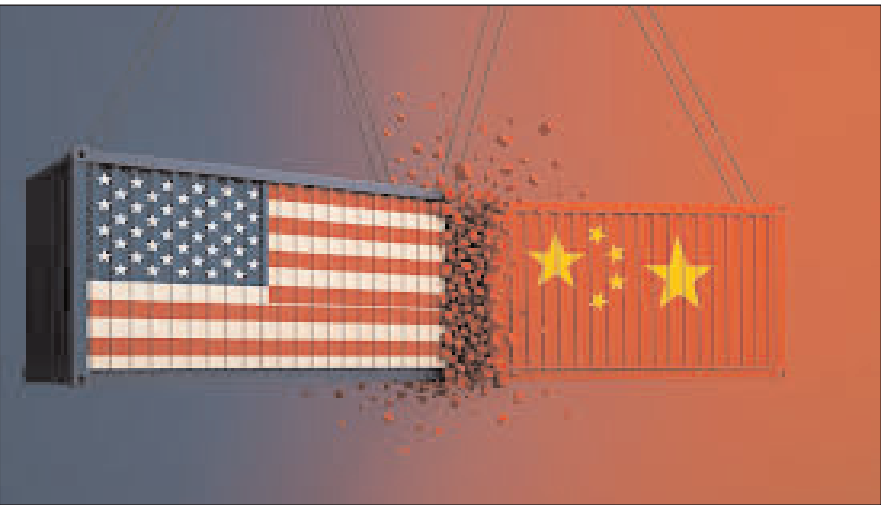
**Delhi:** Recently, the US has banned, restricted, or imposed high taxes on hundreds of Chinese imports to stimulate domestic production and reduce dependence on Chinese commodities. The USTR has already added tariffs to half of 429 items. The USTR excluded further duties from the "Section 301" probe of China's technology transfer, intellectual property, and innovation measures in previous announcements. The current 429 product-specific exclusions (352 reinstated and 77 COVID-related) expire on May 31, 2024. The US trade agency declared a 14-day transition period for all current exclusions until June 14, 2024, and to "extend certain exclusions through May 31, 2025" in a new notice. "To allow for a transition period, the US Trade Representative is extending all currently expiring exclusions through June 14, 2024,"

it stated. Chinese motors and medical equipment are excluded until May 2025. The USTR ruled that "extending these exclusions will support efforts to shift sourcing out of China, or provide additional time where, despite efforts to source products from alternative sources, availability of the product outside of China remains limited". Last March, the USTR reinstated some "Section 301" tariff exceptions for Chinese goods. Former President Donald Trump began a trade war with China and imposed tariffs on nearly \$300 billion in Chinese goods, invoking Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. Trump granted product tariff exclusions for select businesses to help them. Last week, US President Joe Biden quadrupled tariffs on Chinese electric cars (EVs) and raised duties on solar cells, semiconductors, and other





## The US-China trade battle escalates



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## The proposal to remove the 12 per cent tax slab has been supported by state



**Delhi:** The officials and experts advising the Group of Ministers (GoM) over rate rationalisation have reached a "near consensus" that the current 12 per cent tax slab does not hold much relevance now and the items falling under this could be shifted to either 5 per cent or 18 per cent slab. This could be the most plausible way to undertake a revenue neutral tax rate rationalisation exercise. However, the GST Council has to take a final call," the report quoted a person aware of the development. The proposal to remove the 12 per cent tax slab has been supported by most Union and state government officials, experts and GoM representatives, it said. Under the 12 per cent tax slabs goods such as such as condensed milk, caviar and caviar substitutes prepared from fish eggs, drinking water packed in 20 litre bottles, walkie talkies, tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles, contact lenses, cheese, dates and dried fruits, frozen

vegetables, sausages and similar meat products, pasta, jams and jellies, fruit juice-based drinks, namkeens including bhujiya, curry paste, mayonnaise, tooth powder, feeding bottles, carpets, umbrellas, caps, bicycles, specific household utensils, furniture made of cane or wood, pencils and crayons, handbags and shopping bags made of jute or cotton, footwear priced lower than ₹1,000, diagnostic kits, and marble and granite blocks are currently included.



## Ped Lagao, Ped Bachao Jan Abhiyan-2024: Rural Development Dept leads with 13.54 crore saplings planted

**Lucknow**  
As Uttar Pradesh set a record by planting over 36.51 crore saplings in a single day as part of its Ped Lagao, Ped Bachao Jan Abhiyan-2024, the Rural Development Department made the largest contribution to this effort, planting 13.54 crore saplings. Sonbhadra topped among the districts with 1 crore 53 lakh saplings planted. The Sheesham tree was the most planted species, with more than 4 crore 33 lakh 38 thousand saplings planted across Uttar Pradesh. Out of more than 36.51 crore saplings planted, the highest number were Sheesham trees, with 4 crore 33 lakh 38 thousand 723 saplings. Additionally, 4 crore 33 lakh 7 thousand 858 teak saplings, 2 crore 19 lakh 10 thousand 650 Jamun saplings, 1 crore 67 lakh 73 thousand 913 Arjun saplings, and 95 lakh 32 thousand 275 Amla saplings were planted. The Sonbhadra district saw the highest number of saplings planted, with 1 crore 53 lakh saplings. Other districts also contributed significantly: 97 lakh saplings were planted in Jhansi, 95 lakh in Lakhimpur Kheri, 94 lakh in Jalaun, and more than 93 lakh saplings in Mirzapur, all within a single day. The Rural Development Department led the way, planting 13 crore 54 lakh saplings, the highest among all departments. The Forest, Wildlife Department made a significant contribution by planting 12.64 crore saplings, enhancing the greenery of Uttar Pradesh.

