



Inspiration: Late. Dr. L.C. Wallia



Ahmedabad plane crash: Girls, 8 and 4, lose mom and dad within 18 days

Vatika Times

SURAT: As stories of AI 171 crash victims unfold, among the most heartbreaking is that of 37-year-old Arjun Patoliya, whose death has left two little sisters in London, aged 8 and 4, orphaned within a span of just 18 days. Still mourning the loss of their mother Bharti, who died of cancer on May 26, the two girls have now lost their father in Thursday's tragic plane crash in Ahmedabad. Arjun had travelled to India to fulfil his wife's last wish - that her post-death rituals be performed in Gujarat. He immersed her ashes in the Narmada River at Nilkanthdham in Poicha, 60 km from Vadodara, and at their native Vadiya village in Amreli district. He was flying back to London when fate dealt another cruel



blow to the family. 'Never imagined we'd perform Arjun's last rites just days later' Arjun's mother lives in Surat. His daughters are now in the care of his younger brother Gopal, who also lives in London. Only last Sunday, the Patoliya family had gathered to perform Bharti's final rites - an emotional and heavy moment. They had just about started to process their loss when tragedy struck again. "My sister-in-law

wanted her last rites to be performed in India. We had never imagined that within days, we would be performing Arjun's rites too," said his cousin, Sanjay. Arjun's mother gave her DNA sample to help identify his body so it could be brought back to Vadiya for the last rites. Arjun had lost his father in 1990 at a very young age and was raised by his mother, who sold cutlery and household items to make ends

meet. He studied up to grade 12 at Swaminarayan Gurukul in Surat before moving to the UK at the age of 20. He had been living in London for the past 17 years. There, he ran a furniture shop and met Bharti, who worked as an accountant. They married and built a life together, raising two daughters. Bharti hailed from Gujarat's Kutch district. Her family is now settled in Ahmedabad.

Shoot-at-sight order at Assam border amid communal unrest

Vatika Times'

GUWAHATI:

The Assam government on Friday issued a shoot-at-sight order in the India-Bangladesh border town of Dhubri after dusk to rein in what CM Himanta Biswa Sarma described as "a communal group" fomenting trouble over the past week. The immediate trigger for the directive to enforcement agencies, including Rapid Action Force and CRPF reinforcements, was a purported poster campaign by the group for "Dhubri's integration with Bangladesh". The town has been on the edge for several days following mob violence over offal being found near a place of worship. CM, who was in Dhubri district to take stock, said police found at least three provocative



posters put up by a group identified as Nabin Bangla at different locations there. "Since the last one week, maintaining law and order in Dhubri has been challenging. A communal group is trying to create disturbances, which the government won't tolerate," Sarma said. He later wrote on X, "I directed law enforcement officers to follow (a policy of) zero tolerance against elements who desecrate places of worship...In Dhubri, a particular group has

become active with the intent to damage our temples. We have issued SHOOT AT SIGHT orders." Communal tension gripped Dhubri on June 7, a day after Eid, prompting community leaders on either side to appeal for peace. The next day, offal was allegedly dumped at another location, leading to stone-pelting at night, Sarma said. CM said a large herd of cattle illegally brought to Dhubri from Bengal by a "new beef mafia" was another reason

for the disturbances.

"I have ordered an inquiry into this. I have directed the authorities to arrest whoever has started this cattle trade." Sarma declared that he would camp in Dhubri for two days on Eid next year to ensure something like this didn't recur. "We are fully committed to ensure enforcement of law and order in the district and defeat all communal forces," he said. CM alleged last week that beef had been "weaponised" in the state. Dhubri has the highest Muslim population among all districts of Assam, constituting 90% of the demography. Suspicions about a large section of them being of Bangladeshi origin make the issue a socio-political hot potato.

Assam: 70 families shifted after blast, gas leak at ONGC rig

DIBRUGARH: A massive explosion followed by an uncontrolled gas leak at a rig under Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)'s Rudrasagar oilfield in Assam's Sivasagar prompted the evacuation of 70 families to a relief camp at Bongaon, as authorities struggled to contain the crisis even 24 hours after the accident. The rig, operated by SK Petrochemicals under ONGC, suffered a blowout during routine operations in Sivasagar's Bhatiapar area around 11.45 am Thursday, causing the uncontrolled release of natural gas and triggering panic in nearby villages. The deafening roar of the escaping gas was allegedly heard as far as 3-4km away, forcing residents of Bari Chuk and surrounding areas to flee for safety. ONGC officials said emergency protocols were activated promptly, but the high-pressure leak proved difficult to contain. SDRF and NDRF were pressed into action, alongside ONGC's technical teams, to control the emission. "Till now, 70 families have been relocated. Food, drinking water, and medical facilities have been arranged at the camp. A police team has been deployed for security, and an ambulance with a medical team is stationed at the site," Sivasagar district.

Row erupts over BJP call to drop Urdu criteria from test

Vatika Times

SRINAGAR: Urdu is the latest flashpoint between political parties in Jammu and Kashmir. A day after J&K BJP brass sought LG Manoj Sinha's intervention for scrapping the mandatory Urdu test for recruitments to naib tehsildar (revenue official) post, opposition PDP on Friday pushed back and asked the Omar Abdullah govt not to bow to pressure, even as governing National Conference



(NC) has kept mum so far, reports Naseer Ganai. "Urdu has been the official language of J&K for centuries. At least 70% of the population is familiar with the language in

written and spoken form. All revenue records are preserved in this language. BJP's dislike for Urdu should be resisted by the NC govt," PDP spokesperson Naeem

Akhtar said. Party MLA Waheed Parra said BJP's demand to remove Urdu from the revenue exam, if accepted, would risk erasing J&K's rich archive and cultural legacy. "Urdu is more than a language - it is a key part of J&K's heritage," he said. The controversy erupted after J&K Services Selection Board on June 9 issued an advertisement for 75 posts of naib tehsildar, specifying 'working knowl-

Air India plane crash: Toll mounts to 274; 33 on-ground deaths confirmed

Vatika Times

AHMEDABAD: Salvage teams scouring the debris of flight AI 171 found the black box of the crashed 787-8 Dreamliner and 29 more bodies on Friday, taking the toll to 274 and expanding the scale of the worst single-aircraft disaster in the history of Indian aviation. The casualty count increasing beyond the 241 passengers and crew confirmed dead in the crash suggested that



the other 33 victims were likely people on the campus of Ahmedabad's BJ Medical College - possibly doctors, their family members, medical students, workers and others in the Meghaninagar

neighbourhood. The black box was found on the rooftop of the students' mess in the medical college campus, Joint Commissioner of police (Sector 1) Neeraj Badgujar said.

Plane crash: Govt forms high-powered panel led by Union home secretary

Vatika Times

NEW DELHI: In a clear sign of how seriously the Modi government is taking the deadly crash of Air India flight AI 171, it on Friday formed a "high level multi-disciplinary committee" headed by Union home secretary Govind Mohan to examine the causes leading to the June 12 Air India Ahmedabad-London Gatwick flight 171 crash. The move came just hours after PM Modi visited the crash site in Ahmedabad. In a late-night statement, the Union aviation ministry said this panel "will examine the existing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and guidelines (meant) to prevent and handle such occurrences... suggest comprehensive guidelines for dealing with such



instances in the future. The committee will not be a substitute to other enquiries being conducted by relevant organisations but will focus on formulating SOPs for preventing and handling such occurrences in the future." It will publish its report within three months or by Sept 13, 2025. Union home secretary Govind Mohan The panel will "ascertain the root cause of the crash. It will assess contributing factors, including mechanical failure, human

error, weather conditions, regulatory compliance and other reasons. (It will) recommend necessary improvements and formulate a suitable SOP to prevent such incidents in the future. The SOP shall also include best international practices regarding preventing and handling such incidents," the order says. It will "assess emergency response of various stakeholders (both Central and state governments), including rescue operations, and coordination among

them.... will examine existing guidelines regarding handling such incidents and go through records of previous such aircraft crashes in the country. The committee will formulate a comprehensive SOP and suggest the roles of all agencies and organisations of the Central and State Governments to deal with post-crash incident handling and management. Suggest policy changes, operational improvements and training enhancements required to prevent such occurrences and handle post-crash incident situations," the order says about the role of the panel. Headed by the Union home secretary, it will have as its members the aviation secretary Samir Kumar.

Lost in translation: statement sinks drug case in Tamil Nadu

Vatika Times

CHENNAI: An important narcotics case here fell apart after the prosecution submitted a key witness's statement only in Hindi-without any Tamil or English translation-leaving the court unable to understand its contents. The city court acquitted the accused, Nag Narayan Prasad from Kolkata, citing a lack of admissible evidence. Besides, there were a host of other lapses in the case. The accused was arrested in connection with the seizure of 4.6 kg of hashish hidden inside 38 woollen sheep-like toys in a courier parcel intercepted in Ekkatuthangal near Chennai in March 2021. The parcel, booked under a Bengal sender's name, was flagged as suspicious during X-ray screening. NCB officers confirmed the contraband.

Israel Iran War News Live Updates: Iran launches fresh



Vatika Times

NEW DELHI: A powerful Israeli airstrike hit targets in Iran late Thursday, triggering explosions around Tehran and sparking fears of a broader regional conflict. The move comes as part of what Israel's Defence Minister described as "preemptive strikes" against Iran's nuclear threat. Iran's state-run Nour News confirmed reports of blasts northeast of Tehran early Friday. The Israeli Air Force carried out the attack, which is being seen as one of the boldest actions by Tel Aviv against Iran in recent years. In response, Israel

declared a nationwide state of emergency, preparing for possible retaliation from Iran in the form of missile or drone strikes. Israel has consistently warned that it would not allow Iran to reach weapons-grade nuclear capabilities. International watchdogs have reported that Iran is enriching uranium to dangerously high levels, although Tehran has always claimed its nuclear programme is peaceful. The United States was quick to distance itself from the Israeli operation. "Tonight, Israel took unilateral action against Iran. We are not involved in strikes against Iran.

