

Inspiration: Late. Dr. L.C. Wallia

VATIKA TIMES

English Daily Newspaper

Sunday, 29 June, 2025

Year: 04

Vol: 105

Loharu

Price: Rs. 01/-

Pages: 08

vatikatimes@gmail.com

Pahalgam horror caught on cam: Zipliner inadvertently records terror attack



Vatika Times
NEW DELHI: A video has surfaced from Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, captured during the terror attack on April 22 that left 26 people dead. The footage shows a tourist ziplining across the scenic valley, smiling and recording his experience, seemingly unaware of the violence unfolding below. However, in the video the operator can be heard saying, "Allahu Akbar" before pushing the man on the zip line. Gunshots can be heard in the background of the video, even as Bhatt continues his ride across the landscape. At the same time, terrorists opened fire on a group of tourists at the popular Baisaran meadow, turning a day of leisure into a scene of tragedy. He has not verified the video independently. The terrorist incident occurred in the Baisaran meadow of Pahalgam area, situated near the popular tourist destination in Jammu and Kashmir. This attack stands as one of the most severe incidents in the region since the 2019 Pulwama incident, which claimed the lives of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

Youth Mock Parliament is a living laboratory of policy-making: CM

Vatika Times
Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Naib Singh Saini said that the Youth Mock Parliament is not just a program, it is a celebration of democracy and a living laboratory of policy-making. He called upon the youth to give a clear message to the country through this mock parliament that the protection of democracy is our top priority. Chief Minister Naib Singh Saini was addressing the youth at the Youth Mock Parliament organized in Gurugram today. He said that the Youth Mock Parliament is not just an academic exercise, but also an opportunity to remember this day as Samvidhan Hatya Diwas, and to discuss the dark chapter of the Emergency, which dared to crush the soul of democracy. Gurugram has always carried forward the spirit of innovation and aspiration. The Chief Minister said that this program organized on the land of Gurugram is not only a sign of the bright future of the youth, but its role as a strong laboratory of democracy is highly commendable. He said that Gurugram, the holy land of Guru Drona and famous as the Millennium City, has always carried for-



ward the spirit of innovation and aspiration. Today's event further strengthens the identity of this city. The Chief Minister said that when he sees energetic youth like you, the resolve of a developed India and a developed Haryana becomes even stronger. He said that this generation of Amritkaal will lead India towards making a developed nation by the year 2047. The youth mock parliament will be a milestone in achieving this goal. Every word that resonates in the Parliament and every law that is made affects the life of the last person in the country. Naib Singh Saini told the youth that they should not see the Parliament only as a building but understand it as the center of aspirations of 140 crore countrymen. Every word that resonates in the Parliament and every law that is made

affects the life of the last person in the country. The objective of this youth mock parliament is not just to imitate parliamentary procedures but to imbibe the spirit that makes Indian democracy unique. They should study any topic in depth while speaking and present their views on the basis of facts and figures. When they support any policy of the government, they must explain the thinking behind it and its far-reaching consequences. He said that protesting is a right of democracy but not just protesting but constructive criticism with solutions and alternatives is the real strength of democracy. He clarified that there should be protest in democracy and not obstruction. India has become a partner in solving global problems. Praising the leadership of Prime Minister

Haryana Government constitutes Seventh State Finance

Vatika Times
Chandigarh

The Haryana Government has constituted the Seventh State Finance Commission to review and recommend the distribution of financial resources between the State, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies. Former Chief Secretary of Haryana, Shri Sanjeev Kaushal has been appointed as the Chairman of the Commission, while IAS officer Shri Anshaj Singh

will be its Member Secretary. Other members will be appointed later. A notification in this regard has been issued by Chief Secretary Shri Anurag Rastogi. The Commission will recommend principles for distribution of taxes, duties, cesses and net proceeds of taxes between the State Government and Zila Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats. It will also state which taxes and duties may be assigned to or collected by the

Panchayati Raj Institutions. Apart from this, the Commission will also recommend on grants to be given to PRIs from the Consolidated Fund of the State and measures to improve their financial position. Similarly, the commission will also make suggestions regarding urban local bodies, including distribution of taxes and levies between municipalities and the state government, identifying taxes assignable to municipalities.

The teachings given by great men are still relevant: Bedi

Vatika Times
Chandigarh

Haryana's Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Shri Krishna Kumar Bedi has said that saints and great men are not limited to any particular caste or class but are ideals for the entire society. India has been the mother of sages, saints, ascetics and great men since ancient times and from time to time many saints and gurus have given the message of harmony, equality and cor-

diality to India as well as the whole world. The teachings given by the great men are equally relevant even in the present times and the words of the saints pave the way for the welfare of the entire society. Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Shri Krishna Kumar Bedi was speaking as the chief guest at the Prakat Utsav organized on the occasion of the 628th birth anniversary of Sant Kabir Ji at Valmiki Bhawan.

Case lodged against unknown person for issuing threats

SAMBHAL: A man allegedly entered Samajwadi Party MP Zia Ur Rehman's house and threatened him, police said on Saturday. A case was lodged in the matter on Friday against an unidentified youth at the Nakhasa police station, circle officer Asmoli Alok Kumar Sidhu told PTI. Kamil, who works at Zia ur Rehman's Deepa Sarai residence, told reporters that a youth came to the Sambhal MP's house and threatened him.

The government is constantly making efforts to expand health services and spread education

Vatika Times
Chandigarh

Haryana Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Krishan Kumar Bedi has said that the state government is constantly making efforts to expand health services and spread education. Medical facilities are being made ultra-modern so that the common people of the state get health benefits and free treatment and treatment is being made available to the poor

and economically weak people in government hospitals. In future, Haryana will become a healthy and prosperous state and Narwana constituency will also get full benefit of health services and facilities. Mr. Bedi was speaking as the chief guest at the foundation stone laying ceremony of Block Public Health Unit at Civil Hospital in Narwana (Jind) on Saturday. He said that this unit hall will be built by the

Municipal Council and about Rs 60 lakh will be spent on its construction. He said that there will be a multipurpose hall in this block unit. Health checkup camps can be organized by the department from time to time in this multipurpose hall as per the need. Apart from this, pathology lab, nursing room, board room and other health related checkup and test facilities will also be available in this hall.

Modi-Nayab Government's schemes are benefiting the common man on the ground

Vatika Times
Chandigarh

Haryana's Cooperative, Heritage and Tourism Minister Dr Arvind Sharma said that in the last 11 years, the Bharatiya Janata Party government has made the system transparent and simple, so that the common man does not have to make rounds of government offices. He said that due to the system of availing the benefits of hundreds of schemes from home, today the common man has a feeling of satisfaction towards the BJP government. Today, Cooperative Minister Dr Arvind Sharma held a regular weekly court in Gohana and interacted with the people of the area. He met hundreds of people from various villages and urban



areas and enquired about their well-being and then listened to their problems. Cabinet Minister Dr Arvind Sharma instructed the officials that whenever a person goes to the government office with his problem, his matter should be heard on priority and appropriate action should

be taken. He said that if the officials treat the common man politely and resolve their problems on the spot, then their problems will be resolved. Cabinet Minister Dr Arvind Sharma said that in the last 11 years, the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the state govern-

ment led by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini have taken effective steps for the upliftment of the poor, deprived and needy. This has increased the trust of the common people towards the BJP government. He said that the BJP government is continuously working towards the welfare of the common people, farmers, youth, women, poor. Due to transparency in government jobs, today the youth are getting opportunities on the basis of merit, which has increased the competitive spirit in them. Not only this, the youth are also showcasing their talent by taking advantage of the schemes of the central and state government to make the youth self-reliant.

'Repatriate Kerala man's mortal remains killed in Jordan': Tharoor

Vatika Times

NEW DELHI: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor and BJP leader V Muraleedharan have sought ministry of external affairs' intervention in the repatriation of the mortal remains of the Kerala man shot dead at the Israel-Jordan border last month.

Tharoor said that he had written to MEA and the embassy "requesting urgent action to expedite the return of the mortal remains to the family in Thiruvananthapuram." "This is the most unfortunate and tragic situation, Thomas Gabriel from my constituency, was shot dead by apparently by Jordanian security forces in Jordan at the border with Israel, we are not fully aware of the circumstances.

Kalyan inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 7 projects worth about Rs 3.77 crore

Vatika Times
Karnal

Haryana Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 7 projects worth Rs 3 crore 76 lakh 45 thousand in Gharaunda constituency on Saturday. On this occasion, he told the villagers to openly put forward their problems and demands, every reasonable work will be completed. A strong foundation of progress has been laid in the constituency. Pending works are being completed at a fast pace. The construction work of the training center for women of self-help groups has started. Efforts will be made to complete it within two years. Harvinder Kalyan laid the foundation stone of the road from the PWD road to the crematorium in village Bharatpur. This 1278 meter long road to be built by the

Panchayati Raj Department will cost Rs 57 lakh 25 thousand. The target has been set to complete the construction work of this road to be made of paver blocks in four months. He also laid the foundation stone of the sub-health center in Sadarpur village. Its construction will be done by the District Council. It will cost Rs 67 lakh 26 thousand. Inaugurated the road built at a cost of Rs 27 lakh. The Assembly Speaker inaugurated the 220 meter long connecting road built by the Mandi Board from Mundi Garhi-Garhi Khajur Road to village Bassi. Rs 27 lakh has been spent on it. After this, the foundation stone was laid for the construction of 14 rooms in the Government Senior Secondary School of the village by the Haryana School Education Project Council in village Garhi Khajur.

US-China trade war: Why Xi Jinping is 'ghosting' Donald Trump

Vatika Times

NEW DELHI: China on firmly denied that President Xi Jinping has recently spoken to Donald Trump, directly contradicting the US president's public assertions that tariff talks are underway.

"As far as I know, there has been no phone call between the two heads of state recently," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told reporters in Beijing. "China and the United States are not conducting consultations or negotiations on tariff issues." The Chinese Embassy in Washington doubled down: "China and the US are NOT having any consultation or negotiation on #tariffs. The US should stop creating confusion."



Development work is being done equally under the leadership of CM : Rana

Vatika Times
Karnal

Assandh MLA Yogendra Rana today formally laid the foundation stone for the construction of the road from Assandh to Khizrabad. For this important development work, MLA Yogendra Rana expressed his gratitude to Haryana Chief Minister Naib Saini, Union Energy Minister Manohar Lal and Public Works Department Minister Ranbir Singh Gangwa and said that this road will give new impetus to the devel-

opment of Assandh assembly constituency and will make the movement of the people of the area more smooth. The MLA said that under the able leadership of Haryana Chief Minister Saini, all development works are being completed at a fast pace and no shortage of funds will be allowed to come in the way of development work. Today, the state is developing under the leadership of CM Saini and from road to vil-

lage, today Haryana is improving, changing and moving forward. In Assandh assembly constituency, people are being provided with all basic facilities including electricity, drinking water supply lines and sewerage system and beautification of parks. The central and state governments are always committed to the development of the region and for this purpose, the Ganga of development is flowing in the country and the state without any discrimination. Development is a continuous process.