## An LG secretariat official said the webpage was designed to streamline, simplify, and standardize the capital's licensing process

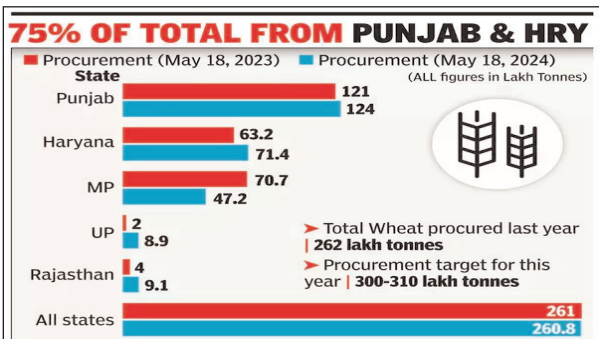
**Delhi:** LG Saxena's unified public entertainment licensing platform, launched earlier this month, has made business easier and helped turn Delhi into a dynamic city, restaurateurs claimed. Restaurant operators may now schedule gigs without worrying about getting a license at the last minute with a long-term license. Before launching the service, they had to file a police license form before hosting singer, band, percussionist, or stand-up shows. Permissions were slow, so you couldn't book good artists or host last-minute shows. This link lets you apply for a longer license online. Sandeep Goyle, National Restaurant Association of India Delhi chapter head, said this will help many businesses. The manager of a popular restaurant stated even a casual gig required a license and much documentation before submission. "Permission could take two weeks to a month. It could also be refused. This nearly ended live music and performance in restaurants,

which mostly used DJs or recorded music," said. An LG secretariat official said the webpage was designed to streamline, simplify, and standardize the capital's licensing process for amusement parks, auditoriums, and video game parlours. According to the source, the licensing unit of Delhi Police, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and National Informatics Centre created the transformational portal to improve licensing operations across Delhi. The paperwork and documentation

requirements are much reduced, streamlining the application procedure. The site streamlines application processing and cooperation by combining municipal organizations, Delhi Fire Service, and Delhi Police onto a single platform." The application can be filled out online from anywhere and sent to all agencies simultaneously for quick processing. This allowed public performers, poets, and comedians to perform without having their scripts approved by police before the capital event.

## Fully procured wheat by centre exceeds last year's mark

**Delhi:** This Rabi selling season, the Food Ministry announced that the Central government had purchased 262.48 lakh metric tonnes of wheat in various states, beating previous year's 262.02 lakh. The Rabi marketing season 2024-25 MSP outflow was Rs. 59,715 crores, benefiting 22.31 lakh farmers. Five states dominated procurement. Punjab procured 124.26 lakh metric tons (LMT), followed by Haryana with 71.49 LMT and Madhya Pradesh with 47.78 LMT. Rajasthan and



Uttar Pradesh followed with 9.66 and 9.07 LMT. According to the Ministry, 728.42 LMT paddy equivalent to 489.15 LMT of rice has been acquired directly from 98.26 lakh farmers during the Kharif marketing scheme 2023-24, with a total MSP outflow of Rs. 1,60,472 crores. The Food Ministry said the Central Pool's wheat and rice stock had topped 600 LMT, allowing the country to meet its food grain needs under PMGKAY, other welfare initiatives, and market interventions.

## Graduates of state universities are unable to secure employment due

**Delhi :** Using the success stories of Punjab and Karnataka, the NITI Aayog suggests that state public universities work with international language organizations to provide programs for English and foreign language proficiency. The employability of the students who graduate from these institutions is greatly impacted by their "inadequate" skill in the English language. State public universities are essential to reaching the NEP 2020 objectives; they educate more than 80% of all college-aged students and were the focus of a new report from the National Institution of Transforming India Aayog, "Expanding Quality Higher Education Through States and State Public Universities," which was published. Local businesses in a lot of states rely heavily on outside expertise and materials. One factor contributing to this trend, according to the poll, is the low English proficiency among local kids. This shows that state governments should make fixing this a top priority. According to it, if we want our students to remain in the state and help make it prosperous on a regional and national level, we need to help them become more employable. Working together with international language organizations to educate students English and other foreign

## Byju's loses \$533 million loan fraud case in US court

**Delhi: U.S. bankruptcy court** rules Riju Ravindran, Byju's parent business Think & Learn, and hedge fund Camshaft Capital guilty of \$533 million fraud and "breach of fiduciary duty." The beleaguered edtech business Byju's Alpha has been found to have engaged in several fraudulent financial transfers and conversions, according to a ruling issued by the Delaware Bankruptcy Court. Byju brother Riju Ravindran was found to have breached his fiduciary duty as director of Byju's Alpha, according to the court. The court's clear recognition that Riju Ravindran, Camshaft, and Byju's engaged in a worldwide fraud including the theft of \$533 million is something we are grateful for. In a statement, the



lenders hailed this as a major victory in their fight to reclaim the stolen assets that properly belong to them. Byju successfully obtained a \$1.2 billion five-year term loan from Glas Trust through the establishment of his Alpha special purpose financial organization. Having defaulted on its loans, Byju's Alpha was placed under trusteeship in March 2023. A group of 37 banks and other lending organizations gave Byju \$1.2 billion. Byju's Alpha's limited partnership interest in Camshaft Capital was transferred to William Morton's hedge fund, Camshaft Capital Fund. , with the proceeds of about \$533 million in term loans, according to the lenders.