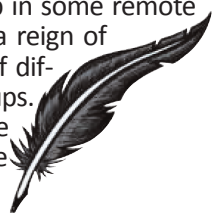


Editorial

Mobs are still calling the shots in Bangladesh. Yunus government appears weak

Ritu Walia

A month into Sheikh Hasina’s ignominious fall from the throne, political groups of different hues and colours are trying to fill the vacuum that her dictatorial rule has left behind in Bangladesh. During her 15-year in power, Hasina systematically destroyed the country’s political institutions. When Muhammad Yunus, the country’s lone Nobel laureate, replaced her following a mass upsurge, Bangladesh didn’t have a functioning police force to speak of— a large number of its officers, handpicked by Hasina and her cronies, have either fled the country or are still in hiding. With no effective monitoring of the law and order situation, there are signs that extremism and Islamic militancy is trying to raise its head in a country once plagued with large scale terrorist attacks and targeted killings of atheists, militant-atheists and an LGBTQ activist. In this context, it’s significant that last month the Yunus government released on bail Jashimuddin Rahmani, a cleric who was trained in Darul Uloom Deoband, an Islamic seminary in India’s Uttar Pradesh. He was charged with the murder of a blogger in 2013 and was accused of being the spiritual head of Al-Qaeda associated Ansarullah Bangla Team, also known as Ansar Al Islam, which has been proscribed by Bangladesh, India, US and the UK. But the case against him was so weak that back in 2015 he was given only five years’ imprisonment for abetting the murder. To make matters worse, Hasina’s prosecution team has never been able to effectively prove Rahmani’s connection with Ansarullah Bangla team, a transnational terror outfit thought to have operatives and sympathisers in India’s West Bengal and Assam. In addition to the case for which he has already served his term, Rahmani faced four more charges. Before his release, all but one case filed in 2008 has been withdrawn by the Yunus government. Rahmani is a glaring example of how criminally inefficient Hasina’s law enforcement agencies were. The cases against him were filed under the country’s infamous Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act, which Hasina mostly used against her political opponents. Absurd it may sound, Shahidul Alam, Bangladesh’s most celebrated photographer, has faced the same charges under the same law. Alam’s crime was that he gave an interview to Al Jazeera criticising Hasina. Before his prison sentence, Rahmani was a little-known cleric with some popularity among fringe elements of the society. But the media attention given to him following his release has now made him look like a victim of Hasina’s autocratic rule, and he’s cashing in on the new-found limelight. Given that anti-India sentiment is running high in Bangladesh, thanks to India’s shoddy and myopic foreign policy, who else would Rahmani target to grow fan-following? In one of his first speeches given after his release, Rahmani warned India that if the country interferes with the internal affairs of Bangladesh or plays foul with him, “We will ask China to close down the Chicken’s Neck and tell Northeast India to fight for its independence. We will tell Kashmir to get ready for Independence. I urge Pakistan and Afghanistan to help Kashmir become independent.” He goes on to say that he will urge West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to liberate her state from India. Rahmani’s case is just a small part of a bigger problem that Bangladesh’s mainstream politicians have always been infected with— the culture of denial. Islamic militancy in Bangladesh dates back to Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Khaleda Zia’s final term in office between 2001-2006. In 2004, Siddique ul-Islam alias Bangla Bhai (Bengal’s Brother) started a Salafi vigilante group in some remote parts of the country and led a reign of terror by lynching members of different Maoist insurgent groups. When the newspapers were flooded with reports of these barbaric act.



Bamboo farming is proving to be beneficial for farmers

K. P.

However, hard work is required to get a good crop of bamboo. Bamboo farming brings bumper income for many years, but if we talk about one acre, then 20 lakh to 40 lakh rupees can be earned in 4 years. However, farmers should contact traders in advance for the sale of bamboo and find a good market. But the good thing is that if the farmer does not find a trader to buy bamboo, he can open his own small scale industry of bamboo products, which will also increase the income. Another specialty of bamboo is that it can be grown anywhere, it cannot be cultivated only in sand. Surjeet Singh, owner and authorized distributor of Tomar Agriculture located in Bijnur district of West Uttar Pradesh, says that farmers should definitely plant some bamboo plants according to their capacity, because in the area where bamboo plants are planted in large numbers, people do not suffer from respiratory diseases. If there is a disease, then those diseases will go away by living in an area with bamboo. And in the area where bamboo plants are planted, there is more rainfall and the water level of that place also keeps increasing. If we plant



bamboo forests in some large area, you will see amazing results. Where the water level is 80 or 100 feet, it will come down to 25-30 feet. Looking at the water level and the problems of sugarcane farmers in West Uttar Pradesh, bamboo farming can be a good alternative to sugarcane, so farmers need to focus on its cultivation as well. What else is needed in bamboo. If there is bamboo, then it is special. Bamboo farming can prove to be a boon for the sugarcane farmers of the country. Actually, 60 to 70 species of bamboo are found in India. A fence made of thorny bamboo can be many times better than a wire fence. A lot of money is spent by the farmer in getting a wire

fence made. The farmer’s income starts with getting a thorny bamboo fence made, which gives a good income every year and also protects the crop from wild animals. Bamboo helps in increasing the income of the farmer as compared to sugarcane and other crops. After growing it, farmers can also earn a good income by making thermos, cups, glasses, spoons, bowls, leaves, furniture etc. from bamboo. In the field where farmers grow bamboo crops, earthworms are produced in large numbers after some time. We can earn a good income by making vermicompost manure by adding cow dung and leaves. The land in which we will do this work will become

stronger due to earthworms. There is no need to apply any kind of poisonous medicine on bamboo, because bamboo crops do not get any disease. In this way, by farming without poison, we can save the land and climate from getting polluted and we can save the coming generations from giving poisonous food and water with our own hands. The profit in bamboo farming is visible because the cost in it is zero i.e., there is no cost at all. There is no expense in this and the number of its plants keeps increasing every year. When you cut 10 sticks, at least 20 to 30 sticks i.e. shoots come out more. Bamboo is also very much needed for the industry. In the future, benches, paper, card-

board, cloth, ethanol, ply, board, tiles, houses, fancy equipment, and kitchen items can be made from bamboo. In this way, about 15 hundred items can be made from bamboo. Bamboo houses are especially beneficial in areas where cases of earthquakes keep coming up. Bamboo is also a wonderful plant from the environmental point of view. Bamboo absorbs 35% more carbon dioxide and gives about 35% more oxygen than all other plants, which is very useful for living in the future. The way trees are being cut every year and the heat on earth is increasing, it seems that humans will not be able to survive on earth for long. This is a serious problem. We are taking water, air, food grains, fruits etc. from nature, but what are we giving to nature, only smoke and pollution. If we want to give something good to our future generations, then there is nothing better than bamboo. The biggest thing is that the bamboo crop becomes ready for harvesting in about three years, but its stem can be used in one and a half to two years. Once the bamboo crop is planted, three generations can get profit from its crop. Its crop lasts for about 40 years.

AidData identified eight ports outside mainland China where Beijing could set up naval bases

Rajesh Singh

A Great game is afoot, with two emerging superpowers—India and China—vying for influence in their neighbourhood and beyond. There is little doubt among geopolitical hawks that manoeuvres New Delhi and Beijing make in the Indo-Pacific will chart the course of the next century. Like any other great game, this too has multiple dimensions and a cast of characters. For the sake of this argument, let us consider one key dimension central to lasting influence in the Indo-Pacific: maritime infrastructure. Encompassing about one-fifth of the world’s sea area, the Indian Ocean supports roughly 80 per cent of the global maritime oil trade. It is no secret that China has over the past decade mounted an all-out effort to encircle India in the Indian Ocean region by securing access to foreign ports for dual use—logistical and military. Besides catering to the routine

needs of ocean-going ships, port terminals earmarked for dual use allow one to fortify one’s position at key strategic locations, act as a window for intelligence collection, and also offer an opportunity to establish one’s credentials as a reliable bilateral partner in an increasingly unstable world. For now, it seems, Beijing wields a first-mover advantage given that the Chinese coastline has 34 major ports, including some of the largest in the world. To add to that, the Chinese own or operate nearly 100 ports in as many as 50 countries. China is also one among the top three builders of merchant ships and controls the second-largest merchant fleet globally. In a July report, AidData identified eight ports outside mainland China where Beijing could set up naval bases within the next five years. These include Bata in Equatorial Guinea, Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Kribi in Cameroon.

Rahul Gandhi Puts Kashmiri Non-Muslims at Great Risk

Radhika

Reaping his first, slender electoral gains by means of divisiveness in the general elections, Congress scion Rahul Gandhi is pushing the envelope in a place where history is written with blood. Addressing a public rally at Sangaldan, in Banihal Assembly constituency of Jammu and Kashmir’s Ramban district, Rahul accused the Modi government of giving the benefits meant for the people of J&K to “outsiders”. This is politics at its most immoral, most cynical. That ‘outsider’ word has taken the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, in the state. The entire Islamist narrative in J&K is that anybody other than Kashmiri Muslims is an ‘outsider’ and fit to be converted, driven out, or killed. One does not have to delve into history for examples. On April 17 this year, terrorists shot a trader from Bihar, Raja Shah, in Bijbehara, Anantnag district. On April 8, terrorists shot at and injured Delhi-based taxi driver Dilranjit in Padawan, Shopian district. On terrorists shot dead Amritpal Singh, a labourer from Amritsar in Punjab in Habba Kadal, Srinagar. Another non-local worker, Rohit Mashi, from Amritsar, was injured and died a day later. Data compiled by South Asia Counter Terrorism Portal (SATP) shows there have been eight attacks on civilians resulting in eight civilian deaths till May 26 this year. The toll in the corresponding period in was the same, with ‘outsiders’

or non-locals bearing the brunt of the violence. The attacks on ‘outsiders’ are also prompted by nervousness among Islamists regarding the nearly 70 lakh domicile certificates issued to those living and working in J&K who have come from across the country. The separatists feel their stranglehold on the state’s demographic is slipping away, with the Centre also settling families of security forces and displaced Kashmiri Pandit families. Article 370, which the Narendra Modi government scrapped on August 5, 2019, barred outsiders from settling permanently or buying property in Kashmir. The Modi government also brought delimitation in the state which has increased the total number of seats in the state by seven. Six seats were added in Jammu, and one in Kashmir to take the total number of assembly constituencies to 90. Islamist lobbies and parties like the National Conference and the PDP have been upset by the added weightage given to Jammu over Muslim-majority Kashmir.

They have stoked Islamists’ feelings over both delimitation and domicile, making the environment ripe for violence against ‘outsiders’. Now, Rahul Gandhi has directly fed into the insecurities of jihadis and put a target on the back of every man or woman who is not a Kashmiri Muslim. As the leader of India’s main Opposition party, it is both irresponsible and sinister.

Atheism gained world popularity by opposing the ‘Guy in the Sky’ deity

Suman Singh

Atheism gained world popularity by opposing the ‘Guy in the Sky’ deity and Abrahamic monotheism. Hindu deism is much more complex. It cannot be opposed so easily, as, if one claims not to believe in Hindu deities, one must also claim not to believe in nature. Hindus have the Trimurti, represented by Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, who were initially depicted as Indra, Surya, and Agni, corresponding to the elements of water, sky, and fire.