Editorial

It aspires to make local Saudis understand better

Ritu Walia

The presence of women in the workforce has also meant increased intermingling of genders and rewriting of many social norms and gender behaviours. A big focus of Vision 2030 is also the cultural and social integration of all those living and working in Saudi Arabia. The Media Ministry's Global Harmony project is aimed at enhancing understanding and collaborations between diverse groups that call Saudi home. According to the Saudi Deputy Minister of Media, Dr Khaled Bin Abdulqader al Ghamdi, the Global Harmony project aims to make expats feel more at home. But more than that, it aspires to make local Saudis understand better the various communities that live among them. So, during the Riyadh Season, which starts in September and continues till February-March, you see a host of public cultural and social events to bring communities together. It's a true celebration and appreciation of diversity. Even among the expats, special attention is on Indians, who are the largest expat group in Saudi Arabia. At present, 2.6 million Indians live in the Kingdom, working in the domestic sector as well as private jobs, and running both start-ups as well as big companies. Recognising the role of India, Dr Khaled calls the community "an integral part of the Saudi story". This year, the Media Ministry dedicated the Suwaidi Park festival exclusively to India. The 10-day festival saw a celebration of Indian culture, food, music and art. People from all communities streamed into the vast Suwaidi Park to savour a slice of India. The Global Harmony project attempts to present Saudi as an inclusive and harmonious society where people from all backgrounds live and celebrate their own cultures, traditions and festivals. And, it's not some civil society gig. It's a government policy initiative with clear objectives and plans.

That makes it an attempt worth emulating for many countries that are facing social fissures due to their diversity. As Saudi strides into modernity, it is also conscious of its history and heritage. It's encouraging studies and excavations at heritage sites, such as at al Ula, and is promoting its pre-Islamic history too. Nouf Marwaai, a yoga instructor and also a consultant with the Saudi government, gave us a presentation on the historical and social similarities between India and Saudi Arabia. In her talk, she went back to 6000 BCE to trace the Almagar Civilisation. Clearly, the new Saudi Arabia projects itself as an old civilisation, and not just as a society defined by the advent of Islam 1,400 years ago. That is now portrayed as only an important event, not the sole marker of the civilisational identity. The Kingdom is also promoting its historical sites. The Diriyah town, just outside Riyadh, is one such heritage site that has a UNESCO tag. It was the home of the Saudi royal family and also served as the capital of the Emirate of Diriyah under the first Saudi dynasty from 1744 to 1818. Today, Diriyah is one of the foremost cultural hubs and the centre of many sports and adventure activities in the Kingdom. Even so, its historical character has been maintained all along. On the one hand, you have mega infrastructural projects, new businesses and modern wave sweeping Saudi, and on the other, there is a renewed focus on its over 1,400-year-old history. Coming back to the India connect: wherever there are Indians, there is music. Indian film music has been a great brand ambassador and unifier across the world. Saudi Arabia is no different. My local support, Abdulwahab al Ghamdi, a young, peppy guy in his late 20s, played Hindi songs for me in the car while we drove around Riyadh. He told me that he and his friends dance to Punjabi numbers at their parties. And how he loved Shah Rukh Khan and Indian film music.

and also a consultant with the Saudi government, gave us a presentation on the historical and social similarities between India and Saudi Arabia. In her talk, she went back to 6000 BCE to trace the Almagar Civilisation. Clearly, the new Saudi Arabia projects itself as an old civilisation, and not just as a society defined by the advent of Islam 1,400 years ago. That is now portrayed as only an important event, not the sole marker of the civilisational identity. The Kingdom is also promoting its historical sites. The Diriyah town, just outside Riyadh, is one such heritage site that has a UNESCO tag. It was the home of the Saudi royal family and also served as the capital of the Emirate of Diriyah under the first Saudi dynasty from 1744 to 1818. Today, Diriyah is one of the foremost cultural hubs and the centre of many sports and adventure activities in the Kingdom. Even so, its historical character has been maintained all along. On the one hand, you have mega infrastructural projects, new businesses and modern wave sweeping Saudi, and on the other, there is a renewed focus on its over 1,400-year-old history. Coming back to the India connect: wherever there are Indians, there is music. Indian film music has been a great brand ambassador and unifier across the world. Saudi Arabia is no different. My local support, Abdulwahab al Ghamdi, a young, peppy guy in his late 20s, played Hindi songs for me in the car while we drove around Riyadh. He told me that he and his friends dance to Punjabi numbers at their parties. And how he loved Shah Rukh Khan and Indian film music.



A frustrated Zelensky dismissed the Riyadh talks

Mahesh Singh

Marco Rubio met the Russian delegation headed by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Saudi Arabia, to discuss peace. Ukraine was not invited. Putin—who had been shunned by the US and its allies since the invasion of Ukraine—was delighted. A frustrated Zelensky dismissed the Riyadh talks as worthless. Trump did not like those comments and called the Ukraine President a dictator, even accusing him of starting the war. Zelensky said the US President was living in a Russian-made "disinformation space". This infuriated Trump, who does not take kindly to any criticism. The proposal has been dismissed by Russia, which currently has about 600,000 troops in Ukraine. But even Britain and France, with much smaller armies than Russia, can't send troops to Ukraine without some backup from the United States. And that looks unlikely, for now. Trump's Ukraine envoy, General Keith Kellogg, who visited Kyiv and met Zelensky on Thursday, said all options must be open to deal with the outcome of peace talks. But he knows that any decision to provide any US military cover will be made by Trump who looks less inclined to do that. He described Zelensky as "a modestly successful comedian" who "talked the United States of America into spending \$350 Billion, to go into a War that couldn't be won, that never had to start, but a War that he, without the U.S. and 'TRUMP,' will never be able to settle." Trump's behaviour towards Zelensky is in stark contrast to Biden's, who had backed Ukraine against Russia with all the possible military and financial



aid. President Biden travelled to Ukraine many times since the Russian invasion in February 2022 to display his administration's full support. He also promised NATO membership to Ukraine at a future date. Russia was severely punished for invading Ukraine. The US joined hands with its allies to isolate Moscow. Russia faced tough sanctions and its assets in the West were seized. The International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant against Putin for alleged war crimes in Ukraine. There were even plans to put Putin and his close allies on Nuremberg-style trials. Until a year ago, Ukraine's leader was talking about even liberating all its territory, including Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, with the help of Western military equipment. Ukraine even succeeded in occupying the Russian territory of Kursk, which it had thought would be used as a bargaining chip during negotiations with Moscow. But all that now looks like a distant dream. With Trump back in the White House, Ukraine fears that Russia will be allowed to keep all the occupied territory as part of the deal to end the war. Kyiv is now likely to be denied NATO membership. That could be a promise to Russia to end the war. The US under Trump has

now even opposed calling Russia an aggressor in a G-7 statement being prepared to mark the third anniversary of the war. The US team removed the phrase from the first draft, which was prepared by Canada, the current holder of the group's presidency. It is not just Ukraine, America's European allies are also now nervous about the intent of Trump. Since the Second World War, they enjoyed the US security umbrella under NATO. But now they are unsure if the US under Trump will honour Article 5 of the NATO, which is triggered when a member state comes under attack. It implies that an attack on one member is an attack on all. There is even fear in Europe that Donald Trump may sign a deal with the Russian leader Vladimir Putin that will lead to the withdrawal of US forces from Baltic states and effectively kill the NATO alliance. That could be similar to the non-aggression treaty signed by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany on August 23, 1939, sending shockwaves to other European countries and prompting Hitler and Stalin to annex neighbouring countries. It is another matter that Hitler invaded the Soviet Union two years later, putting an end to the treaty. European members of NATO may call them-

selves major powers, but they can't match Russia's military might without US support. Even after losing more than a hundred thousand men and lots of military equipment in the Ukraine conflict, Moscow remains a strong power, mainly because of its nuclear arsenal. So Why Has Trump Changed The Narrative? Trump has always been an admirer of strongmen like Putin. Even during his first term, he developed a rapport with him. He also dislikes Zelensky, whom he sees as more of a roadblock in ending the Ukraine conflict. As a former businessman, Trump sees things from the perspective of profitable deals. Western sanctions have hit Russia, but American companies have also suffered business losses, running into billions of dollars. He would like to reverse that. And despite Ukraine's resistance, Trump believes Zelensky will have to give access to critical minerals in return for any future US support. Some in the Trump administration suggest Kyiv should provide Americans with those minerals in return for the US military and financial aid already received by Ukraine. Trump has blamed European leaders for not doing enough to end the Ukraine war. He has also complained for a long time that Europe has lived off the US for too long and it must pay for its security. Europeans have increased their defence budgets but not enough to survive without US support. In the face of changing US policy under Trump, European leaders are working on a plan to guard against a Russian attack. This involves a proposal to deploy tens of thousands of peacekeeping troops in Ukraine. The proposal has the support of

Britain and France and is in response to Zelensky's request of 100,000 troops. But the idea doesn't have wider support in Europe. Germany, another big power in the continent. Donald Trump has spent only a month in his second term as the US President. However, he has disrupted the international order, weakened the Western alliance and created a sense of insecurity and uncertainty among its members, surprising even some of his supporters. There has been a paradigm shift in US foreign policy under Trump. He is now closer to Moscow than Washington's traditional allies. He has embraced the Kremlin's narrative on Ukraine and has sidelined US allies. Although senior members of the Trump administration have denied that the US has abandoned Kyiv and ignored its European allies, Trump himself has not made any serious attempts to pacify Ukrainians and Europeans. His closeness to Russia has been on display since he talked for 90 minutes on the phone with Russian leader Vladimir Putin, in which they agreed to start negotiations to end the Ukraine war, which will mark its third anniversary on Monday. Trump did speak to Zelensky soon after that call with Putin, but a nervous Ukrainian President warned that excluding his country from the talks would be "very dangerous". Events after that only made Ukrainians feel sidelined. Trump's Vice President, JD Vance, met European leaders in Munich two days later. But his comment that Europe will not be included in the peace talks only helped fuelled the speculation that they were being left out of the future of Ukraine

Will Bihar Pay Attention This Time?

Suman

In this context, many questioned whether Modi was in Bihar trying to test the ideological limits of the BJP. "Those who believe in jungle raj hate our heritage and our faith," he said, slamming the opposition for "abusing" the current Maha Kumbh of Unity. He stressed that more individuals had bathed at the Kumbh than lived in Europe. Anyone who finds fault with the Ram temple will seize the chance to criticize the Maha Kumbh. He made it clear that someone who disrespects the Maha Kumbh would never be forgiven in Bihar. Lalu Prasad Yadav caused a stir last week when he criticized the Maha Kumbh Mela, claiming that it was "meaningless" and placing the responsibility on the Railways for the 18 lives lost in the stampede. The people who disagreed with Maha Kumbh weren't limited to him either. In addition, Akhilesh Yadav, leader of the Samajwadi Party (SP), offered Yogi Adityanath and himself a book based on a Harvard University research on Kumbh Mela management that they had commissioned in 2013. The oppo-

sition has brought up the problems of the January 29 stampede, the filthy water, and the enormous number of worshippers at the Mela on multiple occasions. Mamata Banerjee, chief minister of West Bengal, used the moniker "Mrityu Kumbh" to emphasize the gravity of the events. Despite the Opposition's nasty campaign, devoted Hindus were unconvinced. In spite of all the negative feedback, a staggering 62 crore people made the journey to the Sangam to take a sacred dip, proving once and for all the spiritual importance of Maha Kumbh. Leading the criticism of the Ganga holy plunge was Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, who said it was "not good enough to remove poverty." By sending his family to the Sangam for a holy plunge, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar set an example for believing Congress lawmakers. Seen on X alongside him were digvijaya Singh, abhishek Singhvi, and Sachin Pilot, all prominent figures in the Congress party. Members of the Gandhi family have a long history of participating in the Kumbh Mela.