## Yogi govt scripts history with more than 36.51 crore saplings planted in a single day in UP

**Lucknow**  
Uttar Pradesh created history on Saturday with a total of 36, 51, 45, 477 (over 36.50 crore) saplings planted across the state till 6 pm, surpassing the government's target by 1,45,477 saplings, on the occasion of the launch of a massive plantation drive by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. In alignment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative, the 'Ped Bachao, Ped Lagao Jan Abhiyan-2024' campaign was conducted on a large scale across the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath kicked off the plantation campaign on the banks of the Kukrail River in Lucknow. Additionally, the CM planted saplings in Prayagraj and Gorakhpur. Governor Anandiben Patel participated by planting saplings in Sitapur, while all state government ministers also contributed by planting saplings in various districts. Following the unexpected success of the 'Ped Lagao, Ped Bachao Mahabhiyan 2024,' Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath congratulated everyone on his official social media account 'X'. He wrote, "Today, in the 'New Uttar Pradesh' of 'New India,' the public welfare resolution of planting more than 36.50 crore saplings in a single day has been fulfilled. This record, expressing gratitude towards nature and Mother Earth, demonstrates the immense public engagement with the call. of respected Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji #Ek\_Ped\_Maa\_Ke\_Naam. Heartfelt congratulations and commendations to all the esteemed citizens,





## Education as a Mission: Govt transforms learning landscape in Uttar Pradesh

**Lucknow, May 11:** In Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi government has transformed education from a basic service into a mission of empowerment. From renovating schools under Project Alankar to establishing new universities and promoting digital learning, the state is preparing students for a future-ready India. The newly launched Rani Lakshmi Bai Scooty Scheme further strengthens this vision by enabling greater access to higher education for girls, promoting both mobility and empowerment. Operation Kayakalp This flagship campaign has transformed most government schools across the state, equipping them with toilets, drinking water, playgrounds, smart classes, and digital libraries. For 1.91 crore students, funds for two uniforms, sweaters, shoes, and school bags are being

transferred directly into parents' bank accounts each year. CM Composite Schools CM Yogi has announced the establishment of one Chief Minister Composite School in every assembly constituency. These institutions, to be built at a cost of Rs 25-30 crore each, will offer education from pre-primary to senior secondary in a single campus, featuring science and computer labs, stadiums, and multipurpose halls. These schools will follow the model of Atal Residential Schools, offering all facilities under one roof. Project Alankar Project Alankar aims to enhance infrastructure in 2,441 government secondary schools. Under this initiative, schools are being equipped with new classrooms, science labs, libraries, computer labs, smart classes, clean drinking water, and toilets to provide a conducive

and hygienic learning environment. PM SHRI scheme Over 1,500 schools are being modernised under the PM SHRI scheme, while about 6,500 others are undergoing reconstruction. A budget has been approved for 57 composite schools that will provide seamless education from pre-primary to class 12 on a single campus. Residential education facilities Kasturba Gandhi schools, previously limited to class 8, have been extended up to class 12. To bring children from remote tribal Vantangiya villages into the mainstream, 22 primary and 11 upper primary schools have been established. Atal Residential Schools are providing integrated campuses to deliver quality education. Higher education and technical training New universities have been established in Saharanpur.

**Lucknow/Muzaffarnagar** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, while addressing a large gathering at the Sant Samagam in Shukirtha, Muzaffarnagar, on Wednesday, said that saints have always guided society towards unity and harmony—a path that could have prevented incidents like Kairana and Kandhla. He described Sant Swami Gyan Bhikshuk Das Ji Maharaj as a divine soul who dedicated his life to spreading the teachings of Satguru Ravidas Ji Maharaj. The event was held on the occasion of the 65th death anniversary of Sant Swami Gyan Bhikshuk Das Ji Maharaj and in memory of Satguru Samandas Ji Maharaj. The CM recalled how, during the medieval period when India was under foreign rule and its culture was being trampled, Satguru Ravidas Ji Maharaj emerged in Sear Govardhan, Kashi, as a beacon of hope. "Through his life of devotion and work, he inspired generations,



and his guidance continues to enlighten devotees even today," the CM said. Yogi Adityanath said Sant Ravidas Ji awakened society against superstition and social evils and emphasized the dignity of labour and inner purity. His words—"Man changa to kathauti mein Ganga"—continue to inspire spiritual purity and moral clarity. His guru, Sant Ramanand, too, spread the message of equality: "Jaat-paat poochhe nahi koi, Hari ko bhaje so Hari ka hoi." Recalling Ravidas Ji's words on equality and dignity, the CM said, "He had said he would be happy only when every person gets equal rights and food without discrimination. PM Modi has fulfilled this vision through the Pradhan

Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, under which 81 crore people have received free food grains—even during the pandemic. This is the true spirit of saints' teachings," he said. The CM said that before 2014, roads to Sant Ravidas' birthplace Sear Govardhan were single-lane. Inspired by PM Modi, it is now connected via a four-lane road. A grand ashram, a magnificent statue, and an 'Anna Kshetra' have been built. Land was acquired for a park and statue in the name of Sant Ravidas. Describing Shukirtha as a sacred and mythological site, the CM said it was here, 5,000 years ago, that Shukdev Ji narrated the first Shrimad Bhagavat to King Parikshit. "This is the land of devotion,

## Saints' teachings can avert Kairana, Kandhla-like incidents: CM Yogi

## A survey on cybersecurity activities for curriculum design and education

**Delhi:** As our technological era progresses, cyber attacks have emerged as a major issue. Cybersecurity experts who can identify, stop, react to, or lessen the impact of cyberattacks are in great demand as a result of this problem. Nevertheless, there is a severe lack of trained cybersecurity experts around the globe. Many new cybersecurity education programs have emerged to meet this challenge; for example, computer science graduate programs. Now offer cybersecurity as a concentration. High schools, universities with computer science and information systems programs, and even some government agencies are offering cybersecurity courses in response to rising demand. Cybersecurity is so unique that it presents numerous challenges for schools when trying to develop cybersecurity curricula or programs. This article examines the current cybersecurity curriculum and the methods and exercises that are already in place. Case studies on cybersecurity education from different parts of the world are also included.

## Water bill waiver scheme to be launched by government

**Delhi :** The government is planning to launch a water bill waiver scheme shortly to address the increasing number of complaints about high water bills, according to PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh, who made the announcement. Multiple complaints have been received by the Delhi Jal Board over erroneous pricing, prompting this notice. In the near future, we intend to implement a bill waiver program that will handle all domestic bills and cut them by almost 90%. A reorganization of the billing system is in the works. At a news conference, Mr. Singh explained that the necessary software is now in development and that some technical challenges are being resolved. Additionally, the Minister has promised that all of the city's unapproved colonies.