The Tridev represents the deification of the universal principles of creation, preservation, and destruction. Yajna fire ceremonies involve offerings of earth and water elements to the fire, resulting in air and space. This reflects the psychological doshas and/or principles of ojas, tejas, and prana. We are defined by our true nature. A Hindu is as a Hindu does, not necessarily what occurs in his or her mind. Inner knowledge, based on experience, trumps all outer systems of

belief. Dogma attracts and supports a hive-mind mentality and fanaticism. They are simpletons who rally behind ineptitude. Hindu dharma is not so mono-cultural. Dharma allows for freedom of individual expression, thought, and experience. It is basically not one religion but a conglomeration of many paths, and then there are paths within those paths. Dharma is vast, diverse, and plural—encompassing and inclusive. Not every Hindu is a dharmika, and not every

dharmika is a Hindu. Sanatana Dharma is far greater than any kind of ‘ism’—infinitely so, in fact. When the eternal natural way is projected through matter, mind, senses, and identity, it becomes diffused and mistaken for mere religion. Religion, as we have come to know it, has definite boundaries. Sanatana Dharma does not. Hindu Dharma consists of many schools of thought, science, culture, technique, metaphysics.



Guru Nanak Taxi Service Brings Relief in Scorching Heat



Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: To offer respite from the sweltering summer heat, Guru Nanak Taxi Service, Kurukshetra organized a Chabeel (free distribution) of cold sweet water outside its office located on Pipli Road. The initiative was dedicated to the Parkash Purab (birth anniversary) of the sixth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The service was inaugurated by former president of Kurukshetra Auto Union, Jagtar Singh, who praised the noble effort, calling it an

inspiring act of public service during extreme weather conditions. Ravinder Singh, owner of the taxi service, stated that the aim of this initiative was to provide relief to passersby and vehicle drivers during the intense heat. People passing by were stopped and offered cold sweet water, which brought much-needed relief and was appreciated by all. Several dedicated members of the taxi service, including Harpreet Singh, Manjeet Singh, Ashu Maan, Amarjeet Singh, Rinku Saini, Kartar Singh, and Malkit

Singh, actively participated in the service, demonstrating their commitment to community welfare. This act of kindness was not only a social responsibility but also brought comfort to many hearts. On this occasion, Gurpreet Singh, Gurnam Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Roopmeet Singh, Harman Singh, Harmeet Singh, and Eknoor Singh, along with other volunteers, contributed to the water service, upholding the tradition of selfless service (sewa) in the house of the Guru.

On His Birthday, Dr. Deepak Sharma Organizes Free Medical Camp



Jasbir Singh Duggal Shahabad Markanda: Setting an inspiring example of social service on his birthday, Dr. Deepak Sharma, Managing Director of Siddharth Hospital and Heart Care Centre located on Ladwa Road, Shahabad, organized a special free medical check-up camp. During the camp, 195 patients suffering from various ailments received health check-ups and benefited from expert consultations. Dr. Sharma stated that with the rising temperatures, people often face numerous health issues, and in such times, timely diagnosis and consultation become

essential. He expressed that turning a personal occasion like a birthday into an opportunity for service is a matter of pride for him. He also pledged to continue such public welfare initiatives in the future. A specialist team from Abbott Health Care Centre participated in the camp and conducted free sugar & HbA1c tests for patients. In addition to this, general health screenings, blood pressure checks, consultations, and other medical advice were also provided. Prominent participants in the camp included gynecologist Dr. Anjali Sharma, Dr. Yogesh, Dr. Rohit,

Naveen Sharma, Ranjot Singh, and Asit Jetli, along with the team from Naveen Diagnostic Laboratory, who played an active role in ensuring the success of the event. During the camp, a Chabeel of cold sweet water was also set up outside the hospital to provide relief to the public in the scorching heat. The nursing staff enthusiastically served cold water to passersby and motorists. This thoughtful gesture offered much-needed respite during the intense heat, and a large number of people benefited from and appreciated the initiative.



KU VC Encourages Massive Turnout for State Level Yoga Day Celebration



Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: The state-level celebration of International Yoga Day will be held on June 21, 2025, at 6:00 AM at Purushottampura Bagh, Brahma Sarovar, Kurukshetra. In preparation for this grand event, Kurukshetra University Vice Chancellor Prof. Som Nath Sachdeva chaired a meeting in the Senate Hall on Friday. Prof. Sachdeva called upon Deans, Directors, Chairpersons, the Controller of Examinations, Chief Security Officer, Principals, Chief Wardens, Branch Heads, Deputy Registrars, Assistant Registrars, Superintendents, and Deputy Superintendents to ensure maximum participation in the celebration and reviewed the preparations in detail. Prof. Sachdeva emphasized that yoga has seen a tremendous rise in popularity globally, driven in part by the increasing number of doctors recommending yoga to patients. Prof. Sachdeva added that approximately 5,000 participants from Kurukshetra University will attend the state-level event. Highlighting the vital role of yoga in modern life, Prof. Sachdeva remarked, "Yoga is not just a physical practice; it's a holistic science that enhances mental and spiritual well-being—the foundation of a healthy life."

Special on World Blood Donor Day

Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: Police Sub Inspector Dr. Ashok Kumar Verma is the top blood donor of the police department in India. He himself has donated blood 175 times and platelets 85 times. In his family, his brothers Satpal, Vinod Kumar, Naresh Kumar, Nanha Ram have donated blood more than 50 times. His sons and daughters have also donated blood more than 10 times. Not only this, Dr. Ashok Kumar Verma has organised 544 voluntary blood donation camps in which more than 19754 units of

blood have been collected by government hospitals, which has benefited 59262 people. He has been honoured 6 times by the Governor of Haryana at Raj Bhawan Chandigarh for blood donation. He is famous as a recipient of the President's Police Medal, National Gold Medal winner, Diamond Blood Donor and Environmental Guard. Everyone knows that the life of a person can end due to lack of blood. Blood is the elixir of life flowing in the arteries of a person, without which life can be in danger. About two



three decades ago, people were afraid of donating blood. Sometimes, even when blood was needed for a family member, they would look

at others. Many would move away from there out of fear. One such inspiring true story is of Haryana Police Sub Inspector Dr. Ashok Kumar Verma. He is

posted as Awareness Program and Rehabilitation In-charge in Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau and he tells that "I remember that in 1990 when I was studying in Government College Karnal, in those days a voluntary blood donation camp was organized by NCC in DAV College Karnal. Students above 18 years of age from the entire Karnal district were invited to donate blood there but only a few aware and select students who understood their duty towards the society went there and donat

ed blood. Fortunately I was also one of them. I felt very good after donating blood that I have done something good but this happiness was short-lived because as soon as I returned home with the certificate of blood donation and told it at home, my mother expressed concern and when my sister-in-law came to know about it, the problem increased further. I started feeling as if I have committed a big crime. This incident also had a great impact on my mind. At home, mother and siblings were worried that now I will

become weak. Till evening there was a conflict going on inside my mind and I was like this I kept feeling that I have committed a big crime. At night my father Shri Kali Ram Khippal returned home and he was informed about this. I was afraid that my father would also scold me but what is this, he patted my back and encouraged me even more saying that you did a very good job and he himself has been in the army and he has donated blood there many times. Hearing this, I felt happy and it

was as if my life came back. Now I felt that I have not done anything wrong. With the inspiration of my Indian soldier father Shri Kali Ram Khippal ji, till now I have donated blood 175 times and platelets 85 times. Not only this, all the members of the family are donating blood together. Now people do not have the fear of donating blood. In Dera Sacha Sauda, people were seen crying for blood donation that take my blood. Even after so much awareness, even today many lives are lost due to lack of blood.

Royal College of Art Graduate Sonakshi Presents "Zaat" - A Sculptural Installation Exploring Women's Hidden Histories Through Metal and Memory

Vatika Times GURUGRAM / AMBALA – The Gallery at British Council, Kasturba Gandhi Marg, will present "Zaat" by Sonakshi, a powerful sculptural installation that unravels matrilineal memory through the language of heirloom, metal, and meaning. The exhibition runs from 11 June through 31 July 2025 as part of Study UK: Creative Connections II. Born in Agra and now based in London, Sonakshi Chaturvedi brings together her expertise in painting, enamelling, and gemology to question how women's histories are remembered—or systematically erased. The exhibition confronts the inherited roles of bride, mother, and grandmother, foregrounding



untold longings encoded within craft traditions of the Indian subcontinent. **A Fresh Voice in Contemporary Art** Fresh from completing her MA in Jewellery & Metal at the prestigious Royal College of Art (2024), Sonakshi represents a new generation of artists bridging traditional craft with contemporary artistic practice. Her unique background as both a Graduate Gemologist

and researcher with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (Ministry of Culture) positions her with the requisite capabilities to question the cultural significance of adornment and inheritance in South Asian societies. "Zaat began as a way to fortify my own nostalgia, but it evolved into an act of reclamation—tracing heirloom objects that held the silent resistance of women remembered only as mothers, brides, grandmothers. Through sculpture, I archive their matrilineal inheritance as material memory—for future female ancestors to know them not just by the roles they played, but as individuals with dreams, agency, and voice" explains Chaturvedi.

Farmers Protest on 152-G Corridor, Halt National Highway Construction for 3.5 Hours

Jasbir Singh Duggal Shahabad Markanda: Anger erupted among farmers on Friday regarding the construction of the 152-G National Highway sub-corridor. The protest took place on a 22-kilometer stretch from Jalbehra to Patti Shehzadpur, where farmers, upset over the lack of access roads, began a sit-in protest by setting up tents in the middle of the main route at 9 a.m., bringing construction work to a standstill. Along with halting construction, the farmers also blocked the supply of materials and movement of heavy vehicles. Leading the protest, farmer leader Jasbir Singh of Mamu Majra stated that for the past two years, farmers have been repeatedly demanding access to their fields from the



administration, but have only received hollow promises. He emphasized that while the sub-corridor is an important infrastructure project, the real-life challenges faced by affected farmers cannot be ignored. If their access to fields and livelihood is disrupted, it directly impacts the nation's food providers. During the highway construction, land measuring 45 to 60 meters in width was acquired, and walls were erected on both sides, splitting many farmers' land into two parts—making it

impossible for them to reach their own fields. At 12 p.m., Satyawar, a representative of the CPM construction company, arrived at the protest site and held discussions with the farmers but said that decisions on access roads and compensation were beyond his jurisdiction. Later at 1 p.m., NHAI SDO Abhijeet reached the spot and listened to the farmers' concerns seriously. He assured them that compensation would be provided within 25 to 30 days to farmers whose access routes had been affect-

ed. He informed that the Section 3A process had already been initiated. The SDO also committed that where access has been blocked due to walls, alternate paths will be created by breaking the walls. Additionally, he said that the drainage pipes, which were laid earlier but are now clogged, will be cleaned soon. Underpasses will be leveled with gravel and stones to ensure smooth passage. The farmers warned the authorities that if promises are not fulfilled within 25 days, they will resume their protest, and the administration will be held accountable. Farmer leader Jasbir Singh criticized the reliance on Section 3A, pointing out that the notification process hasn't even been fully implemented yet, so it may take even longer to

reach Section 3B. He also expressed concern that the blocked drainage pipes could cause waterlogging during monsoon, damaging crops. Other farmers present in the protest—Ravinder Singh, Joginder Singh, Sukhwinder Singh, Jaswinder Singh, Dilbag Singh, Harmeet Singh, Sucha Singh, Malkit Singh, Avtar Singh, Jarnail Singh, Taqdeer Singh, Saroj Singh, and Gurbaksh Singh—also voiced their displeasure at the administration's handling of the situation. An agreement between farmers and officials was finally reached around 1 p.m. after which the protest was called off. However, the farmers made it clear that if this time the administration only offers promises and no real solutions, the next protest will be much more intense.