Aasavage irony is unfolding in Uttar Pradesh right now

Rashi Singh

Aasavage irony is unfolding in Uttar Pradesh right now. India's holiest gathering is a hunting ground for faceless remote predators. At the "once in 144 years" Maha Kumbh Mela underway in Prayagraj, where millions congregate to wash away their sins in the Ganga, an unholy alliance of voyeurs, traders, and technology has formed. They're transforming purification into portable entertainment. What's on sale? The privacy and bodily integrity of women devotees. And the price? Anywhere between Rs 800 and Rs 2,000, depending on the quality of violation. Indian women have been failed, yet again, by a new trinity: The holy, the unholy, and the algorithm. Last week, 13 FIRs were lodged against 140 social media accounts for posting objectionable videos of women, including those of female devotees taking a dip at the Kumbh. The bathing videos came to light during a separate investigation by the Ahmedabad Cyber Crime Police into videos sourced from a Rajkot hospital's gynaecology department. The investigation revealed that the three accused—Prajwal Taili, Praj Patil, and Chandraprakash Phoolchand—ran at least 22 Telegram channels where they sold clips of women, recorded and traded without their consent. The three men, a YouTuber from Maharashtra, ran their enterprise under an innocuous name "Megha Demos Group". The channels, with labels like "CCTV Injection Group", "Labor Room Injection Group", and "Ganga River Open Bathing Group", turned these transgressions into a menu of options. "Disturbingly, some content featured covert recordings from hospital labour rooms, medical examinations, and public areas like bus stands, marriage halls, and par-

lours," cyber crime officers told The Times of India. This lucrative venture raked in Rs 8 lakh a year. To the credit of UP Police, their social media monitoring team has moved swiftly, and identified 15 more accounts across Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram participating in this ecosystem of exploitation. The state government has now banned cameras at bathing ghats, deploying CRPF and state police personnel to enforce this prohibition. In 2019 too, the Allahabad High Court had banned the publishing of photos and videos of women at the Kumbh Mela: "The court said no pictures of women bathing or taking a holy dip should be shared. It also warned that action would be taken if the order was broken. This rule applies to both print and visual media." This violation and commodification of women's bodies at the Maha Kumbh represents a betrayal across three interconnected spheres. It's not as if Indian women are unfamiliar with such trespasses—that's our daily reality. But the Kumbh videos expose a particularly perverse intersection of faith, trade, and technology. First, there is the sacred: In a space of spiritual liberation, the crowd provides both cover and target for predators. Elaborate systems, at Indian temples and other places of worship prevent photography to protect idols and deities. Those regulations don't extend to the bodies of women who show up at these sites. Then comes the betrayal by the profane, a carefully constructed marketplace where every assault is catalogued, priced, and traded. What's most chilling about the Kumbh videos is the clinical efficiency of their distribution. The "Megha Demos Group" operated with the precision of a tech startup, complete with a freemium business model.

Muslims want waqf reforms too. It's not an issue for political acrimony

Saariq

For waqf administration. In fact, some Islamic nations do not have waqf institutions at all. It is rather unfortunate that acrimonious divisions within the parliamentary committee marred the tabling of the report in Parliament. While a certain degree of politicisation is natural in a parliamentary democracy during any law-making exercise, the underlying values of non-partisan deliberation, consensus-building, and effective communication between ruling and Opposition parties are essential for advancing the national interest. As such, these values must inform the

future parliamentary course of action on the waqf reforms. Data from the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) from April 2022 to March 2023 further reveals that out of 566 complaints received, 194 related to illegal encroachment and transfer of waqf land, while 93 were against waqf officials and mutawallis. Moreover, an appraisal of the functioning of waqf tribunals reveals that 40,951 cases are currently pending, of which 9,942 have been filed by Muslims themselves against institutions managing waqfs. In addition, there are inordinate delays in

the disposal of cases, and there's no provision for judicial oversight of tribunal decisions. Over the years, a number of issues pertaining to mismanagement have come to the fore—delays in registration of waqf properties, waqf boards fetching rents below market value, rampant encroachments on waqf land, denial of inheritance rights of widows, non-completion of surveys by survey commissioners, and slow progress in digitisation of waqf property records. Many such issues have been extensively reported in the media from time to time. The proposed reforms also contemplate representa-

tion for underrepresented and deprived Muslim groups, including women and Pasmandas. The idea is to make state waqf boards and the Central Waqf Council more diverse and inclusive. Not only will such a measure lead to sociological diversity and gender balance within these institutions, it could also reshape the political interaction of the Muslims with the BJP. Further, the proposal to include non-Muslim members who bring technical expertise in waqf administration should not trigger anxiety within the community, provided such representation does not erode the community's primacy.

Credila Financial Services Limited files UDRHP-I with SEBI

Vatika Times GURUGRAM : Credila Financial Services Limited, ("the Company") an Indian education finance company focused on providing education loans to Indian students pursuing higher education in India and overseas has filed its UDRHP-I with SEBI. The Company plans to raise funds through initial public offering. The total issue size aggregating up to 5,000 crores comprises of fresh issue of equity share aggregating up to 3,000 crores and offer for sale of Equity Share aggregating up to 2,000 crores of face value of 10 per equity share. The Offer for sale of equity share aggregating up to 2,000 crores (face value of 10 each) comprises of up to 950 crores by Kopvoorn B.V. ("Promoter Selling Shareholder") and up to 1,050 crores by HDFC Bank Limited



("Other Selling Shareholder"). Founded in 2006, the company is a leading education finance company in India across multiple parameters according to industry report. The Company proposes to utilise the Net Proceeds towards augmenting capital base to meet Company's future capital requirements arising out of growth of its business and assets. A Pre-IPO Placement of the specified securities may be undertaken by the company, in consultation with the BRLMs, prior to the filing of the Red Herring Prospectus with the ROC for an aggregate amount not exceeding 600 crore ("Pre-IPO Placement"). The Pre-IPO Placement, if undertaken, will be at a price to be decided by the company in consultation with the BRLMs. If the Pre-IPO Placement is undertaken, the amount raised from the Pre-IPO Placement will be reduced from the fresh issue, subject to the offer complying with rule 19(2)(B) of the securities contracts (Regulation) rules, 1957, as amended ("SCRR"). The Pre-IPO Placement, if undertaken, shall not exceed 20% of the fresh issue. Credila Financial Services Limited is the second fastest growing education-focused NBFC in India in terms of year-on-year growth of Net Loans, with a year-on-year growth of 47.67% between the Financial Years 2024 and 2025, according to industry report.

Manika Plastech Limited files DRHP with SEBI for an IPO

Vatika Times GURUGRAM : Manika Plastech Limited, a design-led, precision engineered, rigid polymer packaging manufacturing company has filed Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with SEBI for an Initial Public Offering (IPO). The public offer comprises of a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹ 1,150 millions by company (THE "FRESH ISSUE") and an offer for sale (OFS) aggregating up to 15 million equity shares of face value of ₹ 2 each by VRIDAA Holding Trust the Promoter Selling Shareholders ("OFFER FOR SALE"). Nikunj Mohanlal Kapadia, Munjal Nikunj Kapadia, Mihir Nikunj Kapadia, Pratik Nikunj Kapadia and VRIDAA Holding Trust are the promoter of the company. Manika Plastech Limited is a design-led, precision-engineered rigid polymer packaging manufacturer catering to diversified critical industries such as energy storage, dairy and edible food products, paints, and chemicals. The com-



pany's products are designed and developed in-house, with 36 designs registered as unique intellectual property, out of which two have been applied for renewal, under the Designs Act, 2000 and the Designs Rules, 2001. (Source: Technopak Report) With focus on application specific performance, durability, product safety and efficiency, the company has product portfolio built around precision engineered solutions such as high-performance battery casings, pail & thin-wall containers, each tailoring to serve industrial and consumer use cases. These offerings cater to a broad spectrum of industries, including automotive, energy storage, telecommunications, paints, lubricants, agrochemicals, food, and dairy, among others. The company undertakes production in injection moulded, rigid polymer components, such as precision battery casings pails and thinwall containers. The company proposes to utilize the Net Proceeds towards Funding the capital expenditure towards purchase of plant and machinery, Repayment/pre-payment, in part or full, of certain borrowings availed by the company; and General Corporate Purposes. The Company is proposing to implement using ISBM technology to manufacture additional range of products like PET bottles, jars, containers etc. for industry segments such as, personal care, cosmetics, beverage and pharmaceutical applications, among others. Manika Plastech Limited is one of the top three players for recycled polymers/post-consumer recycled processing output in CY 2023/ FY 2024.

CAPSULES

Maharana Partap Public School Hosts Innovative In-House Training on Active Learning



Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra:

Maharana Partap Public School, Kurukshetra, organized a special in-house training session on the topic of Active Learning to promote innovative teaching practices. The session was effectively led by Meenakshi Malik and Pooja Kakkar, who guided teachers on the significance and techniques of active learning. Meenakshi Malik shared practical strategies to implement active learning in classrooms, while Mrs. Pooja Kakkar explained the scientific foundation behind the approach. The session saw enthusiastic participation from over 69 teachers, who engaged in insightful discussions and knowledge exchange. School Principal Pratima Sharma emphasized that such sessions play a vital role in shaping the future of education and open new avenues for institutional growth.

Geeta Kanya School Alumna Deepika Sharma Selected by Federal Bank with 8 Lakh Annual Package

Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra : Deepika Sharma, an alumna of Geeta Kanya Senior Secondary School, Kurukshetra, and a final-year B.Com. student at Kurukshetra University, has achieved a remarkable milestone through her dedication and hard work. She has been selected for a prestigious position at Federal Bank with an annual package of ₹ 8 lakh, bringing pride to



both her school and university. Deepika attributed her success to the guidance and support of her teachers and parents,

stating that their encouragement at every step of her journey has been her driving force. On this proud occasion, the School Management Committee including President Rajendra Singh Kaler, Vice President Dr. Jitendra Jangra, Manager Balbir Prakash, Treasurer Suresh Saini, educationist Dr. Hari Prakash Sharma, members Dr. Rajesh Agrawal and Saurabh Trikha, women repre-

sentative Anjali Sharma, regional representative Sanjay Chaudhary, Principal Suman Bala, and all the faculty members extended heartfelt congratulations to Deepika and wished her a bright future. They remarked that Deepika's success is an inspiration for today's youth and expressed immense pride in her achievement, hoping she continues to scale even greater heights in the future.

Adesh Hospital Receives Authorization for Organ Retrieval

Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: Marking a significant milestone in the field of healthcare, Adesh Medical College and Hospital, Mohri, has been officially recognized by the Government of Haryana as an authorized center for organ retrieval. Sharing this information, Dr. Guntas Singh Gill, Managing Director of Adesh, stated that with this recognition, the hospital has now been included in the list of the State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (SOTTO) and the National Organ and Tissue Transplant



Organization (NOTTO). This notable achievement makes Adesh Hospital the second medical college in Haryana, after PGIMS Rohtak, to participate in organ retrieval. The

move will greatly benefit critically ill patients in the region by providing them with access to life-saving transplant opportunities. Dr. Gill emphasized that this recognition is not

just an honor but a major responsibility. He said, "Adesh Hospital will now become a ray of hope for families in need of organ transplants. We are committed to carrying out this service with utmost dedication, sensitivity, and transparency." He added that this decision not only brings new recognition to Adesh Hospital but will also directly benefit the people of Haryana by expanding access to vital healthcare services.

Photo Caption: Dr. Guntas Singh Gill, MD of Adesh Hospital,

5,000 km of Road Carpeting Work to Be Completed by December: Ranbir Gangwa

Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: Haryana PWD and Public Health Engineering Minister Ranbir Gangwa announced that the tender process has begun to carpet 5,000 kilometers of roads across the state, and the work will be completed by December. Additionally, patchwork repairs have been completed on another 5,000 kilometers of roads by the PWD department, while 14,300 kilometers of roads are still under maintenance deadlines assigned to contractors. He emphasized that most roads in the state are now pothole-free, and the remaining ones will be repaired soon. Strict action will be taken against any official who fails to comply with government directives or shows negligence in their duties. Minister Ranbir Gangwa was addressing a public gathering at the Prajapati-Kumhar Dharmshala Sabha in Kurukshetra.



