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12 pages ₹ **3** 9654077232 Hindus can pray in Gyanvapi

mosque's basement, says Varanasi court

Chandigarh, January 31: The Varanasi Court on Wednesday granted permission to the Hindu side petitioners to perform puja in the basement of the Gyanvapi mosque premises. The judgment pertains to the case of one Somnath Vyas' basement. Vyas' family used to perform puja in the basement till 1993, however, following the state government's order, the worshipping was stopped. In its order, the court said prayers could be conducted by priests from the Vishwanath Temple and said arrangements should be made to remove barricades blocking entry to the mosque's basement, which had been ordered sealed by the Supreme Court during the ASI survey op Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, representing the Hindu side told ANI, " ... Puja will start within seven days. Everyone will have the right to perform Puja..." "Hindu side allowed to offer prayers at 'Vyas Ka Tekhana'. The District Administration will have to make arrangements within 7 days," Jain said. The mosque has four 'tahkhanas' (cellars) in the basement out of which one is still in possession of the Vyas family who used to live here. Vyas had petitioned that as hereditary pujari he be allowed to enter the tahkhana and resume pooja.

Himachal CM ignoring dedicated party workers: Pratibha Singh

Sanjay Kumar

death anniversary here today. She further said Shimla, January 31: was resentment Accusing Chief Minister among the party workers Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu over the issue. "The party of ignoring dedicated workers keep approaching party workers, Pradesh me to share their resent-Congress Committee (PCC) chief Pratibha ment," she said. It may be mentioned that she has Singh today said these workers had not been raised the matter of accomaccommodated in the government despite her recommendation. Congress president Pratibha Singh said the party officials and the Chief Minister would sit down to decide the party's candidate for the soon-to-be-vacant Rajya Sabha seat from state "I had given a list of dedicated party workers to the Chief Minister, urging him to accommodate them somewhere in the government. He had assured me that it would be done, but it hasn't been done yet," the state party president said comes to accommodating after paying tributes to workers," Mahatma Gandhi on his Pratibha Singh.

modating party workers in boards/ corporations with the Congress high command as well in the past. She further said the Congress government had come to power due to the efforts put in by the party workers, and hence they should be rewarded with some position in the government. "I always tell the Chief Minister not to ignore the party workers. The CM himself says that he has risen to this position through party ranks so the expectations from him are a lot more when it

Temple not picnic or tourist spot'; court directs Tamil Nadu government to put up boards allowing non-Hindus only till entrances

Madurai, January 31: The Madras High Court on Tuesday directed the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department (HR&CE) to install boards in all Hindu temples stating non-Hindus were not permitted beyond the 'Kodimaram' (flagpole) area in the respective shrines and said Hindus also have fundamental right to profess and practise their religion. Justice S Srimathy of the HC's Madurai Bench gave the judgement while hearing a plea from D Senthilkumar, who sought directions to the respondents to permit Hindus alone to the Arulmigu Palani Dhandayuthapani Swamy temple and its sub temples. He also wanted that display boards to that effect in all entrances be set up. The famous Lord Murugan temple is located in Palani in Dindigul district. The respondents were the TN government, represented by Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments, the Commissioner, HR&CE, and the Executive Officer of the Palani temple. The HR&CE department administers Hindu temples in Tamil Nadu. Admitting the petition, the court directed the respondents to install boards indicating "non-Hindus are not allowed inside temple after Kodimaram" in the entrance of the temples, near the flagpole and at prominent places in the shrine. "The respondents are directed not to allow the non-Hindus who do not believe in Hindu religion. If any Non-Hindu claims to visit particular deity in the temple, then the respondents shall obtain undertaking from the said non-Hindu that he is having faith in the deity and he would follow the customs and practices of Hindu religion and also abide by the temple customs and on such undertaking the said non-Hindu may be allowed to visit the temple," the court ruled. Further, whenever such a person is allowed based on the undertaking the same shall be entered in the register which shall be maintained by the temple. "The respondents shall maintain the temple premises by strictly following the agamas (temple rules), customs and practices of the temple," the judge said. The respondents submitted the said writ petition was filed only for the Palani temple and the order may be restricted to it alone. "But the issue raised is larger issue and the same ought to be applicable to all Hindu temples, hence the plea of the respondents is rejected. As stated, these restrictions would ensure communal harmony among different religions and ensure peace in society. Therefore, the State Government, the HR&CE department, the respondents and all persons who are involved in temple administration are directed to follow the directions to all Hindu temples," the court said. The people belonging to Hindu religion have the right to profess and practise the faith. "Likewise, people belonging to other religions have right to profess and practise their

Hemant Soren becomes third Jharkhand Chief Minister to be arrested

Simmi Kaur Babbar

Ranchi, January 31: Jharkhand's Hemant Soren became the third state chief minister to be arrested after the Enforcement Directorate took him into custody in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam on Wednesday. Before Hemant Soren, his father Shibu Soren and Madhu Koda were arrested. Hemant Soren, who assumed office on December 29, 2019, was questioned for over six hours by the ED on Wednesday after he skipped the previous nine summonses.Hemant Soren Wednesday resigned as Jharkhand Chief Minister, while the ruling JMM-led coalition proposed the name of senior leader Champai Soren as new state head. Soren tendered his resignation to Governor CP Radhakrishnan at the Raj Bhavan after about seven hours of questioning by the Enforcement Directorate in a moneylaundering case linked to a land scam.