Hectik reigns supreme! Shubhankar lifts the crown of Amazon MX Player’s Realme Hip Hop India S2

New delhi: The battle for the crown reached its ultimate thrilling conclusion as Shubhankar aka Hectik emerged as the winner of Realme Hip Hop India Season 2 on Amazon’s free streaming service, Amazon MX Player. With judges Remo D’Souza and Malaika Arora at the helm, this season has been a true celebration of grit, individuality, and the boundless spirit of hip hop. With its growing popularity, the show has consistently ranked among the most-watched streaming originals every week, with its intense



face-offs, raw talent, and unpredictable twists. Taking the finale to a crescendo were lead artists of the upcoming flick, Metro...In Dino, Sara Ali Khan and Aditya Roy

Kapur, as they were present to cheer on the champions and promote the movie, slated to release on 4th July 2025.In a finale brimming with adrenaline and artistry,

Shubhankar outshone formidable finalists Hitesh, Rule Breakerz, Aman-Kunal, and Lil Pool, each of whom brought their own signature styles to the stage. With his explo-

sive energy and unmatched command over the KRUMP style, Shubhankar owned the stage and raised the winner’s belt in a moment that was nothing short of electric. Now with the trophy in hand, Shubhankar is looking beyond just dance stages. Determined to take krump to new spaces, he plans to explore new arenas— from reality shows to acting in films, theatre, and web series, paving the way for greater recognition of the genre and showcasing the limitless reach of his artistry.

Additional controlled area implemented in 22 villages around Gharaunda, will be included in Gharaunda development plan: DTP

DILPREET WALIA
Gharaunda/Karnal: District Town Planner Satish Kumar informed that 22 villages situated within the limits of Gharaunda have been notified as Additional Controlled Area-IV Gharaunda by the Town and Country Planning Department, Haryana. In this regard, Haryana

Government has issued Notification No. CCP (NCR) KNL/Gharaunda/ACA-IV/2025/816 dated 06.06.2025. He informed that these villages will now be considered as part of Gharaunda Development Scheme and it will be mandatory to take prior permission for land use

change for any kind of construction or development work in these areas. He informed that before starting any kind of construction work in the revenue property of notified villages, it will be mandatory to take permission from the Town and Country Planning Department, Karnal.

PUC centers reopen as government promises to evaluate testing fee



Delhi: **Petroleum** dealers association officials said most pollution-under-control (PUC) checking centre operators at Delhi petrol pumps resumed operations on Thursday after calling off their indefinite strike to demand higher fees. After a meeting between the Delhi Petrol Dealers Association (DPDA) and Delhi transport department officials, who promised to investigate the striking dealers' requests, services resumed.DPDA general secretary Bibek Banerjee said: "The principal secretary, transport, agreed to relook into rate revision based on actual costs involved in the process. The officer will get DPDA's complete reasoning for PUC tariff increases soon. For the greater

good, DPDA has called off PUC centers' petrol pump strikes.The transport agency said PUC centre dealers put off the strike after talking with them. "They will justify raising PUC rates in detail. The transport official, who requested anonymity, said the department will review the findings and take action.The Delhi government reported 945 PUC centers, 600 of which operate from petrol pumps. Around 400 dealers went on an extended strike from July 15 to demand double testing. Following a 13-year gap, the government recommended raising PUC rates by ₹20 to ₹40 last week. Petroleum traders say the raise is insufficient to cover costs while waiting for notification.

LG Saxena's unified public entertainment licensing



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 documenta-

tion 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.

India and Maldives aim to expedite defence projects

NEW DELHI: India and the Maldives on discussed expediting implementation of various ongoing defence cooperation projects in the archipelago, in a development that comes soon after external affairs minister S Jaishankar visited Male last month amid the strain in bilateral ties. The 5th defence cooperation dialogue, with Indian defence secretary Giridhar Aramane and Maldives' chief of national defence force General Ibrahim Hilmy leading the delegation-level talks here, extensively reviewed matters related to bilateral defence cooperation. "The two sides also deliberated on some other areas of common interest such as high-level military exchanges and capability development projects. The participation in the forthcoming bilateral military exercise was also discussed," an official said. "The entire range of talks were productive, and will advance shared interests of the two nations in the near future and bring stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)," he added. During his visit, Jaishankar had also assured the top leadership of the Maldives that the country remained an important partner of India in maintaining peace and stability in the IOR. Since the pro-China Mohamed Muizzu govt came to office in Male last November, bilateral relations with India have become strained. Apart from signing a defence cooperation pact with China, the Muizzu govt forced India to withdraw its military personnel.I operating a Dornier-228 maritime aircraft and. two 'Dhruv' advanced light helicopters in the archipelago.

Total Energies, a French oil company, has suspended investments in Adani Group entities

Delhi: Total Energies, a French oil company, has suspended investments in Adani Group entities pending the conclusion of US bribery allegations against its founder. The Paris-based company, which owns key investments in Adani Group's renewable energy and gas distribution operations, said it was unaware of the US solar power corruption inquiry. "Total Energies rejects corruption in any form," it declared. "This indictment does not target Adani Green Energy (AGEL) itself, nor any AGEL-related companies." Total Energies claimed it learned about Gautam Adani's and others' indictment from US public pronouncements. Gautam Adani, his nephew and Adani Green Energy executive director Sagar Adani, and others are accused of a \$265m bribery scam. Total Energies bought 19.7% of Adani Green Energy in January 2021. It invested \$444 million in an equal joint venture with the Indian company to acquire three 1,150MW operational renewable assets in September. Additionally, it owns 37.4% of Adani Total Gas, which supplies CNG to cars and natural gas to homes. "Total Energies, which is not targeted nor involved in the facts described by such indictment, will take all relevant actions to protect its interests .

State-run hospitals will provide Delhi residents

Delhi: State-run hospitals will provide Delhi residents telemedicine from doctors and specialists. Sources stated Delhi health minister Saurabh Bharadwaj has authorized doctors from several government hospitals to consult with patients via eSanjeevani. The Centre for Development of Advance Computing (C-DAC), which built the Sanjeevani software, agreed to Bharadwaj's request to alter it for the Delhi government. National patients can consult doctors in central government and municipal hospitals in the capital.A six-member committee led by ILBS

chancellor Dr. SK Sarin, created by Delhi High Court to improve health services in state-run and MCD hospitals and dispensaries, also advocated telemedicine.Sources said C-DAC will build a Delhi-only platform with state-run hospital doctors. "Since the government was in the process of hiring more doctors through UPSC and on contract, officials said the facility will be reviewed in due course of time and will be opened to patients from other states also," a rep said. Delhi's health department will hire general practitioners and specialists in surgery.

“We expect better park maintenance. It will expedite park maintenance concerns

Delhi: Senior civic officials stated that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will pilot outsourcing municipal park management to commercial concessionaires to improve their upkeep. The 762-park Karol Bagh zone will host the pilot.A senior MCD official said the horticulture department has produced a project study for outsourcing Karol Bagh maintenance, including upkeep, pruning, rubbish collection, and vegetation.“The sanitation department manages waste in all zones through private conces-

sionaires. We're outsourcing Karol Bagh park maintenance to a specialist. It is estimated to cost roughly ₹5 crore annually. The official, who requested anonymity, said the idea may be expanded to other zones if successful.MCD's horticulture department administers 15,226 parks on 5,172.07 acres. Most parks—90%—are “housing area parks” (HAP) with areas under 5,000 square meters. Besides providing a green lung for Delhi, these parks allow citizens to exercise and play.According to an MCD official, out-

sourcing park management to experts should save money. “We expect better park maintenance. It will expedite park maintenance concerns from citizens. The zonal officer would oversee all agency activity, the statement stated.The top MCD official stated that of 762 parks in Karol Bagh, 42 are more than 4,047sqm, 119 are 2,023.5sqm to 4,047sqm, and the rest are smaller. Reported last year that the corporation had a gardener shortage, citing an MCD study that indicated 56% of gardener posi-

tions were vacant as of September 2023. Only 3,446 of 7,872 sanctioned gardener posts were hired, causing trouble in north and east Delhi. Karol Bagh zone managed parks with two trucks and 120 gardeners, the report claimed.To fill gardening shortages, the department hires multi-task staff (MTS), according to a second city official. “The civic body occasionally hires MTS workers for this. The official said outsourcing maintenance can improve agency accountability.



JMM-CONG GOVT WILL ERASE INFILTRATORS: Amit Shah

Delhi : Union home minister Amit Shah said that the state's JMM-Congress government is nearing its end and that Bangladeshi infiltrators' "time is also over". Shah claimed to eliminate infiltration, terrorism, Maoism, and corruption from Jharkhand in five years and make it one of India's most successful states. Shah spoke during electoral rallies in Giridih, Gandey, and Dumr. In Giridih, he targeted Congress. "Sonaiji loves launching Rahul Gandhi. At a gathering for BJP candidate Nirbhay Shahbadi, he stated Congress would not win five Jharkhand seats. He also addressed infiltration, a



"The Soren administration and infiltrators have run out of time. We will find and expel all Jharkhand infiltrators"

crucial BJP issue this election. Neither power nor industry were Hemant Soren's priorities. He spends all his time helping Bangladeshi illegal immigrants into

Jharkhand. The Hemant Soren administration and infiltrators have run out of time. We will find and expel all Jharkhand infiltrators. Shah thundered, "We'll

Pawar says must stop, hints at quitting after RS term

Delhi : NCP (SCP) leader Sharad Pawar hinted about retiring . He told a crowd in Supe village in his Baramati bastion that he may reconsider running for Rajya Sabha after his tenure. "I will have to decide whether to return to Rajya Sabha after serving my remaining 1.5 years. Pawar stated he would not run.