During the event, he also extended an invitation to the community for the Guru Daksh Prajapati Jayanti celebration to be held in Bhiwani on July 13. The Sabha President Pawan Kanungo welcomed Minister Gangwa with a bouquet. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that under BJP governance, birth anniversaries of great personalities are celebrated as official events, helping to spread awareness of their contributions to the masses and instilling pride in all communities. He added that Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini will attend the Bhiwani event as the chief

guest. Minister Gangwa further stated that previous governments ignored the needs of the backward and underprivileged sections. Many backlog vacancies across departments remained unfilled. However, the BJP government has completed all backlog recruitments and reformed the recruitment process. He emphasized that youth no longer need political connections or bribes to secure government jobs. Now, only merit matters, and youth are focused on books and qualifying exams to earn jobs on the basis of their capabilities.

Rural Mushroom Processing Units Face Major GST Crisis Over HSN Code Dispute

Jasbir Singh Duggal Kurukshetra: The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI), under the Ministry of Finance, has issued Show Cause Notices worth ₹ 105 crore to several mushroom processing units across North India. The notices cite misclassification of HSN codes, particularly between HSN 0711 (vegetables preserved temporarily, not ready for immediate consumption) and HSN 2003 (vegetables prepared or preserved for immediate consumption). At the core of this dispute lies the canned button mushroom, a key product in the sector. According to a comprehensive report by NIFTEM, canned mushrooms are not immediately consumable and



thus fall under HSN 0711, which attracted 5% GST until December 31, 2018, and 0% thereafter. However, authorities are now seeking to reclassify them under HSN 2003, which carries a higher GST rate, resulting in retrospective tax demands over the past seven years. Industry stakeholders have strongly opposed

this move, terming it technically flawed and financially disastrous. They warn that reclassification would render imported mushrooms cheaper than domestic produce, harming Indian farmers and processors. The mushroom sector plays a vital role in rural livelihoods, especially during peak harvest times when it helps reduce

spoilage and provides income stability to farmers. For example, in the last financial year, association members purchased 4,000 tons of mushrooms directly from farmers, along with similar volumes of sweet corn and baby corn, showcasing the sector's critical role in strengthening the agri-supply chain.

Indian Current Account Surplus After Last Quarter Deficit

According to CRISIL, India's current account surplus improved to \$5.7 billion in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2025, or 0.6% of GDP. This is a considerable improvement from the \$8.7 billion deficit (1.0%) in the third quarter and the \$1.3 billion deficit (0.2%) in the fourth quarter of the previous fiscal year. The current account balance improved due to a shrinking merchandise trade deficit, an enhanced services trade surplus, and rising remittances. Financial flows improved quarterly and annually, resulting in a \$30.8 billion foreign exchange reserve accretion in the fourth quarter, the biggest in ten quarters. India's foreign reserves reached \$652.9 billion on June 24. From the third quarter's 1.0% deficit, India's current account surplus rose to 0.6% of GDP in the fourth quarter. The trade deficit fell to 0.9% of GDP from 2.7% the quarter.

The event will be a landmark gathering of the global construction

New Delhi: Nilesch Jetpariya, Sr. Vice Chairman, Ceramic Panel – Capexil & Member-Board of Trade (Government of India), stated, "The ceramic and tile segment from India is gaining remarkable traction globally due to its quality and innovation. Vibrant Buildcon 2025 will further strengthen our global outreach, offering a strategic opportunity to highlight India's leadership in ceramics and allied products." Vishal Acharya, Global Business Head, Vibrant Buildcon, stated "This year's edition has witnessed unprecedented interest from international buyers, signaling India's growing clout in the global building materials supply chain. We are proud to be facilitating meaningful cross-border business relationships. Jitendra Kathiriya & Vijay Aghara, Directors, Vibrant Buildcon, shared "With partici-

pation from leading brands and innovators, Vibrant Buildcon 2025 is the ultimate destination for product launches, partnerships, and future-ready solutions. We welcome industry professionals, traders, and buyers from across the globe to experience India's manufacturing strength." India's largest building material expo – Vibrant Buildcon 2025 – is set to be inaugurated by Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, April 2025 at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, New Delhi. The event will be a landmark gathering of the global construction and infrastructure industry, featuring over 250 exhibitors, 50,000+ domestic visitors, and 700+ international buyers across a vast 27,000 sq. m exhibition area. A curtain raiser for the exhibition was recently held in New Delhi, attended by key

stakeholders and industry leaders. Prominent guests included: Ramesh Mittal, Chairman, Capexil; Nilesch Jetpariya, Sr. Vice Chairman (Ceramic Panel), Capexil & Member-Board of Trade (Government of India); Harpal Singh, Secretary, Capexil; Narendra Sanghat, Western Region Committee Member, Capexil; Vishal Acharya, Global Business Head, Vibrant Buildcon; Jitendra Kathiriya, Director, Vibrant Buildcon; Vijay Aghara, Director, Vibrant Buildcon. The expo will bring together buyers from over 60 countries, including the USA, Mexico, Brazil, UK, Spain, UAE, and other regions across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, South East Asia, and more. It offers unmatched export, OEM, and joint venture opportunities for Indian manufacturers.

Patent applicants to reveal the nation of origin or the source

Delhi : A new treaty finalized by members of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) requires patent applicants to reveal the nation of origin or the source of genetic resources if the claimed invention is derived from those materials or related traditional knowledge. One of the main demands of the developing world, led by India, is the treaty that will offer extra protection for Indian genetic resources and traditional knowledge, including yoga, siddhi, and ayurveda. The agreement was finalized by the Geneva-based agency that is in charge

of developing regulations pertaining to patents and trademarks. This will force some nations to revise their domestic laws. Rather than trying to register patents to take advantage of the immense traditional knowledge and genetic resources, India has asked that the world's largest corporations give credit to these resources. Even while there is protection against misappropriation in India and other nations without disclosure requirements, the disclosure standards will offer protection internationally. Currently, there are dis-

closure requirements in 35 countries, the majority of which are voluntary and lack the necessary legal framework to be implemented successfully. For the first time, the knowledge and wisdom that have long underpinned economies, civilizations, and cultures will be recognized by the WIPO treaty on intellectual property, genetic resources, and related traditional knowledge. These resources are now part of the global intellectual property system. "As a source of traditional knowledge and wisdom and a reservoir of biodiversity, India has championed.

Redeveloping railway stations opens Rs 30,000 cr in business opportunities

Delhi: EPC companies are expecting Rs 30,000 crore in business from contracts to redevelop/revamp railway stations in the next two years. The Railways have sanctioned 1,318 station redevelopment/revamps, which ICRa Ratings estimates will provide Rs 30,000 crore in commercial potential for EPC firms over the next two years. The government previously planned most station renovation projects as public-private partnerships, accounting for 12% of the national asset monetisation pipeline target. However, due to pricing restrictions, real estate development market risks, and a lack of PPP experience in railways, the government reallocated station redevelopment work to the EPC mode in December 2022 and increased the budgetary allocation by more than seven times from Rs 2,159 crore in FY23 to Rs 15,511 crore in FY25. Railway station rehabilitation offers EPC businesses Rs 30,000 crore in business potential due to intense competition in traditional segments like roads and buildings, according to Vinay Kumar G of the agency. In the past two years, station redevelopment project awards have seen modest competition, with maximum discounts of up to 18% and a median discount of up to 4%, similar to other railway EPC projects with a median discount of up to 5%. UP has the most stations being redeveloped at 149, followed by Maharashtra at 126, Bengal at 94, Gujarat at 87, Bihar at 86, Rajasthan at 82, and MP at 80. Foundation stones have been set for 553 stations, and nearly Rs 20,000 crore has been given for station redevelopment.

Over 1.6 crore Jio subscribers leave in four months

Delhi: At Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., India's largest telecom operator, approximately 1.65 crore subscribers have dropped in the past four months. Reliance Jio lost 37.6 lakh mobile users in October, 79 lakh in September, 40 lakh in August, and 7.58 lakh in July.

Rs 91,000/10gram: Gold hits historic high ahead of wedding season

NASHIK: The price of yellow metal breached a historic mark - Rs 91,000 per 10 gm - ahead of the wedding season. Traders in Nashik and Jalgaon in Maharashtra anticipate further price escalation in the coming days. Jalgaon continues to attract buyers from across Maharashtra,

Gujarat, and MP due to its reputation for ensuring gold purity and exceptional craftsmanship. Sushil Bafana, a Jalgaon-based jeweller, said: "The market rate for 10gm gold on Saturday was Rs 91,052, including tax. On Friday, it was 91,600. The market price is responding

to international developments, including the US action on trade. Even today, many people consider gold the best investment option." The fierce competition amongst Jalgaon jewellers benefits customers, ensuring high-quality products at competitive prices.

District Courts receive instructions to facilitate smooth case

Delhi: Delhi High Court directed the national capital's district courts to follow a number of guidelines to guarantee that video conference equipment functions properly during court sessions.

The Delhi High Court's Acting Chief Justice Manmohan issued the following directives. The video conference must remain active throughout court hours. At the court end, the video will be turned on. According to the office order of June 5, 2023, it will be made sure that the video conference at the court's end won't be kept silent unless the court orders otherwise. According to the office order of June 5, 2023, it will be made sure that the



video conference is not locked and that litigants, counsel, and members of the public can all attend without difficulty, unless the court orders differently. Each Court is required to make certain that the item number is visible throughout the video conference.

Every court must make sure that, in accordance with Office Order of June 5, 2023, a message appears on

the video conferencing screen when the court retires, is not in session, is on leave, or when instructions are given to restrict the proceedings. According to the ruling, the Principal District & Sessions Judges are required to provide a report on the video conference to the Registrar General's office of this Court using the stipulated format.

BSNL launches free mobile intranet TV, national wi-fi roaming

In collaboration with OTTplay, BSNL launched BiTV as a pilot service, offering Pudukcherry mobile subscribers complimentary access to over 300 live television channels, including premium content. The service uses BSNL's mobile intranet to provide stable streaming of television programmes, films, web series and documentaries in multiple languages. "With BiTV, through our partners, BSNL is giving every customer the power to access entertainment on the go, 'anytime, anywhere', free of cost, irrespective of the plan they are, making it a perfect alternative.

Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar took a sharp dig at the ruling NDA

NEW DELHI: The Congress in Bihar has kicked off a state-wide pada-yatra themed "Palayan Roko, Naukri Do" (Stop Migration, Give Jobs), aiming to spotlight the massive unemployment crisis forcing lakhs of youth to leave the state. Led by senior leaders including AICC Bihar in-charge Krishna Allavaru, state Congress chief Akhilesh Prasad Singh, and Kanhaiya Kumar, the march began in West Champaran's Bhitiharwa, the site of Mahatma Gandhi's historic ashram. Youth

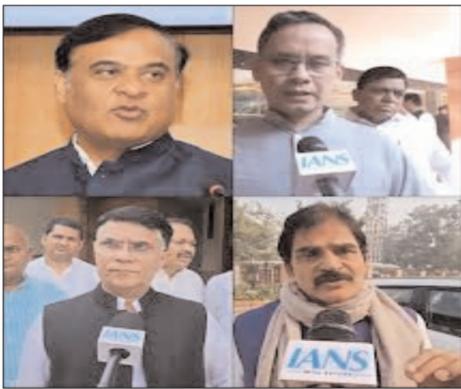
and student volunteers of the party are set to cover multiple districts before reaching Patna. "No jobs, no future?" Speaking at the launch, Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar took a sharp dig at the ruling NDA in Bihar, blaming it for failed employment policies. "Every exam gets leaked or stuck in court battles. Even those who manage to get jobs, like government teachers, are denied pension benefits their seniors enjoyed," he said. Accusing the government of using communal politics as a distrac-

tion, Kumar added, "When a government fails to provide education, healthcare, and jobs, it fuels division in society." "From education to honeymoon, people must leave Bihar" In a fiery speech to young Congress workers, Kumar highlighted Bihar's lack of opportunities. "People leave Bihar not just for jobs, but for everything – education, healthcare, even honeymoons. No one comes here seeking a livelihood, and that's why Biharis face humiliation outside," he remarked.