## Yogi govt sets new benchmark for inclusive education through 'Sugamya Worksheets'

**Lucknow, :** The Yogi government in Uttar Pradesh is taking inclusive strides in education by reaching out to nearly 2.96 lakh children with special needs through 'Sugamya Worksheets', developed in collaboration with UNICEF. Designed to enhance foundational learning while building confidence and self-esteem, these worksheets reflect the government's commitment to turning education into a tool of empowerment. By recognising disability as a unique trait, and not a limitation—this compassionate and strategic initiative of the government aims to integrate Divyang children into the mainstream with the right

support and resources. Basic Education Minister Sandeep Singh affirmed that the government's priority is to ensure no child is left behind—regardless of social, economic, or physical circumstances. With 'Sugamya Worksheets', the state is ensuring equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities. This initiative is not just an innovation in education, but a strong step toward building an inclusive and empathetic society. The 'Sugamya Worksheets' cover Hindi and Mathematics for students from classes 1 to 8, with 1,300 worksheets developed for classes 1 to 5 and 600 for classes 6 to 8—totaling 1,900 worksheets. Designed for all

categories of children with disabilities except those with complete visual impairment, the worksheets use simple language, vibrant visuals, and engaging formats to make learning accessible and enjoyable. The printing of the worksheets has been completed, and their distribution to all districts has been ensured. At the block and school levels, worksheets are now being delivered. As per guidelines, they will be distributed in a phased manner, one set at a time. Only after students complete and teachers assess one set will the next set be provided. Teachers have been instructed to engage students in completing the worksheets through individual, pair, and

group activities. Before each set, it is mandatory to hold a brief discussion or activity with students to introduce the context. After evaluation, students will be allowed to take the worksheets home for further practice. Special educators will visit schools to ensure worksheet availability and help resolve difficulties faced by students. Their monthly reports will be reviewed by district coordinators, who will also provide feedback and guidance based on these reviews. Through this inclusive and structured initiative, the Yogi government is making sure that education becomes accessible, meaningful, and empowering for every child.

## The role of farm credit societies is being advocated

**Delhi :** Amit Shah, minister of home and cooperation in the Union, has argued that Primary Agricultural Credit Societies' (PACS) continued financial viability and social significance depend on their increased participation in the government's food-grain storage program. Shah ordered the food and public distribution ministry and the Food Corporation of India to do national-level warehouse mapping

in order to match infrastructure with regional demands during a review meeting of the world's largest cooperative foodgrain storage scheme. In his request, he pushed states to include more PACS in the program and asked FCI, NCCF, NAFED, and state warehousing organizations to connect PACS. With additional warehouses. According to Shah, a comprehensive

cooperative supply chain can be achieved through the integration of state-level marketing federations. To aid PACS financially, he emphasized extending the loan tenure of the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund. According to Shah, the plan is a huge step in the direction of the prime minister's goal of "sahkar se samridhi," which is to increase employment opportunities in rural.

## Govt charts new course for educational empowerment of Divyangjans

**Lucknow:** Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Uttar Pradesh government is redefining educational empowerment of Divyangjans. As part of this effort, 16 special schools with a capacity of 2,040 students are currently operational across the state, with 1,680 children enrolled. These institutions are helping Divyang children move toward self-reliance through education, while also fostering greater social inclusion and empowerment. As part of its initiative to operate special schools, the government is running 16 such institutions in the state with a total capacity of 2,040 students. Currently, 1,680 differently-abled children are enrolled in these schools and are steadily moving toward

self-reliance through education. This initiative not only empowers them, but also promotes inclusion in society. In accordance with the specific needs of children, schools have been set up for different categories of disability. 'Prayas Vidyalayas' cater to children with mobility challenges and operate at the high school level in Pratapgarh and Lucknow with a combined capacity of 100. For children with intellectual disabilities, 'Mamta Vidyalayas' are being run up to the junior high school level—one for boys in Prayagraj and one for girls in Lucknow—with a capacity of 100. For speech and hearing-impaired children, the government is running 'Sanket Vidyalayas' in Agra, Lucknow, Bareilly, Farrukhabad, and

Gorakhpur. While Agra offers high school education, the other locations provide junior high school level education. These schools collectively have a capacity of 790. 'Sparsht Vidyalayas' for visually impaired children are being run in Lucknow and Gorakhpur for both boys and girls, in Meerut and Banda for boys, and in Saharanpur for girls, with a combined capacity of 1,050 students. Each school is staffed with specially trained teachers and equipped with tailored resources to provide education suited to each child's unique needs and abilities. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath remains committed to integrating divyangjans into the mainstream. He believes that through focused education and empowerment.

## Delhi police app to accept complaints beyond theft and burglary

**Delhi :** Delhi Police will release a smartphone app that allows residents to report crimes from home with a few clicks to modernize and expedite the procedure. Development is underway on the app. Police said its user-friendly interface will allow individuals to download the app, complete a one-time registration, and register complaints from serious crimes to small street offenses without visiting a police station. They promised timely follow-up and action with the feedback mechanism and status alert system. Burglary, theft, and pickpocketing complaints are filed online. They prefer



the cops for other things. Aslam Khan, joint commissioner of police (vigilance), said the app simplified complaint registration and investigation to make it more efficient and transparent. Citizens will no longer have to attend police stations or follow up on complaints. "The innovative app will streamline justice delivery," he continued. Delhi Police's plan is a major step

toward using technology to improve public services and community involvement, insiders said. Many manual complaint registration and investigation processes will be automated by the app, benefiting residents and police. Deputy commissioner of police (vigilance) Anyesh Roy said inquiry officers can upload papers to the app for their superiors to review.