He last ran for Lok Sabha in 2009 and won from the newly created Madha constituency. The only occasion Pawar ran an election beyond Baramati was to allow his daughter

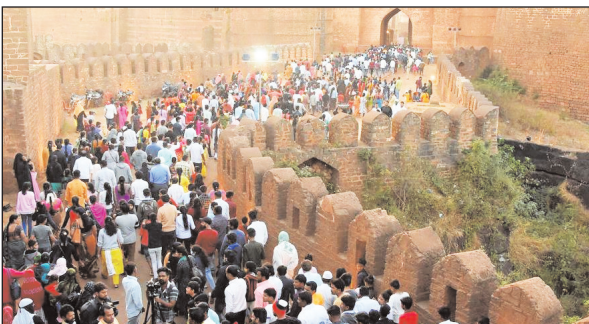


Supriya to run from the Pawar stronghold. Pawar said he wanted to make room for youth. "People always help me win my 14 elections. I must stop to make room for the new generation. No, I won't stop doing social work. I shall continue. In his speech, he declared he was not seeking power but would serve the people.

Karnataka wakf board claims Bidar fort, surprises ASI

Delhi : Karnataka's wakf board has claimed ownership of historic Bidar fort, a protected monument in ASI custody for over 70 years, and two villages in Bidar taluk, shocking ASI officers, deputy commissioners, and local elected representatives.

The Waqf board acquired the 1427 Bahamani Sultanate fort in 2005. Since then, ASI has maintained the monument. On November 29, 1951, Gazette of India proclaimed Asia's largest fort a protected monument. State wakf board notification from August 17, 2005 claimed the fort area was wakf property. Solah Kambh, a 16-pillar monument, 14 of Ashtur's 15 domes, and several tombs, including Amir Barid's in Barid Shahi Park, are claimed. With wakf controversy continuing,



First draft text on new post-2025 climate finance goals released

Delhi : With the first draft decision text on new post-2025 climate finance goals released at COP29 here on Wednesday, amid huge differences between rich and developing nations on the issue, UN climate body said developing countries would need \$1.1-2.4 trillion annual

investment by 2030, and up to \$2.9 trillion till 2035, to meet mitigation goals. This could, at least, be an indication to negotiators of rich nations about requirement when developing countries have been struggling to get a deal on having at least \$1.3 trillion a year.

residents and institutions applied for land record details to determine property safety. They found that several structures now had wakf ownership.

Farmers and citizens are still confused after the CM issued two clarifications and a takeover notice nullification order in the past two weeks.

Ajit's NCP can use 'clock' symbols with warnings

Delhi : The Supreme Court allowed the Ajit Pawar faction of NCP to use the 'clock' symbol for the Maharashtra assembly elections after the deputy chief minister promised to publish a disclaimer in leading newspapers, including Marathi dailies, stating that the legal fight with NCP founder Sharad Pawar over party control and symbol is subjudice. Senior counsel Balbir Singh issued an assurance on behalf of Ajit Pawar before a bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta,



and Ujjal Bhuyan after the court made it plain that the breakaway NCP party must comply with its interim decision from earlier this year. On March 19, the highest court allowed Ajit's faction to use the party name and emblem 'clock' at the hustings, but ordered the

Election Commission to recognize the rival faction as 'NCP-Sharadchandra Pawar' and reserve the man blowing turba (trumpet) symbol. It ordered Ajit's faction to notify journalists that the symbol dispute was subjudice until the case's conclusion.

MP government to give women 35% of govt. positions



Delhi : The Madhya Pradesh government has mandated 35% female recruitment, except for the Forest department. The state has amended the Madhya Pradesh Civils Services (Special Provision for Appointment of Women) Rules, 1997 to offer women 35% reservation. According to the notification, "Notwithstanding anything contained in any service rules, there shall be reserved 35 percent of all posts in the state service (except Forest Department) in favor of women at the stage of direct recruitment and the said reservation shall be horizontal and compartment-wise."

Chouhan has promised 35 percent reservation for women in police and other government positions and 50 percent in teaching. Female aldermen and other municipal officials would be prioritized. Girls will receive better education as the government pays their expenses.

Parliament's women's reservation Bill became law after President Droupadi Murmu signed it. The Rajya Sabha unanimously passed the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhniyam', which guarantees 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies, the first bill in the new Parliament building.

After Himachal loss, Cong dissolves state unit

Delhi : Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge abolished the Himachal Pradesh Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) and district and block units immediately. The Congress plans to revamp its Himachal unit. Since the Congress founded its own state government, the PCC has not changed. Outgoing Himachal Pradesh Congress president Pratibha Singh has joined the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body. Singh, wife of former chief minister Virbhadr Singh, became state Congress chief in April 2022. "Congress president has approved the proposal to dissolve the entire state unit of the PCC, district presidents and Block Congress Committees of Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee, with immediate effect".



Oxford Union to hold debate on 'independent state of Kashmir'

NEW DELHI: Oxford Union, the debating society of Oxford University, is hosting an event titled 'This house believes in the independent state of Kashmir' . The debate will focus on Kashmir's political status, a topic that has historically caused tension between India and Pakistan. The panelists include Dr Muzzamil Ayyub Thakur, a Kashmiri Independence activist who leads the Justice Foundation and the Kashmir Freedom Movement, Professor Zafar Khan, chairman of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) diplomatic bureau and Prem Shankar Jha, who served as media advisor to former Prime Minister V P Singh. In a post on Instagram, the Oxford Union said, "On Thursday, 14th November at 20.30, we will be hosting our Week 5 debate on the motion 'this house believes in an independent state of Kashmir'. The Kashmir question, a parting gift of British colonial rule, has troubled the subcontinent since 1947 resulting in multiple wars. The continued push for Kashmiri independence has sustained a long-standing struggle, rooted in the region's quest for self-determination and autonomy. This has led to persistent unrest, human rights concerns, and renewed demand for autonomy among the Kashmiris. While nuclear-armed neighbours vie for control and geopolitical influence, the desire for peace among the population remains strong. Could an independent Kashmir be the answer to this enduring crisis?"

"Speaking first for the proposition will be Dr Muzzamil Ayyub Thakur. Dr Thakur is a Kashmiri independence activist opposed to Indian control of the Kashmir region and leads the Justice Foundation and the Kashmir Freedom Movement," wrote Oxford Union. "Speaking second for the proposition will be Professor Zafar Khan. Zafar Khan is the chairman of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Diplomatic Bureau, an organization focused on advocating for the right to self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Khan is also a retired academi."

"Speaking for the opposition will be Prem Shankar Jha. Former media advisor to the Prime Minister of India. Held positions at the United Nations, as well as at the World Bank and the Hindustan Times - one of India's largest daily newspapers," added the post. INSIGHT UK, a group representing British Hindu, condemned the decision, and wrote on X, "We have sent a formal letter to Oxford Union expressing deep concerns over their decision to host the debate." "The invitation of speakers with alleged links to terrorism is particularly alarming and raises serious questions about the integrity of this debate." INSIGHT UK highlighted the history of violence and unrest in the Kashmir region.

Manipur on boil again, Centre rushes 2,500 CAPF personnel

GUWAHATI: An escalation of violence in Manipur has prompted MHA to despatch 2,500-odd additional central paramilitary personnel to the state, most of them for deployment in Jiribam, a relatively new flash-point of the ethnic stir that has reported 13 fatalities since Nov 7. The state, which has



witnessed bloodletting on both sides of the hill-valley divide over the past 19 months, will now have a combined deployment of 218 companies of central armed police

forces (CAPF), constituting over 29,000 personnel. The Army and Assam Rifles form another ring of security. As per MHA directive issued Tuesday, 15 of 20 companies of reinforcements comprise CRPF units repositioned from Assam. The other five companies are of BSF transferred from Tripura.

Freedom of expression isn't a right to abuse: HC

KOLKATA: One should not "transgress the boundaries of decency and law", Calcutta High Court said on Wednesday, adding that freedom of expression neither gave anyone a "licence to abuse", nor to make "irresponsible or motivated insinuations, which can create violence in society", although "the socio-democratic fabric of the country is elastic to accommodate unpopular views". The court, however, refused to gag a former BJP functionary from airing her views, saying that would be "pre-censorship". Her own "good sense"



should determine what to say publicly, bearing in mind "fraternalism, decency and boundary of law", the court said. The division bench of justices Joymalya Bagchi and Kanth was hearing an anticipatory bail plea filed by Nazia Elahi Khan. It granted her bail but frowned upon her social media post, over which a case was lodged against her at Amherst Street PS on Sept 7 for promoting enmity .

Shooter waited outside hospital to check if Baba Siddique survived

MUMBAI: Shivkumar Gautam alias Shiva who allegedly shot former minister and NCP leader Baba Siddique told the police that after firing, he took an autorickshaw to Lilavati Hospital and stood in the crowd outside, to ascertain if the neta had survived the attack. Siddique was declared brought dead at the hospital. Shiva (23) later fled to Pune and proceeded to Lucknow. He was arrested near the Nepal border in UP on Nov 10. "During interrogation, he told the police that soon after firing, he and his two accomplices fled the scene. Shiva was carrying an extra



"The dumped bag was found two days later while police were carrying out a search in the area"

shirt in his bag. He changed into the shirt, and dumped the bag and the weapon below a parked car before returning to the crime scene," said a police officer. There was chaos after the firing and a seriously injured

Siddique was rushed to the hospital. Shiva told the police that after visiting the crime scene he got into an autorickshaw and went to the hospital. He stood outside to check whether his "job" had been properly executed

or not by listening to what the crowd was saying, said the officer. Police nabbed two shooters, Dharmaraj Kashyap (21) and Gurmail Singh (23), soon after the firing while Shiva managed to flee. The dumped bag was found two days later while police were carrying out a search in the area. The parked car belonged to a local who had not used it for weeks. Police found a Turkish Tisas pistol, allegedly used for the firing, and more than two dozen bullets, and Shiva's used shirt. From the hospital, Shiva left in an autorickshaw for Kurla railway station.