'10,000 Himantas can't scare one Gaurav Gogoi': Congress' Pawan

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Pawan Khara on Sunday launched a scathing attack on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, saying the BJP leader should remember that his time in office is "limited." Khara's remarks came in response to the arrest of Assam Congress spokesperson Reetam Singh, which has ignited a fierce political slugfest.

'Days are numbered' Khara accused Sarma of political vendetta, claiming that the Assam CM is "scared" of Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi. "This reminds us of how Congress leaders, myself included, have suffered at the hands of Assam police. The CM should not forget that his days as Chief Minister are numbered," Khara said. Drawing a sharp contrast, he declared, "Even 10,000 Himanta Biswas can't scare one



Gaurav Gogoi." War of words on X The controversy erupted after Assam police arrested Congress spokesperson Reetam Singh in Guwahati over an alleged caste-based insult directed at a Dalit woman. Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh condemned the arrest, calling it an "abuse of police powers," while CM Sarma defended the action, hinting at an explosive revelation. "Wait for the big

revelation," Sarma warned, claiming that a senior Congress leader — Gaurav Gogoi — had links to ISI and Pakistan. Ramesh hit back, calling Sarma the "outgoing CM" and accusing him of weaponizing the police. "Stop diverting attention from the real issue — your misuse of police power to target opponents," he wrote. Congress defends foreign experts

Luxon will be the chief guest and keynote speaker

NEW DELHI: New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon arrived in Delhi on Sunday for an official visit to India. He was received at the airport by minister of state for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, SP Singh Baghel. As Luxon landed in Delhi, India and New Zealand also started negotiations for a "comprehensive and mutually beneficial" Free Trade Agreement (FTA), according to a statement from the Union commerce ministry. "We are delighted to announce the launch of India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. This marks a significant milestone in our partnership, reflecting our shared vision to deepen trade ties and expand economic opportunities," Union minister Piyush Goyal said in a post on

X. Luxon will be the chief guest and keynote speaker at the Raisina Dialogue, which will take place in New Delhi from March 17 to 19. The ministry of external affairs (MEA) spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, posted on X: "Warm welcome to PM @chrisluxonmp of New Zealand as he arrives in New Delhi on his first official visit. Received by MoS for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Prof SP Singh Baghel, at the airport. PM Luxon will also be the Chief Guest & Keynote Speaker in the @raisinadialogue 2025." Later on Sunday, external affairs minister S Jaishankar will meet Luxon. On Monday, Luxon will visit Raj Ghat to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, according to an MEA media advisory. Luxon and Prime Minister Narendra

Modi will meet on Monday at Hyderabad House in Delhi. The meeting will include an exchange of MoUs. Later in the day, Luxon will meet President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Luxon will also hold discussions with Prime Minister Modi and attend the inaugural session of the Raisina Dialogue as the chief guest. His visit to India is from March 16 to 20, marking his first trip to the country as prime minister. He is traveling with one of the largest delegations a New Zealand prime minister has brought. Luxon will visit Mumbai before returning to Wellington. The Raisina Dialogue is India's conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, focusing on international challenges. Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the theme for the 2025 edition.

Studies show polluted air increases Type 2 diabetes risk

Delhi: Air pollution may increase Type 2 diabetes risk. Air pollution, especially PM2.5, is known to cause chronic lung ailments, heart attack, stroke, and cancer, but the diabetes argument is gaining ground. Several research from the US, Europe, and China have shown the association, but a new two-city study from India found that even a 10 g/m3 increase in PM2.5 exposure raises blood sugar. Mumbai-based JAPI (Journal of Association of Physicians of India) published an editorial headlined, "Air Pollution: A New Cause of Type 2 Diabetes?" this month. Diabetes specialist Dr. V Mohan from Chennai wrote, "We now know that PM2.5 is an endocrine disruptor that affects insulin secretion and also leads to insulin resistant." Due to summer, the air quality index has been low in recent weeks, but air pollution is becoming one of urban India's largest problems, killing 20,000 in Mumbai and 50,000 in Delhi annually. Dr. Mohan and Public Health Foundation of India researchers published the first PM2.5-diabetes study a few months ago. "BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care" found links between short-, medium-, and long-term PM2.5 exposure. "A 10 g/m3 increase in monthly average exposure to PM2.5 was associated with a 0.4 mg/dL increase in finger pick blood test and a 0.021 unit increase in HbA1c test," claimed the study. The HbA1c blood test measures blood sugar over three months. The study followed 12,064 Delhi and Chennai people for seven years. A hybrid satellite-based exposure model and ground data were used to track PM2.5 concentrations daily. At follow-up visits, participants' blood sugar was measured. It found that 10 g/m3 of average annual PM2.5 exposure raised Type 2 diabetes risk by

TN should appeal SC ruling on domicile quota

Delhi: A day after the Supreme Court banned domicile-based reservation in specialized and higher education including PG medical courses, MK Stalin's Tamil Nadu government declared it would file a review petition to vindicate its rights and uphold social justice. Health minister Ma Subramanian said the SC order would affect the state's 69% reservation and quotas for in-service applicants in government medical colleges and minorities in self-financing medical colleges. He said that the order would violate state rights. The Union government receives 15% of undergraduate medical seats and 50% of postgraduate medical and super speciality seats through the state quota each year. "All super spe-



cialty seats were lost. "TN gave government doctors a quota for super speciality courses after a court battle," he told reporters. He stated the Centre takes seats unfilled due to a lack of candidates. He said states invest fully in PG and super speciality medical education but share 50% of all-India quota seats. "Now, the judgment deprives us of all seats," Subramanian told reporters. According to him, the verdict will have a major impact on 2025-26 admissions but not 2024.

BBL: Melbourne Stars sign Adam Milne

Melbourne: The Melbourne Stars have signed New Zealand fast bowler Adam Milne to play in the Big Bash League (BBL) before Christmas. He will replace Pakistan leg-spinner Osama Mir, who will not be able to play in the first three matches of this season. The Stars are set to announce a new captain this week after Glenn Maxwell became captain at the end of last season. Maxwell is unlikely to be fit for the first match against the Perth Scorchers on December 15.

This IIM Got Rs 54 Lakh Highest Salary, Rs 5 Lakh Summer

Delhi: IIMs and other premier management institutes are conducting their final placement drives. Final placement season at IIM Mumbai began on November 25 and ended. Microsoft offered the highest remuneration, Rs 54 lakh per year. Coca-Cola paid a record Rs 5 lakh for a two-month summer internship. This year, 78 firms offered 373 jobs at IIM Mumbai's final placement season. Popular brands include Amazon, Microsoft, and Coca-Cola. IIM Mumbai placements saw a 15% boost in average stipend, according to a report. Top 10% of the



cohort received an average pay of Rs 48 lakh in job placements. Additionally, the top 50% of the batch received an average remuneration of Rs 35 lakh. IIM Mumbai ranks sixth in NIRF 2024. After being known as NITIE

Mumbai and then NIIIE, it became the Indian Institute of Management in 2023, becoming the 21st IIM in the country. MBA registration at IIM Mumbai began on November 4. Registration ends January 31, 2025.

Fewer dropouts, but school retention issues

Delhi: The Economic Survey 2024-25 released in Parliament shows that less than half of Indian students complete higher secondary education, despite declining dropout rates across all levels. Dropout rates were 1.9% for primary (Classes I to V), 5.2% for upper primary (Classes VI to VIII), and 14.1% for secondary. Retention rates—the percentage of children who stayed enrolled since first grade—were 85.4% for primary, 78% for elementary, 63.8% for secondary, and 45.6% for higher secondary.



According to the education ministry's Unified District Information System for Education-Plus (UDISE+ 2023-24) report, India's enormous educational system serves 248 million students in 1.5 million schools with 9.8 million instructors. Government schools make up 69% of schools, enroll 50% of pupils, and employ 51% of teachers. The research showed 22.5% private schools, 32.6% student enrollment, and 38% teachers. Digital infrastructure has improved. Computers in schools rose from 38.5% in 2019-20 to 57.2% in 2023-2024, while internet connectivity rose from 22.3% to 53.9%. The poll said the NEP 2020 is based on the idea that "education and human capital development are among the foundational pillars of development." The union government introduced NEP on July 29, 2020, to modernize the education system from school to higher education while maintaining it "rooted in Indianness". Higher education enrollment rose 26.5% to 43.3 million in 2021-22 from 3.42 crore in 2014-15, according to the poll. The poll found that tripling educational infrastructure would be needed to meet the government's 2035 goal of 50% GER in higher education.

India's servers will host DeepSeek's AI models for security

Delhi: The Indian government said it will host Chinese start-up DeepSeek's AI models on its computers to monitor security and safety. The country increased its efforts to give computers to entrepreneurs and researchers to accelerate the development of localized AI 'foundational models' or tech solutions to offset US and Chinese AI developments. IT and electronics minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the government is buying 18,693 GPUs to provide "affordable compute" to large and growing IT enterprises and AI researchers. Foundation models are AI solutions educated on large datasets to fulfill several tasks. The models are adaptable and can be cus-



tomized for special uses. Vaishnaw noted that DeepSeek was constructed with 2,000 GPUs, therefore the Rs 10,372 crore IndiaAI mission's high-tech GPUs are enough to power India's AI quest. He dismissed concerns about India being late in its AI quest, saying it has US assis-

tance as a valued partner. We are punctual. Computer access is most vital. This is now accessible. We are fit. Getting the computer facility was crucial to the goal." He added India is optimistic Nvidia will provide GPUs regularly despite US government limitations on some countries.

"I'm reiterating that we are seen as a trusted country, we're seen as a country which respects IP rights, (and) we're seen as a country which understands the technological development prospects and all the points related to that." DeepSeek's recent popularity hasn't concerned the government. The good news is that DeepSeek is open source and we will soon host it on Indian servers like we did Llama. Everything open source can be hosted on our servers to ensure data privacy. He said we'll do that soon. Vaishnaw claimed preparations have begun. "The team has worked out the details on how many servers are required, how much capacity is required."

Kerala cuts minority scholarships due to financial difficulties

Delhi: Kerala's government has cut minority community scholarships by 50%, putting thousands of students' education at risk, citing the financial crisis. Nine of the 11 minority welfare scholarship programs originally allotted Rs 13.6 crore are affected by the decision. The Government says the plan size reduction is a priority, but the disproportionate cut to minority student educational support raises questions about governmental priorities and social justice. Twitter shares The Prof Joseph Mundassery Scholarship, which received Rs 5.2 crore this



year, suffered most. It has saved Muslim, Sikh, Jain, and Parsi high-achieving children by paying Rs 10,000 to those who scored A-Plus in all SSLC subjects and Rs 15,000 to those who scored 80% in upper secondary or 75% in vocational higher secondary. It ensured that bright students from underprivileged backgrounds were not forced to drop

The government of Maharashtra says it would not pay for eggs for the midday meal

Delhi: The opposition vehemently criticized the decision, as Maharashtra became the latest BJP-ruled state to ban eggs for midday meals for students in grades 1 through 8. The school education department changed the list of foods served during midday meals in a government resolution this week, eliminating the inclusion of sugar and eggs. Rather, it instructed schools to serve nachni sattu and "egg pulao" as optional meals. Nonetheless, it stated that these things, as well as sugar for desserts, had to be organized by the general public without the need for further government support. The state has changed the list to adhere to the meal items prescribed by the Center, accord-



ing to an official who defended the action. While some states use their own resources to offer eggs, the federal government, which provides 60% of the funding for midday meals, does not include them in its list. Goa and Madhya Pradesh recently banned eggs due to criticism from some groups. Aadiya Thackeray, a Sena (UBT) MLA, criticized the move and questioned why the government chose to substitute rice kheer and nachni sattu for eggs and sugar.