## In order to incorporate AI across all academic streams, the AICTE has formed an expert group

**Delhi:** The formation of an expert committee by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is a major development in the field of technical education in India. The committee's mandate is to help various academic programs, not limited to computer science degrees, incorporate AI and applied AI. Leading AI professionals from IITs and NITs are part of the committee, which is chaired by Anand Deshpande, managing director of Persistent Systems. The goal of the move is to encourage the lateral expansion of AI in several streams, including BBA, BCA, electrical engineering, and others. "We are forming a committee to introduce AI laterally across all programs, especially Applied AI," stated AICTE Chairman Prof. TG Sitharam. "The goal is to integrate AI and related courses into all academic programs so that students from all walks of life can learn the basics of AI and data analytics."

## A professor from IIT Delhi to head up IIM Lucknow

**Delhi:** The directorship of the Indian Institute of Management in Lucknow is anticipated to be assumed by a professor from the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi (IIT-D). (Department of IIM-L). The esteemed management school will likely be led by an IIT professor for the first time. Though the official announcement has not been made yet, it has been learned that the nomination of Prof. MP Gupta has been approved by the board of governors of IIM-L.





## UP CM Yogi introduces 'MYUVA Scheme' to empower youth entrepreneurs



**Delhi:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will launch the "Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan (MYUVA)" plan to encourage young entrepreneurship. This ambitious project shows the government's commitment to empowering young entrepreneurs and encouraging innovation and enterprise. Through MYUVA, enterprising youth will obtain support and tools to establish their entrepreneurial endeavors, boosting Uttar Pradesh's economy. CM Yogi has ordered MSME Department staff to speed up the initiative's action plan. The directive emphasizes the government's determination to quickly adopt MYUVA. Officials must submit the action plan quickly to promote entrepreneurship and youth development in Uttar Pradesh. The Yogi administration provides interest-free financing for projects up to Rs 5 lakh to prepare one lakh young entrepreneurs each year. The 2024-25 budget includes Rs 1,000 crore for this endeavor. This unique program empowers educated and skilled youngsters across the state to create self-employment and MSMEs. The initiative promotes entrepreneurship to create rural and urban jobs. The plan offers interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh to industry and service ventures. Finance 1,00,000 units annually to directly benefit one million units (10 lakh units) over 10 years. Participants in the Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana, One District One Product Training and Toolkit Scheme, Scheduled Caste, Tribe, Other Backward Class Training Scheme, and Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission Skill Upgradation (Kaushal Unnayan) will be eligible for assistance. This program also

## UEA Offers Indian Students UK Higher Education Scholarships

**Delhi:** The University of East Anglia (UEA), one of the UK's top 25 universities, has launched a variety of scholarships for Indian students. Graduate and undergraduate applicants for 2024-2025 can apply for these scholarships, which cover tuition, housing, and living expenses. Indian postgraduate students studying Economics, Humanities, Engineering, Chemistry, and Law are eligible for the £4,000 UEA India Award. Following

**Global Undergraduate Excellence award: This distinguished award offers UEA undergraduate programmes to outstanding overseas students**

UEA's entrance requirements immediately qualifies candidates. Undergraduate Scholarship: UEA India High-achieving Indian undergradu-

ates at UEA can get a £4,000 tuition price discount in their first year. Global Undergraduate Excellence award: This distinguished award offers UEA undergraduate programmes to outstanding overseas students. Valued at £4,000 each year, exceptional applicants may receive £10,000. Gita and Sonny Mehta India Scholarship: UEA's Department of Literature, Drama, and Creative Writing offers this scholarship to bril-

liant Indian writers. Applicants must submit a separate £28,500 application. David Sainsbury Full MSc Scholarship: This scholarship covers the tuition cost (£31,500), maintenance grant, and £4,000 travel fees for Global Plant Health applicants. Scholarships are individual and cannot be combined. The UEA website lists deadlines. Framework is part of Norwich Research Park, Europe's.

## Research Internships from UGC Give Students Stipends, Insurance, and Academic Credits

**Delhi:** Stipends, insurance, and academic credits are awarded to fourth-year undergraduates who complete research internships. Participating enterprises must pay interns a set amount, according to UGC norms provided to higher education institutions. Nodal officers for research internships will negotiate

with corporations for the program at higher education institutions. Higher education institutions may also seek group internships. The Four Year Undergraduate Programme's fourth year will include the research internship. Every student will have an internship supervisor to help them finish

their work on time. The UGC solicited stakeholder input on this guidelines draft. UGC chairperson M Jagdish Kumar said it implemented a credit framework at the undergraduate level following the National Education Policy 2020. He claimed the internship is mandatory to boost student employability.

Educational institutions will survey local market demand for research internships. Surveys and courses will inform internship projects. Educational institutions must publish internship projects and mentor information. Industry representatives should have been in career counseling, it said.

### Over 1,300 beggars got skills

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

## Within two months, Physics Wallah's 'Alakh AI' had 1.5 million users

**Delhi:** In less than two months, Physics Wallah's indigenously-built AI education package 'Alakh AI' has seen over 1.5 million users. It debuted the suite in late December 2023. Alakh AI offers AI Guru: Personalised Tutor, Sahayak: Smart Companion Powered by AI, and NCERT Pitara. At its flagship event, Vishwas Diwas, Physics Wallah launched innovative educational technolo-



gy projects. With the theme 'Padhai Ka Naya Andaaz (A New Era in Education)', the edtech platform featured innovations to make learning more personalized, effective, and engaging.

"'Padhai Ka Naya Andaaz' is more than a theme; it is our commitment to provide a learning experience that transcends traditional boundaries, making education more personalised,

effective, and engaging for every student," Physics Wallah CEO and Founder Alakh Pandey stated. This effort centers on Physics Wallah 2.0, a futuristic strategy that employs technology to improve student achievements. Physics Wallah has launched new technologies and offered up to 80% off most online courses. Its FY23 sales were Rs 798 crore, growing 3.4 times from the previous year.