Urban Development Dept establishing 2,700 smart classrooms in Uttar Pradesh at a cost of 324.56 crore

Lucknow

In line with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, the Urban Development Department has taken a significant step to modernize and digitize education in urban areas of Uttar Pradesh, particularly in government schools. Under several flagship schemes, the department is developing over 2,700 smart classrooms at a cost of approximately ₹324.56 crore. Out of these, around 1,780 classrooms have already been completed and are now operational. This commendable initiative is providing especially beneficial for students from economically weaker sections in urban areas. These students are gaining access to modern, technology-enabled education and are becoming digitally empowered. As a result, the enrollment rate in urban government schools across



the state has shown a marked increase. 1,183 smart classrooms built under smart city mission to boost educational facilities in urban government schools, the Urban Development Department is constructing 2,700 smart classrooms through various schemes. The majority of these—1,183 classrooms—have been developed under the Smart City Mission at a sanctioned cost of ₹160.83 crore, of which 1,088 classrooms are fully functional. Additionally, under the 'Kayakalp' initiative, around 190 smart classrooms have been

established with an investment of ₹57.66 crore. Multiple government schemes fuel the smart classroom drive. Under the Aspirational Cities initiative, 913 smart classrooms have been sanctioned at a cost of ₹29.43 crore. Currently, 408 of these are operational while 505 are under construction. Furthermore, 398 new classrooms have also been approved. Under the CM Abhyudaya Composite School Scheme, 25 special classrooms are being built, and the Vaishvik Nagarodaya Yojana has sanctioned 13 smart classrooms.

Yogi govt's strict measures lead to sharp decline in transformer damage

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision to ensure a dependable and uninterrupted power supply in Uttar Pradesh is now visibly taking shape. The UP Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) has recorded a significant drop in transformer damage, thanks to continuous monitoring, strategic interventions, and a strict accountability framework. Compared to previous years, 3,233 fewer transformers were damaged in April and May of 2025—26—a clear sign of a strengthened power distribution system and improved repair and maintenance protocols. According to UPPCL Chairman Dr. Ashish Kumar Goyal, only 12 power transformers were damaged in April-May 2025—26, compared to 42 in 2024—25, 61 in 2023—24, and 90 in 2022—23. This represents a dramatic reduction of over 87% in just three years. Similarly, the damage to general transformers has also decreased substantially.

While 7,322 transformers failed in April-May 2022—23, the number dropped to 4,906 in 2023—24, 3,801 in 2024—25, and just 2,613 in the corresponding period of 2025—26—a decline of over 64%. Once considered a routine problem during summer and monsoon seasons, transformer blowouts are now rapidly becoming a thing of the past. In the broader context, 34,350 transformers were damaged in the 2022—23 period. This number dropped to 33,595 in 2024—25 and further down to 31,580 in just the first two months of 2025—26, 2,015 fewer than the previous year. This transformation is the result of multiple concrete interventions spearheaded by Dr. Ashish Kumar Goyal. Power transformers were equipped with bell protection systems, while distribution transformers were fitted with tail-less and fuse units. Mechanical fault tracking and continuous monitoring systems were implemented, along with rigorous

reviews of maintenance procedures, to ensure optimal performance and reliability. Officers responsible for repeated transformer failures faced strict disciplinary action, bringing several executive engineers, senior divisional officers (SDOs), and junior engineers under scrutiny. Dr. Goyal emphasized, "A zero-tolerance policy is in force when it comes to power supply in Uttar Pradesh. If disruptions occur due to negligence at any level, swift and strict action will be taken." He has directed officials to ensure that wherever a transformer of 100 kV or above is damaged, accountability is fixed, and action is taken without delay. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has made 24x7 quality power supply a top priority. He had earlier instructed UPPCL to address recurring issues, such as transformer blowouts, decisively. Under Dr. Goyal's leadership, this directive is now yielding tangible outcomes, delivering real benefits to the public across the state.

News Avatar Can Be Rajghat Power Plant's Entertainment Hub

Delhi: Gaming zones, nighttime entertainment, water leisure, and retail will replace turbines, coal conveyor belts, and soot-lined chimneys. Delhi Development Authority will turn the Rajghat thermal power station, which closed years ago, into a unique recreational destination. The agency is employing an expert to turn the power plant's ruins into an entertainment hotspot in a public-private collaboration. Besides a 5D museum of thermal power plant operations, the new complex will contain shops, food and beverage, gaming, nightlife, children's activities, and water-based amusement. The proposed museum will offer a 5D experience of a coal power station, which is rare for the public. The proposal document states that the site would be open 24/7. Industrial buildings like turbines, coal conveyor belts, clarifiers, a 160-metre chimney, and cooling towers make up the power plant. DDA stated that the project would follow Delhi's Master Plan. All such facilities must be operated and maintained by the applicant according to DDA indicators and criteria. "Besides mandatory components, DDA will provide sufficient flexibility to the concessionaire to incorporate various uses within the project to generate revenues," says the bid form. "These possible activities could be sports clubs, night theatre, open-air theatre, nursery with plants for sale, cinema, banquet facilities, night clubs, zip line, putting park, ticketed access to jetty or river cruise, tram service, concerts, and rock shows, adventure activities, tram or toy train system, etc." The concessionaire may receive revenue from all sources with a DDA lease premium.



App-purchased RRTS tickets are 10% off.

Delhi: The NCRTC's "loyalty points program" offers Namoh Bharat train riders a 10% discount on RRTS Connect mobile app tickets, an official statement said. NCRTC Managing Director Shalabh Goel launched the program at the Sahibabad Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) station and showcased the first edition of Namoh Bharat Times, a bi-monthly passenger newsletter. The loyalty points program gives travelers one point per rupee spent on Namoh Bharat train tickets. The passenger's account will receive Rs 0.10 (10 paise) each loyalty point. Statement: These points can be used for tickets. The announcement stated that this approach will benefit passengers financially and encourage the adoption of digital QR tickets through the 'RRTS Connect'



app, facilitating paperless ticketing. Lenovo "New app downloaders receive Rs 50, or 500 loyalty points. RRTS Connect app referrals earn 500 loyalty points. "The announcement claimed the referral and referee will earn Rs 50, or 500 loyalty points, in their accounts. All loyalty points are valid for one year from credit date, encouraging frequent, sustained travel and app engagement.

It said that the Google Play and Apple App Stores offer the 'RRTS Connect' app. The announcement stated Namoh Bharat Times will be free to download on NCRTC's digital channels, including ncert.in, rrtts.co.in, and the 'RRTS Connect' app. The newsletter will update Namoh Bharat commuters on new projects and improvements, strengthening their relationship to the service.

HC condemns DDA for 'negligence', 'delinquency'; demolition allowed

Delhi: The Delhi High Court ordered the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to pay over Rs 11 lakh to the family of a 45-year-old man who died in July 2000 when their second-floor balcony fell. Justice Dharmesh Sharma found the DDA's negligence the "direct cause" of the collapse and stressed its continuous responsibility to maintain infrastructure post-allotment. The court ordered the DDA to pay Rs 11.44 lakh to the widow and two children of the deceased, plus 6% annual interest from January 2001, when the writ suit was filed.

Yogi govt digitises National Family Benefit Scheme for transparency and ease

Lucknow

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the National Family Benefit Scheme—designed to provide relief to poor and vulnerable families—has been made more transparent, efficient, and people-friendly. Now, eligible families no longer have to make repeated visits for financial assistance. The entire process from application to payment is now digital and accountable at every stage. As per the new framework, the government will

ensure that beneficiaries receive their financial aid within 75 days of applying. In case of any delays, rather than dragging the case through lengthy procedures, approval will be obtained directly from the district-level committee to facilitate immediate payment. This means that needy families will no longer have to wait for state-level approvals—bringing timely relief to those who have long awaited assistance. To ensure effective implementation, district social welfare officers

have been given key responsibilities. They must ensure that the applicant has not already received aid under the scheme. Upon verification, the final list of eligible beneficiaries will be prepared and submitted before the approval committee within seven days. The approved list will then be uploaded to the portal with digital signatures. Funds will be transferred to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts through the Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

11 Spl Courts Will Handle 2,000 Cases Every Day

Delhi: With an inventive proposal to have them handled by evening courts starting, traffic challans—of which a backlog of more than two crore has accumulated in the district courts—may now be more easily resolved. The courts will meet on all working days from 5-7 PM in all district courts under the name Evening Courts for Traffic Challans (ECTC). Beginning on December 20, 11 nighttime courts in Saket, Rohini, Dwarka, Karkardooma, Tis Hazari, and Patiala House will work to resolve 2,200 cases per day. With the exception of those marked as "contested challan," "sent to digital court challan," and "cognizance declined challan," all traffic challans displayed on the Delhi traffic police web-



page that are pending on or before December 31, 2021, will be handled. Direct downloads of the challan slips are available at <https://traffic.delhipolice.gov.in/eve-courtddc>. Over 9,000 challans have been downloaded since this site went live on December 16. The connection can be used, among other things, to update or modify mobile numbers in the system. "We're working to make the current system more user-friendly."

Coconut oil 'edible' to reduce taxes

Divya Delhi: Is coconut oil taxed as a food or hair care product? After 15 years of debate, the top court ruled that coconut oil is edible and should be taxed less. Coconut oil comes in small packets, like personal care goods, but that doesn't matter. Hair care goods pay 18% GST, but edible oils pay 5%. After the 2005 CET Act amendment, coconut oil was included under Section III, "Animal or Vegetable Fats and Oils" and their Cleavage Products.

Delhi: Officials from the transport department indicated that the three interstate bus terminals (ISBTs) in the Capital may soon acquire prepaid auto stands and that room is being provided for a predetermined number of cars. The government is seeking bids for prepaid stand construction and operation at Sarai Kale Khan, Anand Vihar, and Kashmere Gate ISBTs. "We've noticed that cars are often parked haphazardly outside, and monitoring or assigning spots hasn't helped. The transport department official hopes the prepaid booths will assist get cars in line and reduce traffic outside the ISBTs on the main road, freeing up room for buses. The Delhi Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (DTIDC)



" They said the minimum fare is normally fixed because commuters drive vehicles for short distances of up to three kilometres from bus terminals as the last mile connection "

has allocated 75 lakh for the prepaid auto stand at all three depots, which should be finished in a week. Related Stories Commuters should profit from officials' plans to fix booth charges to avoid automobiles from overcharging. They said the minimum fare is normally fixed because com-

muters drive vehicles for short distances of up to three kilometres from bus terminals as the last mile connection. The transport department does not offer prepaid autos, although auto rickshaws have fixed meter prices. However, few drivers utilize meters and offer fares independently.