Adani cancels \$533mn US port loan in Sri Lanka

Delhi: After US securities and wire fraud allegations, Gautam Adani's Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone withdrew from a finance deal with a US agency for a Sri Lankan port terminal project and used its own resources. After the US indictment, American loans are harder to get. The US International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC) agreed to lend \$553 million to Sri Lanka.

Indian students in Canada panic as Ottawa requests docs again

Delhi: Indian students in Canada have reported receiving emails to resubmit study permits, visas, and educational records, including marks and attendance. IRCC, a federal department that handles foreign students, issued a request that panicked international students, many of whom have two-year visas. In response to the inflow of overseas students, IRCC is tightening its financial criteria and considering limitations on admissions. I was surprised by the email. My visa is valid till 2026, however I was requested to resubmit all my documentation "Avinash Kaushik, "They even want proof of attendance, marks, where we are working part-time, etc.," he said. Punjabi students reported a similar increase in emails last week. Some were



required to verify their credentials at IRCC headquarters in person. "Many students are confused and worried," Indian students have made up a large portion of Canada's rising international student enrollment. The ministry of external affairs reports that Canada has 4.2 lakh Indian students, followed by the US with 3.3 lakh. The sudden

email flood left pupils unsure about their future. "We chose Canada for its welcoming environment, but this unfair," said Adilabad-based business management student in British Columbia. Students want IRCC to clarify and resolve their concerns. For now, urge students to submit documents quickly to avoid difficulties. "

IIT Kharagpur teachers petition governors. Restore HoD positions

Delhi: The IIT Kharagpur Teachers' Association (IITTA) urged the institute's board of governors to expunge show-cause notices issued to 86 faculty members, restore their administrative positions, and protect the association's office bearers from arbitrary or retaliatory actions amid the faculty-administration dispute. In September, the IIT Kharagpur teachers' association accused director Virendra Kumar Tewari of "nepotism" and "arbitrary faculty recruitment" in a letter to the Union Ministry of Education, sparking a confrontation. They wanted an academically qualified, inclusive governance-experienced successor. When the administration sent show-cause notices to IITTA office bearers and disciplined them for not answering within seven days, tensions rose. Show cause notices were sent to 86 academic members who signed a petition supporting the IITTA, worsening the situation. The IITTA said several of the 86 academic department heads were replaced. The administration also said people who answered or apologized would not be punished. After an unusual general body meeting the IITTA approached the board of governors. They worry the administration may act fast and deny office bearers a fair hearing, further undermining trust.



What is CBP Home App, launched a week ago, that helped Ranjani Srinivasan flee to Canada?

Ranjani Srinivasan's self-deportation became an advertisement for the newly launched CBP Home app. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem announced the launch of the CBP Home App on March 10 and on March 11, Indian PhD student Ranjani Srinivasan applied for self-deportation and fled to Canada when ICE agents visited her in her Columbia University accommodation. Her student visa was revoked on allegations of supporting Hamas though she claimed she was not an activist and was not part of any protest group. But as the university informed her that they canceled her enrolment after her student visa was revoked, she found it safe to leave the country on her own. **What is the CBP Home App?** Not a new application, but an overhaul of CBP One and for the oppo-

site reason. CBP One was formerly used to process asylum claims at the southern border. CBP Home was launched for self-deportation. Those who want to leave the country can fill out a form on the app along with their photo in an 'Intent to Depart' statement to the government. The individual will have to provide biographical information, current phone number and also whether he or she has enough money to depart and a valid and unexpired passport. Individuals with no legal status in the US can leave the country and then return again in the future legally through self-deportation. Otherwise, the Trump administration had warned, that they would be caught, deported which will never allow them to return. Ranjani Srinivasan was not in the US illegally. She came to the US from India as part of

the Fulbright program in 2016 and started her doctoral; program at Columbia University in 2020. She said she was in the fifth year of an urban planning doctoral program at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, and was supposed to graduate in May. On March 5, her student visa was revoked which made her lose legality on US soil. "I'm just surprised that I'm a person of interest," she said. "I'm kind of a rando, like, absolute random," she said to NYT from Canada. CBP One and CBP Home CBP One app was launched during Trump's first term to arrange immigration services. But in 2023, it became an app to claim asylum at the border. One of the first things that Trump did after coming back to power was to overhaul the app to allow illegal immigrants to register

Kamala demanded chairs with leg height not less than 15 inches

Kamala Harris has a list of specifications that she wanted her interviewers to ensure during her campaigning and one of those was the height of the chair given to her. "Leg height no less than 15 inches; floor to top of seat height no less than 18.9 inches; arms on chairs may not be very high, arms must fall at a natural height; chairs must be firm," this was the brief from Kamala Harris' team for chairs. Kamala Harris demanded chairs with leg height not less than 15 inches during interview. Here's why Kamala Harris appeared smaller than Tim Walz in her first interview on

CNN following which her campaign came out with a specification of the chair height. During her campaign as the Democrat presidential candidate, former Vice President Kamala Harris or her team made sure that she was given chairs with some specifications. A new book about Kamala Harris' campaign by Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes, **FIGHT: Inside the Wildest Battle for the White House** revealed the former VP's strange demand. "Her team required that she be provided a chair that met certain specifications," according to the book excerpt. The chair specification

was put in place after her first media interview on CNN. where she was joined by her running mate Tim Walz. In the interview, both sitting on their chairs, Walz looked taller towering over Kamala Harris. "Sitting next to Walz in a chair that seemed to place her below him and heaping praise on Biden's record, Harris did not look like a candidate seeking the highest office in the land," the excerpt read. "The whole scene reinforced the criticism that the vice president was either incapable, or afraid, of answering tough questions on her own." During Kamala Harris'

Shark Tank's Kevin says half of Canadians are interested in becoming 51st state

Shark Tank's Kevin O'Leary said most of the Canadians are interested in merging with the US.



Shark Tank's Kevin O'Leary, a Canadian, said he is very much enthusiastic about the idea of Canada being merged with the United States and half of the Canadians are but they don't want Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to do the deal with President-elect Donald Trump. The Canadian businessman said he would go to Mar-a-Lago to talk about a US-Canada merger. "There are 41 million Canadians, basically the population of California, sitting on the world's largest amount of all resources, including the most important: energy and water. Canadians, over the holidays, the last two days, have been talking about this. They want to hear more. Obviously, there are a lot of issues, more details of what could be the beginning of an economic union. Think about the power of combining two economies erasing the border between Canada and the United States and putting all that resource up to the northern borders where China and Russia are knocking on the door. So secure that, give a common currency, figure out taxes across the board...I like this idea and at least half of the Canadians are interested," Kevin O'Leary said. But the problem is, Kevin O'Leary continued, that most of the Canadians don't trust Trudeau to carry out the negotiation with his government collapsing and hence he said he would go to Mar-a-Lago to talk to Trump about this. He said he believed that Canadians would trust him with the negotiation. The issue started as a joke at a Mar-a-Lago dinner where Justin Trudeau and his government officials joined Donald Trump. It was a courtesy visit from Trudeau after Trump said he would impose a 25 per cent tax on Canada.

MAGA Civil War: Why Indian-Americans, the new Jews, are irking Donald Trump supporters

There's a theory out there—wild, audacious, but surprisingly hard to dismiss—that just about everything worth celebrating in Western civilization was dreamed up, built, or perfected by Jews. From splitting the atom to decoding life itself, from rewriting the

rules of music to redefining what it means to be human, Jewish brilliance turned the world into their intellectual playground. Let's take a stroll down the hall of fame: J. Robert Oppenheimer, the "father of the atomic bomb," quite literally blew the lid off 20th-

century science. Albert Einstein, the cosmic poet, bent time and space to his will. Jonas Salk saved millions from polio, and Rosalind Franklin cracked the code of life itself with her DNA discoveries. And that's just the lab coats.

Shuttlecock shaped badminton centre opens in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR: India's newest world-class badminton facility, designed in the shape of a shuttlecock, opened its doors in Bhubaneswar, marking a significant milestone in the country's sporting infrastructure. The Rs 75-crore High Performance Centre (HPC), officially named the 'Dalmia Bharat Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy' was jointly inaugurated by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Badminton Association of India President Himanta Biswa Sarma at the Kalinga Stadium complex on Dec 12. "This centre will take badminton in India to a new high," said CM Majhi during the inauguration ceremony.



The facility, a collaborative venture between the Odisha government, Pullela Gopichand Badminton Foundation, and Dalmia Bharat Group, took four years to complete. The architectural marvel boasts 77,000 square feet of indoor space, featuring eight courts with seating for 400 spectators.

Modern amenities include residential facilities for 50 players, a state-of-the-art gymnasium, and an amphitheater for outdoor activities. A unique viewing ring on the terrace offers a 360-degree panoramic view of Bhubaneswar. Doubles specialist Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, present at the

inauguration, expressed his amazement at the facility. "I have never seen such a HPC for Badminton, even in China. The shuttlecock design is unique worldwide," he remarked. Chief national coach Gopichand emphasized the center's potential impact: "This revolutionary facility, with its unique design and state-of-the-art amenities, will play a crucial role in shaping Indian badminton's future." Puneet Dalmia, managing director of Dalmia Bharat, expressed hope that the venue would become a major part of the competitive circuit, attracting both national and international professionals.

Pak minister defends military trial of civilians

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani minister on Wednesday defended the military trial of civilians, saying that such courts were competent to deal with the cases related to attacks on army facilities. Information minister Attaullah Tarar also urged the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led by Imran to refrain from politicising or disputing the issue of military trials. "When an attack is carried out on a defence institution or its property is set ablaze, it becomes the responsibility of the relevant authorities to



apprehend the culprits. Just as railway police handle crimes on railway premises, military courts address offences targeting assets. So, when attacks on military assets occur, the Military Act is enforced," he said while addressing a press conference. Tarar criticised Khan's party for using military courts as a political

tool, aiming to create controversy around them. He clarified that military courts only handle cases involving attacks on defence establishments, citing incidents such as the attack on the Corps Commander's House in Lahore. The minister also criticised the PTI for changing its stance regarding trials of civilians in the military courts, recalling that during Khan's tenure, military court trials were praised. "The statements praising the military courts from PTI's leadership are still available on social media.

Rice shipment from India, first for Yunus government, to arrive today

DHAKA: Bangladesh is set to receive its first consignment of rice imported from India since the formation of the new interim govt even as it looks to be drawing closer to Pakistan than to its immediate neighbour India, which stood beside Bangladesh in 1971 through shared sacrifices. Bangladesh had witnessed ships coming from Karachi twice in recent days. On Nov 13, for the first time since independence, a container-carrying ship sailing directly from Karachi had docked at Chhattogram (Chittagong). This time the ship "MV Tanais Dream", carrying 24,690 metric tonnes of parboiled rice imported from India under the open tender agreement, will arrive at Chaudagram port at 5.30am on Thursday. This is also the first consignment of parboiled rice



imported from India under the Nov 11 agreement. The unloading of the rice will start soon after samples of the rice are collected and after physical examination, said a senior Bangladesh food ministry official. Talking to diplomatic correspondents in Dhaka recently, Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma had said he was optimistic about Dhaka-Delhi relationship, despite changes happening around. "This is how we look at the relationship. We have so many things to offer

Ramaswamy-critic Ann says H-1B workers are indentured servants
Author and Conservative commentator Ann Coulter, who once said she would not vote for Vivek Ramaswamy only because he is of Indian origin, has commented on the ongoing H-1B row and said that H1B workers can't leave a company, unlike American workers. And that's what tech like Elon Musk, Vivek Ramaswamy, Sriram Krishnan want - she implied. each other with our growing.