## Yogi govt strengthens education through leadership development500 block education officers to receive residential training

### Lucknow

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has taken a significant initiative to strengthen the primary education system at the grassroots level. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a three-day residential training programme for Block Education Officers (BEOs) commenced on June 11 at Deendayal Upadhyay State Institute of Rural Development, Lucknow. The programme, sponsored by the State Project Office

of Samagra Shiksha, Uttar Pradesh, focuses on the integrated development of leadership qualities, innovation, and administrative efficiency. By placing leadership at the center of the education system, this strategy is guiding Uttar Pradesh towards becoming a model state for education governance. The training will not only enhance coordination within the department, but will also help schools create a better academic environment and accelerate

progress towards the goals of NIPUN Bharat. 500 officers to be trained in five phases. The training programme is divided into five phases, with 100 BEOs participating in each phase. The remaining officers are also scheduled to be trained soon. The training focuses on academic leadership, financial management, use of departmental portals, NIPUN Bharat Mission, ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education), Operation Kayakalp, and

management of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas. The first phase has already begun, and dates for the remaining batches have also been finalized. The second phase will be held from June 16 to 18, the third from June 19 to 21, the fourth from June 23 to 25, and the fifth from June 26 to 28. Training aims to transform thinking, not just provide information. The training is not limited to providing information about departmental scheme.

## MG Motor India introduces new Hector variants Shine Pro and Select Pro

**Delhi :** MG Motor India has announced the launch of two new variants of India's first Internet SUV – MG Hector. Named Shine Pro and Select Pro, the new variants pack many new features, intuitive technology, safety, and driving convenience. With a bold-striking exterior and interiors standardised with best-in-segment offerings and unique design elements, MG Hector now starts at an attractive price of INR 13.99\* Lakh (ex-showroom). With a host of best-in-class offerings like its dual-pane panoramic sunroof\*, MG Hector is a great value proposition for SUV enthusiasts who prefer to lean towards technology and top-notch performance in their vehicles. Both new vari-

ants, Shine Pro and Select Pro, offer a superior in-car infotainment experience with India's largest 14-inch HD portrait infotainment system, complete with Wireless Apple CarPlay & Android Auto and a Wireless Phone Charger. The new variants of the Hector feature LED Projector Headlamps, Floating Light Turn Indicators, LED Blade Connected Tail Lamps, and Chrome Outside Door Handles. With an All-Black theme in premium upholstery and leather-wrapped steering, along with a brushed metal finish (CVT 5-seater), both Shine Pro and Select Pro variants come with a Full Digital Cluster with a 17.78 cm Embedded LCD Screen. On the comfort and

convenience front, the Shine Pro and Select Pro offer a Push Button Engine Start/Stop with a Smart Key. The new variants also offer the first-in-segment Digital Bluetooth® Key and Key Sharing capability\*. "Since its launch in 2019, the MG Hector has made a bold statement with its commanding presence and has redefined the SUV landscape with a multitude of tech features and superior driving comfort. With ADAS Level 2 and Connected features. Each subsequent variant has set new benchmarks in the segment by offering a harmonious blend of comfort, advanced technology, and ergonomic design. Using insights from our market research, industry analysis.

## CM Yogi to felicitate UP's young champions of National School Games students

### Lucknow

In a landmark move to recognise young sporting talent, the Yogi government has launched the Mukhyamantri Khel Puraskar (2024-25). For the first time in Uttar Pradesh, students excelling in the National School Games will be formally honoured. On June 12, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will felicitate gold medalists at a state-level ceremony at Lok Bhavan, while silver and bronze medalists will be recognised at the district level. A total of 363 student-athletes from UP's council schools participated in the 68th

National School Games, winning 179 medals—including 51 gold, 46 silver, and 82 bronze—across more than 20 sports disciplines. A total of 363 student-athletes from UP's council schools participated in the 68th National School Games (2024-25) and won 179 medals—including 51 gold, 46 silver, and 82 bronze—across more than 20 disciplines, such as athletics, wrestling, taekwondo, judo, hockey, shooting, karate, boxing, volleyball, swimming, kabaddi, and handball.

The Chief Minister will present cash prizes, certificates, medals, and shields

to gold medal-winning students during the state-level ceremony. A total of 87 athletes (73 boys and 14 girls) who secured 51 gold medals will be honoured. Individual gold medalists will receive Rs 75,000 each, while team gold medalists will be awarded Rs 35,000 each. Simultaneously, district-level ceremonies will be held across all 75 districts of the state, where silver and bronze medalists will be felicitated by district magistrates, ministers in charge, MLAs, or other local representatives. A total of 94 players (63 boys and 31 girls) who

won 46 silver medals will be awarded Rs 50,000 each in the individual category and Rs 25,000 each for team events. Similarly, 182 players (111 boys and 71 girls) who secured 82 bronze medals will be honoured. Individual bronze medalists will receive Rs 30,000, while team event bronze medalists will be awarded Rs 15,000 each. This initiative reflects the government's commitment to nurturing a strong sports culture in Uttar Pradesh and motivating young athletes to consider sports as a viable and rewarding career path.

### Computerized EWS lottery determines school entrance.

**Delhi:** The Delhi High Court ruled that schools must follow the Directorate of Education (DoE)'s computerized draw of lots for economically weaker section (EWS) admissions. Justice C Hari Shankar noted that the computerized draw of lots is based on the class strength communicated by the schools, and if a school does not have enough general students, it must apply to the DoE to reduce the number of EWS students. A pupil seeking admission to a private school's pre-primary class after a successful DoE computerized draw of lots petitioned the court. The school denied admission to the petitioner because the actual number of general category admissions was less than what was communicated to the DoE, and it had already admitted 25% of the actual number under the EWS category per legal mandate. "Once a school communicates the number of general category and EWS seats available with it for being filled in an ensuing academic year.