Govt sets benchmark, completes 76 bridge projects in one year

Lucknow

With a strong commitment to transforming Uttar Pradesh into a state with world-class connectivity, the Yogi government is setting unprecedented benchmarks for development. Reflecting the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, an impressive 76 bridge projects were completed within a single financial year—2024-25—by the Uttar Pradesh State Bridge Corporation Limited under the Public Works Department. These projects were executed with uncompromising quality standards and include 43 river bridges, 28 Road Over Bridges (ROBs), and 5 flyovers—marking a record achievement in infrastructure development. Beyond this year's achievements, CM Yogi's tenure has been marked by continued infrastructure progress. Over the last eight years, a total of 471 bridge projects have been successfully completed by the Uttar Pradesh State Bridge Corporation Limited. This includes 313 river bridges, 143 ROBs, and 15 flyovers—ensuring improved regional connectivity across the state. Alongside these achievements, the financial performance of UPSBCL has also seen remarkable growth. According to data from the Public Works Department, the Corporation's turnover has significantly increased during CM Yogi's tenure. From 1,013.74 crore in 2017-18, the turnover rose to 1,360.34 crore in 2018-19. The trend continued with further growth in subsequent years—1,511.18 crore in 2019-20, 1,936.92 crore in 2020-21, and ₹1,959.33 crore in 2021-22. Although there was a marginal dip in 2022-23 to 1,946 crore, the Corporation bounced back with record turnovers.



Five countries offer faster visa approvals and post-graduation Jobs

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.

Tejaswini's 25-meter pistol gold lets India top the medal tally

Delhi: India took first place in the shooting sport with eleven medals, thanks to Tejaswini's victory in the women's 25-meter pistol event at Monday's ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 in Suhl, Germany. India took home the most medals at the junior ISSF World Cup with nine total, including three golds, four silvers, and the same number of bronzes. China came in second with three golds and one bronze.

Admission.uod.ac.in for DU PG Admission 2025

Delhi : The University of Delhi will soon close its 2025-26 postgraduate (PG) application session. Candidates who have not applied can register at pgadmission.uod.ac.in before 2025. Applicants must complete the CSAS(PG) – 2025 application form online using the admission site. Not accepting offline applications. The Common Seat Allocation System (PG) – 2025 includes university application, preference-filling, allocation-cum-admission, and program payment. CSAS(PG) – 2025 applicants pay Rs. 250 per programme for UR/OBC-NCL/EWS and Rs. 100



per programme for S C / S T / P w B D . Supernumerary quotas and performance-based courses like B.P.Ed., M.P.Ed., M.A. Music, and M.F.A incur costs of Rs. 100 to Rs. 400 each program. The university provides M.A. programs in Arabic, Bengali, Buddhist Studies, Comparative Indian Literature, English, French, German, Hindi, and Hispanic studies. DU provides PG degrees in Computer Science, Mathematics, Statistics, Biochemistry, Biophysics, Electronics, and Mathematics Education in addition to language and literature. The broad PG program includes M.Tech. in Microwave Electronics, MCA, Public Health, and Respiratory Therapy.

On his 19th birthday, world champion D Gukesh resumed his campaign

Delhi : World No.2 defeated Hikaru Nakamura of the US in the third round to open his account while Arjun Erigaisi lost his debut Norway Chess Tournament match. After losing to world No.1 Norwegian Magnus Carlsen and compatriot Arjun Erigaisi in the first

two rounds, Gukesh put Nakamura—one of the top Rapid and Blitz players—under time pressure to win the game in 42 moves and score three points. Gukesh, who was under time pressure in the last two games, got Nakamura gazing at the clock in round three of the six-

player double round-robin competition with white pieces. "I feel happy about winning. Today, I managed my time better. Nakamura had some drawing opportunities, but overall, it was good "Gukesh moved up to fifth on the points table ahead of Chinese No.1 Wei Yi.

Yarraji, Sable, women's 4x400m relay win extends India's Asian Athletics Championships domination

Delhi : India won the Asian Athletics Championships with great performances from fastest woman hurdler Jyothi Yarraji, steeplechase veteran Avinash Sable, and the 4x400m women's relay squad. After Jyothi and Sable set the tone, Jisna Mathew, Rupal Chaudhary, Kunja Rajitha, and Subha Venkatesan won the women's 4x400m relay gold medal in 3:34.18sec, extending India's dominance on the continental championship's third day. India won its 10th gold and first since 2013. A big rainstorm disrupted activities , but India won three gold, two silver, and a bronze medal to bring their total to 14. In women's events, Vietnam won



silver with 3:34.77sec and Sri Lanka bronze with 3:36.67sec. Jay Kumar, Dharmveer Choudhary, Manu Thekkinalil Saji, and Vishal TK seemed like they would win gold, but they settled for silver in 3:03.67sec, their best time. Qatar (3:03.52sec) won the men's 4x400m relay gold, while China (3:03.73sec) took bronze. After

a season-best run, Sable became the first Indian steeplechase gold medalist at the Asian Championships in 36 years. After a late burst, Jyothi won her second consecutive gold medal in 12.96 seconds, setting a championship record. The 2000 tournament record was 12.99 seconds set by China's Su Yiping.

Irish education minister invites Indians for education, research

NEW DELHI: James Lawless, Ireland's Education Minister, on Monday said his country is "very welcoming" for students and has a supportive post-study employment visa arrangement. "Ireland is a very welcoming country. We have a very cosmopolitan culture. We have many nationalities now in Ireland, and many people have made their home, including many, many Indians," the Irish minister said, when asked whether his government is considering any changes in post-study work or immigration policies to retain skilled talents.

Calcutta high court ordered the WBUH, to enroll students with 7% reservation for 66 OBCs

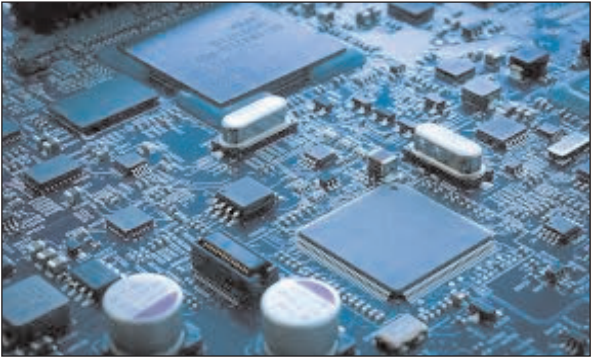
Delhi : Calcutta high court ordered the West Bengal University of Health Sciences (WBUHS), a government medical university in Kolkata, to enroll students with 7% reservation for 66 OBCs notified in the state before 2010. In its ruling, justice Kaushik Chanda noted that a division bench of the high court had set down the state's reservation policy in May, which divided OBCs into A and B categories and offered 10% and

7% quota, respectively. The state must apply OBC reservations solely to the 66 backward classes recognized by the backward class department before 2009. Justice Chanda that the state's OBC reservations should be 7% per November 6, 1997 notification. Caste certificates for 66 grades produced before 2010 have been preserved and 7% reservation maintained, the decision stated. The government suspended

quota-based recruitment and admissions after a division bench of the high court revoked OBC designation for 77 Muslim communities granted by the state since 2010. Supreme Court challenge by TMC government. West Bengal offered 17% OBC reservation in public sector jobs and state-run schools before the May ruling. It was divided into two brackets: OBC-A, with 10% reservation and 81 communities.

Anxieties over politics to dampen employment for semiconductor design

Delhi: The number of job postings at India's Global Capability Centers (GCCs) for semiconductor design fell by 15% in 2024-25, a research said, mostly as a result of continuing geopolitical concerns and interruptions in the global supply chain. According to data compiled by CareerNet, a provider of talent solutions, the number of available jobs reached a high of 3,760 in May 2024. From there, it dropped to 3,040 in January 2025 and 3,181 at the end of the year. This shows a measured drop in active involvement across India's top 50 semiconductor design GCCs of over 15% year-on-year. Even with this slowdown, the demand for specialized knowledge in areas like RF/analog design,



embedded systems, and VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration) was still high, and medium-sized GCCs were more nimble when it came to hiring, it said. Since semiconductor design is a specialized field with a relatively small workforce in comparison to other technological jobs, shifts in recruiting attitude, particularly among a handful of large companies, can have a disproportionately large impact on the semiconductor design employment market as a whole.

India will host campuses of five prestigious international institutions

Delhi: India's ambitions to become a world-class education destination are gaining steam, as five international universities have recently received letters of intent to set up shop in the nation. Officials in the Indian government have stated that by the beginning of the next school year, over a dozen foreign universities will have established campuses in the country.

Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University is taking applications

Delhi : Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU) is taking applications for its 2019 academic year, offering diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate certificate programs across 21 locations. With 83 distinct courses and 7,425 places, the university remains a leading skill-based, industry-aligned education institution. The university launched 40 new certificate courses to promote employability in growing disciplines this year, a big milestone. These new programs cover in-demand fields including digital marketing, AI, coding, and entrepreneurship. The goal is to give students the practical skills and real-world experience they need



" It consistently produces a large number of students who get into professional colleges through entrance exams at the national and state levels. Not only do these students thrive in their professional and social lives, but they also excel in professional colleges. CBSE has increasingly prioritized competency-based education "

to succeed in a changing job market "University official. The online application is open until June 22. Initial applications were above 200, indicating great interest in the university. After applications shut, students must visit their campuses for document verification. Seat allocation results will

be announced on June 23, and selected candidates must pay the cost between June 23 and June 26 to confirm their admission. The application fee for diploma programs is 200, while admission fees are 1,500 for diploma courses and 2,000 for certificate programs. Academics begin in July.

Three new BTech courses at Delhi University await Centre approval



Delhi : Delhi University has been unable to receive approval from the Union ministry of education to start three BTech degrees. Thus, the admission process has not been announced. DU's statutory council approved three BTech engineering courses in computer science, electronics and communication, and electrical engineering in December 2021. The institution requested Rs 100 crore from UGC. The Faculty of Technology was restructured and a new head appointed. The university also announced new academic blocks for these departments. DU also had a committee create course material and structure. More creators More with Shorts India finds home on top real estate app In addition to BTech courses, the DU website lists applied sciences and humanities, architecture and planning, instrumentation and control engineering, civil engineering, production and industrial engineering, and mechanical engineering. Technical courses would begin at DU after Jawaharlal Nehru University. DU previously affiliated DSE and NSIT.