US threatens 'unrelenting' strikes on Houthis until they are 'done shooting at ships'

New York The United States will maintain "unrelenting" strikes on Yemen's Houthi rebels until they say "we are done shooting at ships and assets," defense secretary Pete Hegseth said on Sunday. His remarks came after President Donald Trump ordered airstrikes on Houthi targets in Sanaa on Saturday. "This campaign is about freedom of navigation and restoring deterrence. The minute the Houthis say we'll stop shooting at your ships, we'll stop shooting at your drones, this campaign will end," Hegseth said in an interview on Fox News's Sunday Morning Futures. "But until then, it will be unrelenting," he added. He further continued that "this is about stopping the shooting at assets ... in that critical waterway, to reopen freedom of navigation,



which is a core national interest of the United States, and Iran has been enabling the Houthis for far too long," adding, "They better back off." Earlier on Saturday, Trump announced on Truth Social: "Today, I have ordered the United States Military to launch decisive and powerful Military action against the Houthi terrorists in Yemen. They have waged an unrelenting campaign of piracy, violence, and terrorism against American, and other, ships, aircraft, and drones. To all Houthi terrorists, YOUR TIME IS UP, AND YOUR

ATTACKS MUST STOP, STARTING TODAY. IF THEY DON'T, HELL WILL RAIN DOWN UPON YOU LIKE NOTHING YOU HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!" White House national security advisor Mike Waltz further confirmed that the US carried out successful strikes targeting Houthi leadership and infrastructure. "We hit the Houthi leadership, killing several of their key leaders last night — their infrastructure, the missiles. We just hit them with overwhelming force and put Iran on notice that enough is enough," Mike Waltz told Fox News on

Elon Musk reacts to Democratic Party's favorability dropping to a record low: 'Public is wise'

Elon Musk who once prided in calling himself a Democrat before he turned towards Donald Trump ahead of the election and is now a crucial part of the government reacted to the latest poll which revealed that the Democratic party's favorability rating stands at a record low. CNN released the poll conducted between March 6 to 9 revealing that the party's favorability rating stands at just 29 per cent -- a record low in CNN's polling dating back to 1992 and a drop of 20 points since January 2021 just after the Capitol riots.



The Republican Party stands at 36 per cent in favorability. Elon Musk said the public is wise and they now know the Democratic Party scams as their funding is being turned off -- something that Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency has been doing. "The public is wise to the Democratic Party scams and their funding via bogus taxpayer-funded NGOs is being turned off," Elon Musk said. According to CNN, just 63 per cent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents gave a favorable view of their own party -- which is a dip from 72 per cent in January and 81 per cent at the beginning of Joe Biden's presidency. 79 per cent of Republicans and Republican-minded people take a positive view of the GOP. "Democrats, who overwhelmingly consider Trump too extreme, have yet to consolidate around any one-party leader to serve as a counterpoint.

Congress made fun of Bodo accord, but it brought peace: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Union home minister Amit Shah addressed a public gathering at Dotma, on the final day of the 57th annual conference of the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU). In the event, Shah hit out at Congress, claiming that the party had mocked the government when the accord was signed but has been proven wrong by the peace and development it has brought to Bodoland. Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) chief Pramod Boro were also present at the event.

Highlighting the progress of the Bodo Accord, Shah announced that 82 per cent of its clauses have already been implemented, with full implementation expected within the next two years. He criticised the grand old party for doubting the agreement, saying, "When we signed the Bodo Accord, Congress made fun of us. But today, it has ensured peace and development in Bodoland." Encouraging Bodo youth to aim high, he urged them to start preparing for the 2036 Olympics, which is proposed to be held in Gujarat's Ahmedabad.

Earlier, in Aizawl, the home minister reiterated the Centre's commitment to Mizoram's development. He cited the relocation of the Assam Rifles camp outside Aizawl as a significant step, calling it a "testament" to the government's dedication to the state's welfare. "The BJP government wants a safe, peaceful, and beautiful Mizoram, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is personally overseeing the progress of development projects here," Shah said. The Bodo Accord was signed in 2020, it was a three-party accord.

The country's wealth was being concentrated in the hands of a few close

NEW DELHI: Leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress MP, Rahul Gandhi, has accused the ruling-BJP of attacking the "idea of India" and favouring a few businessmen close to PM Modi. In a video shared on X by Congress on, Congress MP from Rae Bareilly said the country's wealth was being concentrated in the hands of a few close to the Prime Minister, while unemployment and rising prices continued to affect millions. "The idea of India is being attacked today. It is being attacked by the ideology of the BJP. The wealth of India is being snatched from the mil-



lions of Indians and being handed over to a few business people, who are close to the Prime Minister and the BJP. Unemployment is spreading. Prices are rising. And this is what the fight is about," LoP in Lok Sabha said. "The fight is about two different ideas of India. The fight is not between two political formations. The fight is to defend the idea of India,"

Gandhi added in the video. the BJP attacked Rahul Gandhi for reportedly spending more time abroad than in his constituency. BJP leader and former Union minister Ravi questioned Gandhi's visit to Vietnam, alleging that he needed to explain his "extraordinary fondness" for the country. "Where is Rahul Gandhi? I heard he has gone to Vietnam," Prasad said.

MAGA Civil War: Why Indian-Americans, the new Jews, are irking Donald Trump supporters

There's a theory out there—wild, audacious, but surprisingly hard to dismiss—that just about everything worth celebrating in Western civilization was dreamed up, built, or perfected by Jews. From splitting the atom to decoding life itself, from rewriting the

rules of music to redefining what it means to be human, Jewish brilliance turned the world into their intellectual playground. Let's take a stroll down the hall of fame: J. Robert Oppenheimer, the "father of the atomic bomb," quite literally blew the lid off 20th-

century science. Albert Einstein, the cosmic poet, bent time and space to his will. Jonas Salk saved millions from polio, and Rosalind Franklin cracked the code of life itself with her DNA discoveries. And that's just the lab coats.

Seven-year jail term or Rs 10 lakh fine for using forged passport

NEW DELHI: Anyone caught using a forged passport or visa to enter, stay, or leave India could face up to seven years in jail and a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh under the proposed Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025. The bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha on 11 March, aimed to streamline immigration laws while tightening control over illegal migration. The legislation, drafted by the Union home ministry, mandated that hotels, universities, hospitals, and other institutions report foreign nationals to authorities to help track overstayers. Airlines and ships arriving in India will also be required to provide advance passenger and crew details at designated ports or places. Under the proposed law,



knowingly using or supplying fraudulent travel documents will attract a minimum sentence of two years, which could extend to seven years, along with a fine ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 10 lakh. Foreigners who enter India without valid travel documents could face up to five years in prison and a fine of up

to Rs 5 lakh. The bill granted the Centre the authority to regulate premises frequented by foreigners. Property owners could be instructed to shut down, impose specific conditions, or deny entry to certain categories of visitors. **Replacing outdated laws** The Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025, seeks to

consolidate and replace four existing laws, the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1955, which regulates acquisition and termination of Indian citizenship as well as acquisition and registration of foreigners as Overseas Citizens of India (OCI). Foreigners Act, 1939, the Foreigners Act, 1946, and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000. The government said that the new legislation simplified and modernised immigration procedures while maintaining national security. An official said, "The Bill will help in tackling the problem of illegal migration into India and facilitate tracking of movement of overstaying foreigners."

After paper leak, RRB moves to computer-based job exams

NEW DELHI: The railway ministry on Wednesday roped in the Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) to conduct all departmental promotion examinations through a centralised computer-based test. This comes a day after CBI arrested 26 officials of the East Central Railway for allegedly leaking papers of a departmental examination and seized Rs 1.2 crore cash during raids. "All zonal railways will make a calendar for the examination. All the examinations will be conducted on the basis of a calendar only," the



ministry said. It added RRB has been given the responsibility after considering its experience of transparent, fair and highly appreciated examinations conducted in recent years. As per the railways, since 2015, more than 7.7 crore candidates have appeared in exams through com-

puter-based tests without any paper leakage, impersonation, remote log-in and use of spy devices. It said the fair examination has been made possible due to selection of exam-conducting agencies through open tender with the criteria of 'quality and cost based selection.'

Online submission of certificates and documents at the preliminary stage



Delhi: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)'s CSE 2025 requires online submission of certificates and documents at the preliminary stage of the exam, which includes submitting the necessary information and supporting documents for various claims, such as date of birth, category (SC/ST/OBC/EWS/PwBD/Ex-Servicemen), educational qualification, and Service preferences, with the Online A. Examination candi-

date will be canceled if the registration and online application form lack the relevant information/documents. "All of these changes should be explicitly stated in the notification, or the examining authority can create an educational video for specially abled candidates," he says. They appear puzzled and unable to complete the Prelims application form (due February 11, 2025). Candidates must also write about their interests, hobbies,

achievements, and NCC Scout participation in the Prelims, which were previously announced after the Mains. "The goal is to get the best candidate profile information before the Prelims," Kottaram explains (IRS) officers were recruited under PwBD reservation advantages. UPSC must examine claims and papers if aspirants submit fraudulent documents. Kottaram notes that mental illness is a grey area in the notification's five.

US intelligence chief Tulsi Gabbard arrives in India to attend key Delhi meet

NEW DELHI: US Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard arrived in India on Sunday as part of her multi-nation trip to the Indo-Pacific regions. Gabbard will attend a high-level conference chaired by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, focusing on strengthening intelligence-sharing mechanisms to tackle terrorism and transnational crimes. The event, set to take place in the national capital, will bring together intelligence chiefs also from Australia, Germany, New Zealand, and other key partner nations to enhance global security cooperation. Tulsi Gabbard's visit to India comes after



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to the United States in February. During his visit, PM Modi met with Gabbard and described her as a strong advocate for India-US relations. Gabbard, in turn, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to welcome Modi and emphasized her commitment to further strengthening ties between the two nations. This marked PM Modi's first visit to the US since Donald

Trump began his second term as President. During the trip, Modi met Trump at the White House, where they exchanged a warm embrace in their first official meeting since Trump took office as the 47th President on January 20. Modi was among the earliest world leaders to visit the US after Trump's inauguration and was invited within just three weeks of the new administration taking charge.

Vietnam's restrictive internet law comes into force

A new internet law in Vietnam, Decree 147, gives the government increased control over internet access and content in the name of national security and social order. It mandates tech companies to store user data, verify accounts, and remove deemed illegal content within 24 hours. Critics argue this suppresses free speech and impacts livelihoods. A new internet law that gives the Vietnamese government expanded powers over internet services and people using them is set to officially take effect Wednesday. Decree 147 expands government control over access to information on the internet for reasons of "national security" and "social order." The law requires social media platforms providing services to users in Vietnam to store user data and provide it to authorities on demand. The government issued the decree this November, and it requires organizations to take down anything the authorities consider "illegal content" within 24 hours. Decree 147 has sparked concerns, with researchers and experts tracking the country saying that the law is part of a growing crackdown on civil society. "Because the Vietnamese police treat any criticism of the Communist Party of Vietnam as a national security matter, this decree will provide them with yet another tool to suppress dissent," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch. The decree requires tech giants like Facebook and TikTok among other organizations, to verify user accounts using people's phone numbers or personal identification numbers.