## Yogi govt to accelerate establishment of 15 new MSME industrial hubs across 11 UP districts

**Lucknow:** The Yogi government is steadily transforming Uttar Pradesh into an “Udyam Pradesh” (Enterprise State), with a clear focus on achieving the \$1 trillion economy goal. While large-scale industrial clusters for defense and semiconductor manufacturing are underway, equal emphasis is being placed on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)—key drivers of grassroots entrepreneurship. In line with CM Yogi’s vision, the establishment of 15 MSME-focused industrial zones across 11 districts is being fast-tracked. The draft blueprint prepared by the MSME department outlines that a total of 764.31 acres will be developed for these industrial estates. Across these estates, 872 industrial plots will be available for investors to set up their enterprises. This will not only strengthen the MSME sector in the state but also play a vital role in achieving the one trillion-dollar economy target. The department’s roadmap includes a state-wide campaign to create a substantial land bank. As part of this, the process of making land available for the 15 MSME estates in the 11 districts is underway. Key land allocations include: • Aligarh (Gabhana): 116 acres • Etah (Jalesar): 6.8 acres • Firozabad (Tundla): 19 acres, Sirsaganj: 10 acres • Kanpur Dehat (Akbarpur-Kumbi): 59 acres, Duwari: 172 acres • Lalitpur (Bighakheth): 9.8 acres, Pulwara: 44 acres, Jharar: 8.6 acres •

Mahoba: 37 acres Similarly, land has been earmarked in: Prayagraj (Sadar): 8 acres Pratapgarh (Raniganj): 39.7 acres Mirzapur (Chunar): 35 acres Mau (Sadar): 84 acres Raebareilly (Sadar): 58 acres YEIDA’s Initiative to Promote the MSME Sector The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) is also working on a major plan to boost the MSME sector. YEIDA has reserved 500 acres of land for setting up MSME units in its upcoming development zones. Additionally, the Greater Noida-based Flatted Factory Complex, to be developed by YEIDA in Sector 28 of Gautam Buddha Nagar at a cost of Rs 125 crore, will offer state-of-the-art, multi-storey factory spaces. The construction process is expected to begin soon, with the master plan and other technical reports currently in progress. The complex will be spread over 38,665 square meters, and completed within 24 months.

## To achieve this mission, the Government is promoting generation of green power through solar

**Delhi** Hi-Tech Pipes Limited (NSE: HITECH, BSE: 543411), one of the leading Steel Pipes companies in India, has announced decarbonisation of its Manufacturing Facilities. Additional 5 MW Green Power through Roof Top Solar & Open Access and Generation & captive consumption of Green Hydrogen Gas. The Government of India has taken the mission for zero carbon emission by 2070 (30% to 35% by 2030). To achieve this mission, the Government is promoting generation of green power through solar & wind energy along with other environment friendly measures. The Government of India has also approved National Green Hydrogen Mission on 4th January, 2023. This Mission aims to make India a Global Hub for production, utilization and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives. Mission will help in India becoming energy independent and Decarbonisation of major sectors of the economy. In alignment with the government’s broader strategic climate goals for 2030 and 2070 set by honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi. , Hi-Tech Pipes has also taken the mission for decarbonisation of its manufacturing facilities by 2033 (60% by 2030).

## Servotech Power Systems Ltd. Reports Impressive Q1FY25

**Delhi:** Servotech Power Systems Ltd. (NSE: SERVOTECH), a prominent manufacturer of Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers, solar solutions, and power-backup solutions, revealed its impressive financial performance for the quarter ended June 30, at its Board of Directors meeting on 30th July. Commenting on the results, Raman Bhatia, Founder and Managing Director, Servotech Power Systems Ltd. said we got outstanding results in Q1FY25, but we are not satisfied and working for even better and are confident that we will achieve our goals in the coming quarters. We are committed to providing our customers with the best possible products and services and are constantly innovating and improving them. We are also expanding our sales and marketing efforts. We are excited about the future of our company. With the Safiabab plant set to become fully operational.

## Why Muslims oppose Vande Mataram

**Delhi:** After the Muslims refused to sing this song, Hindutva ideologues accused them of being anti-national without giving them a chance to respond. Thus, Muslim objections to Vande Mataram must be examined. As a monotheist religion, Islam condemns the apotheosis of all deities except God, the supreme creator. Ascribing divinity to Prophet Mohammad is blasphemy, defeating Islam’s goal of uniting humani-

ty through worship of a common creator. Those who disagree with Islam should know that Vande Mataram contains verses that contradict Islam. In the hymn, the fourth line praises India as "Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen, with her striking hands and shining swords, Thou art Lakshmi lotus-throned..." A Muslim must deify India by comparing it to Durga and Lakshmi when singing these lines. This contradicts tawheed, which states.

## Yogi govt drives agri innovation with greenhouse, poly house push in 44 districts

**Lucknow:** In a move to double farmers’ incomes and foster agricultural innovation, the Yogi government is promoting modern crop production techniques across Uttar Pradesh. Farmers in 44 districts—including Lucknow, Bahraich, Sultanpur, Barabanki, Sitapur, and Amethi—are adopting greenhouse and polyhouse technologies to enable off-season cultivation of vegetables and grains. Of these, 24 districts already have operational facilities, while construction is underway in the remaining 20. Supported under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Scheme and subsidised through the Integrated Horticulture Development Mission, this initiative aims to ensure year-round availability of fresh produce and boost farm income through protected farming. Notably, farming under greenhouses and poly houses shields crops from extreme weather conditions. Farmers can now cultivate toma-

atoes, chillies, bell peppers, cucumbers, beans, and various grains during any season—be it winter, summer, or monsoon. This results in higher-quality produce and better market prices. With the goal of making every farmer in Uttar Pradesh technologically empowered, the Yogi government has completed 37 greenhouses, now ready for cultivation, while construction of another 29 is underway and nearing completion. Farmers are receiving government grants for building greenhouses and poly houses, along with technical training and expert guidance to boost scientific productivity. This initiative is moving agriculture away from traditional practices toward a more commercial model. It not only modernises farming, but also ensures a steady and sustainable income for farmers. The state government is offering up to 50% subsidy for poly house or greenhouse construction. Districts where greenhouses.