Breeder Seed Nurseries nearly doubles under Yogi govt

Lucknow

The Yogi government has set a new benchmark in strengthening the foundation of sugarcane farming in Uttar Pradesh. The number of breeder seed nurseries in the state has nearly doubled. While only 150 nurseries were operational in 2016-17, this number has risen to 267 in 2024-25. This increase has been achieved by effectively utilising the fields of sugar mills across the state. In a major boost to sug-

arcane cultivation, the state distributed 4.4 crore single buds of newly developed varieties in 2024-25—the highest in the country compared to breeder seed output by any research institution. This initiative is expected to lead to a substantial increase in sugarcane productivity, reinforcing Uttar Pradesh's leadership in the sector. To maintain seed quality, a rigorous three-tier certification process is carried

out under the supervision of a scientific team. A detailed inspection schedule ensures quality at every stage—from sowing, post-germination (45-60 days), tillering (100-120 days), millable cane formation (180-200 days), to pre-harvest (15-20 days before cutting). This scientifically driven process enables the consistent supply of certified, high-quality seeds to farmers, steadily enhancing productivity across the state.

Contending just 11 of 36 Mumbai seats, down from 30 in 2019

Delhi: The Congress will fight 11 seats in Mumbai's assembly elections, down from 30 in 2019. The party's lowest seat share in years. After extensive negotiations with Shiv Sena (UBT), led by Mumbai Congress President MP Varsha Gaikwad and MLA Aslam Shaikh, the party battled to secure a better MVA arrangement. Four of the 11 seats are held by Congress, which traded Bandra East for Chandivli with Sena. The party also declined to contest Byculla and Versova, which it want-



ed. A political observer observed, "Congress has its fewest seats in decades. Fighting only 11 seats reveals it failed to negotiate with Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP. Even though NCP (SP) has no MLAs and did not run in Mumbai, it is contesting three seats." Congress is running only Mulund in North East Mumbai for the first time.

UP's tourism sector soars under Yogi govt's vision

Lucknow

Tourism in Uttar Pradesh is poised for significant growth, thanks to the concerted efforts of the Yogi government. The latest projections by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) regarding India's tourism landscape provide strong indicators of this potential. The state government is strategically and proactively working to convert these promising signals into tangible outcomes. As the influx of domestic and interna-

tional tourists continues to rise, it will not only boost the local economy through spending on travel, accommodation, food, and souvenirs but also contribute to the growth of local businesses. Still, it will also generate employment across related sectors, including transportation, hospitality, homestays, and tour guiding. According to the WTTC report, India's tourism figures for 2024 have already surpassed the pre-pandemic benchmarks of 2019. The Council's

forecasts for 2030 are equally encouraging. Uttar Pradesh holds a unique and unmatched position in the national tourism landscape—being home to sacred destinations like Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Shri Ram; Brijbhoomi, associated with the life and teachings of Radha and Krishna; Tirthraj Prayagraj; Kashi, the eternal city of Lord Shiva; and key Buddhist sites such as Kushinagar, Sarnath, and Kapilvastu. As national tourism grows.

Despite PK's 'clean' guarantee, 3 of his 4 picks are 'tainted'



Delhi: Three of poll strategist Prashant Kishor's four candidates for state assembly byelections face serious criminal charges, including kidnapping, attempt to murder, extortion, theft, and assault, contradicting his claims to give only "clean image" politicians a chance. This was revealed after candidates running on Jan Suraj's new tickets filed their affidavits to the Election Commission. Jan Suraj candidates are running in byelections in Belaganj, Imamganj, Ramgarh, and Tarari. Incredibly, 75% of the newly established party's candidates have a "tainted image," confusing

political analysts. His self-attested poll affidavit filed with the EC shows that the party's Imamganj candidate, Jitendra Paswan, has been charged with kidnapping, deceit, theft, and violence. Mohammad Amjad, Belaganj contestant, disclosed criminal charges in his poll affidavit. Jan Suraj Ramgarh candidate Sushil Kushwaha is like his party mates. According to his affidavit, Ramgarh candidate faces attempted murder charges. "All our candidates have a 'clean image', and the cases were part of attempts to damage their reputation," Sadaf Iqbal, Jan Suraj's national spokesperson, said.

'CM-YUVA' scheme emerging as model initiative

Lucknow

The Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan (CM-YUVA) is no longer just a government scheme, it is fast emerging as a movement for self-employment across Uttar Pradesh. In line with the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the state government is now proactively identifying educated and skilled youth and empowering them with financial support of up to ₹5 lakh to help them become self-reliant entrepreneurs. To connect more youth with the benefits of the scheme, a dedicated campaign is being launched across all 75 districts. Special teams of officials will visit universities, engineering colleges, and other higher education institutions to identify students in their final year, as well as those who remain unem-

ployed despite completing their studies. Once identified, eligible youth will be offered interest-free, collateral-free loans of up to ₹5 lakh to help them start their own ventures and become job creators. According to Sarveshwar Shukla, Joint Commissioner of Industries and nodal officer of the scheme, the primary goal of the Yogi government is to empower every eligible, educated, and progressive-thinking youth by helping them launch their businesses. The vision is to transition youth from "seeking jobs" to "creating jobs." Along with financial support, technical guidance will also be provided to ensure the success of these entrepreneurial initiatives. To ensure effective implementation, specialized training is being imparted to officials. A two-day capacity-building workshop

was recently held at Niryat Bhawan in Lucknow, focusing on improving the rollout of the scheme and enhancing the functionality of the CM Yuva Portal. These trained officials will soon begin visiting campuses to implement the scheme at the grassroots level. Under this visionary initiative, over 2.5 lakh youth have already applied for loans. Of these, more than 1.10 lakh applications have been forwarded to banks, and loans have been sanctioned to over 53,000 applicants, with 40,000 already receiving funds. A significant number of women, as well as youth from OBC, SC, and minority communities, have enthusiastically participated in the scheme and are now walking the path of self-reliance. Young entrepreneurs across.

Karnataka govt. halts Waqf Act eviction letters to farmers amid protests

Karnataka's home minister, G Parameshwara, ordered district deputy commissioners to stop issuing Waqf Act eviction letters to farmers and use revenue records to determine land ownership. "The chief minister ordered all deputy commissioners to withdraw such notices and letters. Parameshwara stated the situation is addressed, but future events are unpredictable. Reports that the Waqf Board claimed lands registered 50 years ago sparked the issue. Parameshwara stated that Waqf claims must match revenue records to be valid. D K Shivakumar, deputy chief minister, accused the BJP of modifying Waqf Act Records of Rights, Tenancy, and Crops (RTC).



Govt. sets benchmark, completes 76 bridge projects in one year

Lucknow

With a strong commitment to transforming Uttar Pradesh into a state with world-class connectivity, the Yogi government is setting unprecedented benchmarks for development. Reflecting the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, an impressive 76 bridge projects were completed within a single financial year—2024-25—by the Uttar Pradesh State Bridge Corporation Limited under the Public Works Department. These projects were executed with uncompromising quality standards and include 43 river bridges, 28 Road Over Bridges (ROBs), and 5 flyovers—marking a record achievement in infrastructure development. Beyond this year's achievements, CM Yogi's tenure has been marked by continued infrastructure progress. Over the last eight years, a total of 471 bridge projects have been successfully completed by the Uttar Pradesh State Bridge Corporation Limited. This includes 313 river bridges, 143 ROBs, and 15 flyovers—ensuring improved regional connectivity across the state. Alongside these achievements, the financial performance of UPSBCL has also seen remarkable growth. According to data from the Public Works Department, the Corporation's turnover has significantly increased during CM Yogi's tenure. From ₹1,013.74 crore in 2017-18, the turnover rose to ₹1,360.34 crore in 2018-19. The trend continued with further growth in subsequent years—₹1,511.18 crore in 2019-20, ₹1,936.92 crore in 2020-21, and ₹1,959.33 crore in 2021-22. Although there was a marginal dip in 2022-23 to ₹1,946 crore, the Corporation bounced back with record turnovers of ₹2,376 crore in 2023-24 and ₹2,583 crore in 2024-25. Overall, the turnover has increased 2.5 times since 2017-18, underlining the Corporation's expanding capacity and efficiency. To sustain and build on this momentum, UPSBCL has prepared a comprehensive action plan for the construction and development of upcoming bridge projects across the state. As per CM Yogi's directives, detailed reports have been compiled for all 10 administrative divisions, identifying ongoing and planned works. Under this roadmap, the focus in the financial year 2025-26 will be on completing priority projects that promise maximum benefit to the regional population—ensuring that development is both strategic and inclusive.

CM Yogi orders construction of integrated govt office complex-

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasised the need to bring all district and divisional-level government offices under one roof in Mathura and Kanpur. He directed the construction of integrated complexes in both cities, equipped with suitable chambers for advocates, proper

parking, food courts, and other civic facilities. The CM noted that such complexes will not only ease administrative functions, but also save citizens from making multiple visits to various offices. On Thursday, the Chief Minister reviewed the 'Vision 2030' plans prepared for Mathura-Vrindavan and Kanpur.

Cabinet Minister Rakesh Sachan, senior officials from the state administration, and officials from Mathura and Kanpur were present. Detailed presentations on both cities were reviewed during the meeting. Regarding Mathura-Vrindavan, the CM remarked that the region has suffered from unplanned .

Shinde launches Sena's campaign, criticizes

Delhi:

Maharashtra state minister Eknath Shinde criticized Arvind Sawant for his alleged insulting remarks on Shiv Sena leader Shaina NC, stating Balasaheb Thackeray would have broken her mouth if he were alive. Eknath Shinde called Arvind Sawant's comments against imported maals "unfortunate" and stated he accepts no criticism. "Really unfortunate. Criticizing a woman is wrong and never



enough. Claiming to follow Balasaheb Thackeray, their deeds betray their actual nature. "If Balasaheb had been here, Shiv Sainik would have broken his face. Character is revealed by their deeds. Eknath Shinde said the "sisters of Maharashtra will show him his place and send

Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena to form Sanatana Dharma protection wing

Delhi: Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party (JSP) president Pawan Kalyan announced the formation of the Narasimha Varahi Brigade to safeguard Sanatana Dharma in Telugu states Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. I speak for the Jana Sena Party, not the NDA. "Several people have asked us to keep a youth wing, cultural wing, etc., but with Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy's blessing, we will set up



a wing to protect Sanatana Dharma," Pawan Kalyan added. Pawan Kalyan stressed the significance of respecting religion, especially when visiting Hindu temples and practicing Sanatana

Dharma. Sanatana Dharma guides India and the world, he said. Visiting Hindu temples and adopting Sanatana Dharma requires some ideals. The country can not survive without

Sanatana Dharma, a guiding light for the globe, he said. The JanaSena president stressed religious tolerance but defended Sanatana Dharma. "We respect churches and mosques, but we will punish any act that hurts Hindus. He stated social media posts mocking Hinduism or Sanatana Dharma are prohibited. Kalyan added that the Narasimha Varahi group would include Sanatana Dharma.-focused JSP Jana