Bodies of 2 J&K brothers found a month after they went missing



SRINAGAR: The decomposed bodies of two Kashmiri brothers reported missing since Feb 13 along with a third person were found three days apart in a river in J&K's Kulgam district, around 70km south of Srinagar. Ahmad Bajad's putrefied corpse was discovered on Sunday at Vishaw, close to where his brother Riyaz's body had been found on March 13, police said. There is still no trace of Mukhtar Ahmad Awan of Partapura village, a relative of the brothers who had accompanied them to a wedding in the Mir Bazar area of

the same district the day all three went missing. The trio worked in a brick kiln. Investigators said the brothers may have died by suicide, based on forensic expert Dr Azia Manzoor Bhat's conclusion that the state of Riyaz's body indicated he drowned. Bhat told reporters in Kulgam that the case "doesn't look homicidal in nature". PDP member Talib Hussain, who was at the site when Showkat's body was found, accused police of baton-charging mourners when they questioned how investigators arrived at suicide as the cause of death.

"How did they drown in a river when the water level was so low?" Hussain said. "We demand a judicial probe into the case." Tribal villagers carried Showkat's body to the highway and staged a demonstration. DIG (South Kashmir) Javid Iqbal Matoo said he would investigate allegations of police harassment, but insisted that there was no indication yet of foul play in the deaths. "There are no torture signs on the bodies. Investigators are looking at all possibilities." NDRF and SDRF teams are scouring the area for the third missing person.

'Leader has to take responsibility': Congress slams PM Modi's remarks on 2002 Gujarat riots

NEW DELHI: Congress leaders have strongly criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on the 2002 Gujarat riots during his interview with American podcaster Lex Fridman, accusing him of deflecting responsibility. During the podcast, Fridman asked PM Modi about the riots, describing them as one of the most challenging periods in India's modern history, leading to over 1,000 deaths. PM Modi, in response, placed the events in the context of a series of terrorist attacks in India and abroad, including the 1999 Kandahar hijacking, the 2001 Parliament attack, and the 9/11 attacks in the US. He argued that Gujarat had a long history of communal riots and claimed that

after 2002, the state had remained peaceful for over two decades. Targeting PM Modi, Congress leader Danish Ali said that Prime Minister's comments were an attempt to justify the riots, which he claimed reflected the failure of the then-Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led central government in handling law and order. "The way the PM has tried to justify the Godhra riots shows the failure of the Vajpayee government regarding law and order in the country. The way he talked about the Kandahar hijacking, the Parliament attack, and more, this is, in a way, a condemnation of the Vajpayee government," Ali said. Former Uttarakhanda chief minister and senior Congress leader Harish Rawat

also criticised Modi, referring to Vajpayee's well-known remark urging Modi to follow "rajdharm" (duty of governance). "When the Godhra incident happened and riots broke out, the scenes were gory. Finally, the PM had to ask to uphold 'rajdharm.' If anything is wrong, the leader has to take responsibility—it will always be with a leader. These words of Atalji will keep on echoing in his ears," Rawat said. In the podcast, PM Modi also pointed out that India's Supreme Court had twice upheld that he had no involvement in the riots. He dismissed allegations against him as politically motivated, saying that his government had prioritised peace and development over "appeasement politics."

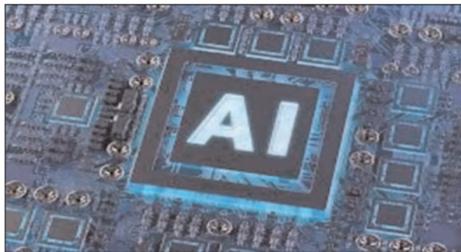


Bank staff, 3 others use idle IDs to siphon Rs 12 crore from 2 accounts, held

BENGALURU: Karnataka police have arrested an Axis Bank relationship manager in Rajkot and three others in an interstate cybercrime and financial fraud after the four allegedly embezzled over Rs 12 crore from Bengaluru-based Dreamplug Paytech Solutions Pvt Ltd, the operator of Cred, a rewards-based credit card payment platform. The accused include relationship manager Vaibhav Pithadiya (29), a banking agent from Surat Parmar Neha Ben Vipulbhai (26), an insurance agent and Vaibhav's colleague Shailesh (29), and a commission agent from Rajkot Shubham (26). The arrests were made following a complaint by Dreamplug executive Narasimha Vasanth Sastry. The fraud came to light on Nov 12 when Dreamplug executives identified suspicious transactions in their company accounts. Investigations revealed that Rs 12.2 crore was siphoned off from two Axis Bank accounts over 14 days between Oct 29 and Nov 11. The accused gained unauthorised access to Dreamplug's accounts by manipulating key details. They submitted forged documents, including fake signatures and board resolutions, to request changes to the registered mobile number and email ID linked to the accounts. These changes, approved by Axis Bank despite discrepancies, allowed the fraudsters to intercept OTPs and initiate 37 fraudulent transactions. Dreamplug said the fraudulent activity was facilitated by requests submitted at Axis Bank branches in Ankleshwar (July 22) and Abrama in Surat (Oct 12).

India's own GPU could arrive in 3-5 years, 18,000 AI servers to go live soon says

India is gearing up to make a significant breakthrough in high-end computing by developing its own Graphics Processing Unit (GPU) within the next three to five years, while also working on an indigenous foundational Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform expected to be ready in just 10 months. Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw made these announcements during the Budget Roundtable 2025, organized by India Today and Business



Today. In a major step towards AI development, the government will roll out 18,000 high-end GPU-based computing facilities in the coming days, making advanced computing power accessible to researchers, startups, and academic institutions. This move is crucial

for reducing India's reliance on foreign chip manufacturers, particularly Nvidia, which currently dominates over 80% of the global GPU market. With AI becoming a critical driver of global innovation, India's efforts to develop self-sufficient semiconductor and AI ecosystems

mark a pivotal shift. This article explores India's GPU development strategy, AI advancements, computing infrastructure expansion, and the broader impact of these initiatives on the country's technological future. Developing an advanced, high-performance GPU requires cutting-edge research, skilled engineering, and robust semiconductor manufacturing capabilities. According to Vaishnaw, India is considering multiple approaches to achieve this goal, including leveraging

Ayodhya's Ram Janmabhoomi Trust paid Rs 400 crore tax in last 5 years, says secretary Champat Rai

NEW DELHI: The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has paid around Rs 400 crore in taxes to the government over the past five years, trust secretary Champat Rai said on Sunday. He said that the amount was paid between February 5, 2020, and February 5, 2025. Of the total amount, Rs 270 crore was paid as Goods and Services Tax (GST), while Rs 130 crore was paid under other tax categories, he said. Rai mentioned that Ayodhya has seen a significant rise in the number of devotees



and tourists, leading to more employment opportunities for locals. He added that during the Maha Kumbh, 1.26 crore devotees visited Ayodhya. In the last year, Ayodhya recorded 16 crore visitors, with 5 crore visiting the Ram temple. The Shri Ram

Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust was formed in 2020 to oversee the construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, following the Supreme Court's verdict in 2019 that paved the way for the temple's construction. The consecration (Pran Pratishtha) of the Ram

Mandir took place on January 22, 2024, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the rituals. The event was attended by religious leaders, political figures, and dignitaries from across India. The temple, built at the site believed to be the birthplace of Lord Ram, has since become a major religious and cultural landmark, drawing millions of devotees. The trust's financial records are regularly audited by officials from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), Rai said.

Use of 'roo' in budget logo conveys TN's resolve in upholding its language policy: Stalin

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin defended the use of the Tamil letter 'roo' to denote the rupee in the state government's budget logo, saying it was done to convey TN's commitment to its language policy. "We wanted to demonstrate our resolve in upholding Tamil Nadu's language policy. That's all. But those who dislike Tamil made this a big controversy," Stalin said in a video message on Sunday. Taking a dig at Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Stalin pointed out that despite TN sending "hundreds of requests" for financial

aid, she remained silent. However, she chose to speak up when a Tamil letter was used in the state gov't budget logo. Stalin said even in some of her posts, 'roo' had been used. "But when we do the same, it becomes a problem for them," Stalin said, hitting out at BJP leaders. He also pointed out that the use of 'Rs' instead of the rupee symbol was a common practice. "In any case, our budget as well as Tamil have become a huge hit," he said. Stalin dismissed opposition criticism of the budget, stating it had won widespread praise and detractors

were opposing it for political reasons. "Those who criticise the budget should read the newspapers and understand its significance," he said. On criticism about mounting debt, Stalin said Tamil Nadu's debt ratio remained within permissible limits. He said the govt had slowed the rate of debt accumulation and was ensuring that borrowed funds were spent judiciously. "What matters is where we invest the borrowed money, and we are doing it wisely," he said. On the efforts that went into the preparation of the budget this year.

In move to decongest Ring Road, NHAI to build elevated corridor between INA and Mandela Marg

NEW DELHI: Finally, with BJP in power, both in Delhi and the Centre, the Union government is speeding up action on major decongestion projects in the national capital. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will build the elevated corridor between INA and Nelson Mandela Marg in Vasant Kunj, a project that was conceived more than four years ago to decongest the Ring Road. Sources said the project would be funded by Delhi govt and urban affairs ministry, and the modalities will be worked out soon. The NHAI will build a tunnel between Nelson Mandela Marg to Shiv Murti interchange, which will provide seamless connectivity to Indira Gandhi

International Airport (IGIA). The corridor will mean, traffic coming from east and south Delhi can travel non-stop to the airport. The proposed elevated corridor (14-km) passing through the newly redeveloped govt residential and commercial complexes along the Ring Road was cleared by the Unified Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning and Engineering) Centre (UTTIPEC) in July 2021. As per the earlier proposal, the central public works department (CPWD) was tasked to prepare the detailed project report (DPR) and execute it. But the project never got approval of the Public Investment Board, a mandatory process

before any proposal is placed before the cabinet for its nod. Sources said matters relating to decongestion of roads in Delhi was discussed at a meeting in the PMO early this month where top road transport and highway ministry officials suggested that NHAI could construct the project considering its expertise in execution of such major road projects. Following the meeting in PMO, Union road transport secretary, V Umashankar held a meeting attended by officials from NHAI, Delhi govt and National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC), the agency redeveloping the govt residential and commercial complexes. Sources told that the NHAI will pre-

pare the DPR and base it on the one prepared by CPWD. "As per earlier estimate, the project would have cost around Rs 4,500 crore. The project may have some components of tunnels considering the ground situation. We will arrive at a cost after the final DPR. The govt is serious about expediting the project, which has been stuck for at least four years," said a senior official. Some estimates by the Delhi PWD suggest that around 1.3 lakh vehicles pass through the AIIMS crossing every day, and nearly 3.3 vehicles ply between Bhikaji Cama Place and Lajpat Nagar flyovers daily. Officials said any more delay in taking up the project would cause more crisis as traffic.

Bihar traffic cop shoots dead reveller in 'self-defence'

SASARAM: A police officer opened fire on a group of revellers, purportedly in self-defence, killing a 32-year-old man and injuring two others in Sasaram in Bihar's Rohtas district on Friday night, reports. Police identified the victim as Rana Om Prakash Singh. His elder brother, Rana Rahul Ranjan, registered an FIR alleging that Om Prakash was shot dead for refusing to bribe the cops. The incident, according to cops, occurred after four men arrived near railway station in an inebriated state. A scuffle broke out between them and a patrolling unit. Traffic DSP Md Adil Bilal witnessed the fight and intervened. During confrontation, one of the youths reportedly fired an air gun.