## Today, PC Jeweller stands as one of the fastest-growing jewellery retail chains

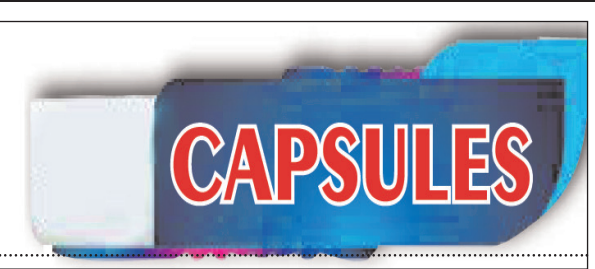
**Delhi :** Today, PC Jeweller stands as one of the fastest-growing jewellery retail chains in India, with showrooms in multiple cities across over 17 states. Since its inception, PC Jeweller has been a pioneer in design, with each product crafted to perfection. Whether it is elaborate wedding jewellery or affordable everyday wearables, PC Jeweller has consistently produced exceptional designs of unmatched quality. Over the years, their timeless pieces have transformed intimate moments into cherished lifetime memories. PC Jeweller Ltd. (BSE: 534809, NSE: PCJEWELLER), one of the leading and fastest-growing jewellery retail chains in India, has announced that Canara

Bank has conveyed its approval to the One Time Settlement (“OTS”) proposal submitted by the Company. The Company had opted for OTS to settle the outstanding dues. The terms and conditions of approved OTS include cash and equity components payable under settlement, release of securities and mortgaged properties etc. Recently, Bank of Baroda had also approved a One Time Settlement approved by the company. Earlier, the company announced that its board approved raising of funds up to Rs. 2705 Cr by preferential issue of fully convertible warrants, at an issue price of Rs. 56.20 per warrant, in accordance with ICDR Regulations

and other applicable laws subject to approval of Members and other necessary regulatory, statutory and other approvals, as may be applicable. The promoter group News Track Garments Pvt Ltd, Balram Garg (HUF) and Pooja Garg are amongst proposed allottees. Further, multiple Foreign Investors such as Elara India Opportunities Fund, Capri Global Holdings Pvt Ltd., Aries Opportunities Fund, etc. are amongst proposed allottees within the non-promoter group. PC Jeweller Ltd. embarked on its journey in 2005 with the inauguration of its first showroom in Karol Bagh, New Delhi. The company’s vision was to redefine elegance, allure, and style through exquisite.

## Odisha's FY25 budget is Rs 2.65 lakh crore

**Delhi:** The Odisha government submitted a Rs 2.65 lakh crore -25 budget focused on agriculture and irrigation in the state parliament. Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, who also holds the finance portfolio, presented the BJP government’s maiden budget and proposed an outlay of Rs 33,919 crore for agriculture, 36% more than the previous year. He said program cost was estimated at Rs 1.55 lakh crore, administrative expense at Rs 97,725 crore, and Disaster Risk Management Funds at Rs 3,900 crore. The "Samrudha Krushak Yojana" for farmers received Rs 5,000 crore from the chief minister. He also proposed a Rs 1,935 crore state budget initiative for farmers called 'CM Kisan'. Majhi called the paper a "people's budget" and stated the government consulted stakeholders.



## Electronic papers acceptable as court evidence

**Delhi:** Text, voice, and video messages contain what? Post July 1, "digital documents" are admissible as primary evidence, not simply emojis, PPTs, PDFs, group conversations, forwards, or tete-a-tete. The last one is a rewrite of the 1872 Indian Evidence Act and an acknowledgment of digital information's importance today. The 2023 Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam defines and interprets evidence. It states that "an electronic or digital record" can be "admissible" in a case under certain conditions, taking into account technical improvements and the widespread use of digital communication. Senior counsel Amit Manchanda said protections must be addressed first to prevent misuse given the uncharted field of artificial intelligence and new software to manipulate words, photos, and digital content on a recipient's device. Advocate Mohit Bhardwaj called Section 57 BSA's "singularly significant" inclusion because it makes digital data, including messages, primary evidence "without much ado," until disputed. For disputed digital records, the new rule mandates a certificate proving authenticity from a specific computer or device. Thus, under Section 61 of BNS, the court cannot deny the acceptance of an electronic or digital document given specified conditions under Section 63. Any print or copy of an electronic record is admissible "without further proof" or production of the original content if the device (say, a phone) was "used regularly" by the person with "lawful control" of its usage. Texts could be evidence under the old Indian Evidence Act, with a Section 65B certificate. On July 2, Delhi High Court stated that "WhatsApp conversations cannot be read as evidence without a proper certificate as mandated under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872". The new Acts apply exclusively to lawsuits filed after July 1. It simplifies police and prosecuting agencies' digital record presentation, according to NDPS lawyer Taraq Sayed. They can "extract" these without a cyber forensic professional in several ways. The data can be downloaded by Bluetooth or scanning, he claimed.

## No farm relief

**Delhi:** With the government reeling under an enormous debt of Rs 7.9 lakh crore and the state's struggling farmers taking their own lives, Mahayuti government's Rs 11 crore gift for India's T-20 champion squad has drawn criticism from Congress's Vijay Wadettiwar, the head of Maharashtra's opposition. "In just four months, at least 1,068 farmers committed suicide, but they get no assistance." The Maharashtra government gave wealthy cricket players an unjustified gift in order to further its own agenda, according to Wadettiwar. "We should support players but within our means and must give due weightage considering the broader picture.