Rahul Gandhi's claim that Bihar caste survey was done under Congress pressure is nonsensical: Nitish Kumar

"Hemant Soren has resigned as the

Patna, January 31: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday said Rahul Gandhi's claim that the caste survey in the state was conducted under pressure from the Congress was 'nonsensical'. Talking to reporters three days after he dumped the 'Mahagathbandhan' in which the Congress is a constituent, and returned to the BJP-led NDA, Kumar, the JD (U) president, claimed that he did not like the nomenclature of the opposition bloc INDIA. "His (Rahul) claim that the caste survey in the state was done under pressure from the Congress is nonsensical. Everybody knows that the initiative was taken by me only. Now, people are taking credit," Kumar said. Addressing a public rally in Purnea district as part of his 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra', Gandhi had on Tuesday claimed that Kumar was feeling trapped after getting a caste survey conducted under pressure from the 'Mahagathbandhan' partners and the BJP "provided him with a way out". Commenting on the opposition bloc INDIA, Kumar said, "They were not doing anything...not even discussing seat-sharing. Frankly speaking, the name (INDIA) given to this alliance was not my choice at all.

Chief Minister of Jharkhand. The ruling JMM-Congress-RJD alliance has proposed the name of senior JMM leader Champai Soren as the new CM," state

Congress president Rajesh Thakur said. Earlier, the legislators gathered at the CM residence elected Champai Soren as

the leader of the JMM legislative party. Party spokesperson Vinod Pandey said a general consensus was reached on Champai Soren. Earlier, there was spec-

senior ED personnel at the SC/ST police station here over searches conducted by the agency at his Delhi residence, officials said on Wednesday. Soren alleged that the ED conducted the search operation at his residence

ulation that Hemant Soren's wife

Kalpana's name could be proposed as

the new CM. Jharkhand Chief Minister

Hemant Soren has lodged an FIR against

malign him and his entire community", the officials said, quoting the FIR. "An FIR has been lodged against some senior ED officials... we got the application from the chief minister," Ranchi Senior Superintendent of Police, Chandan Kumar Sinha, told PTI. An ED team searched Soren's Delhi residence on Monday, and

in the National Capital to "harass and

camped there for almost 13 hours in order to question him in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land deal in Jharkhand. The agency claimed to have seized Rs 36 lakh, an SUV and some "incriminating" documents during

Will return to present a full budget, says PM Modi ahead of Budget Session

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, January 31: In his final pre-Parliament Session remarks ahead of the 2024 general election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi showed confidence of a poll victory saying his government would return and present a full budget later in the year, while Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presents an interim budget on Thursday. Flanked by four ministers, the prime minister launched a scathing attack on disruptive opposition MPs saying no one would remember them. "In the last 10 years, people chose the paths they wanted to choose in conducting themselves in Parliament. But I do hope those habituated to creating ruckus will introspect. Let them ask 10 people in their own parliamentary segments. No one will remember them. The Budget Session is the last session of this Lok Sabha and an opportunity to repent and leave some good footprints,"

Modi said a day after the Rajya Sabha chairman revoked suspension of 11 opposition MPs on the government recommendation. The prime minister said India witnessed all-pervasive and allinclusive development in the 10 years of

the BJP-led NDA rule. "I have faith that

this journey will continue uninterrupted with the blessings of people," he said exuding enthusiasm for the 18th general election in which Modi will seek to equal

late Jawaharlal Nehru's record of returning to PMO thrice in a row. The prime minister also hailed the rising woman power which, he said, was on grand display during the Republic Day parade. He

referred to Wednesday's joint address of Parliament by President Droupadi Murmu, followed by FM Sitharaman's presentation of the interim budget on Thursday as "a festival of celebration of women power". The PM said disrupters should take the Budget Session as an occasion to redeem their reputations. He added that the sharpest of government critics who illuminated Parliament with their high discourse would be valued and remembered but those who stuck to negative and chaotic

behaviour would be forgotten. "We are sticking to precedence and presenting only an interim budget on the eve of the Lok Sabha polls. We will return to present a full budget later," he said.

Congress posts video alleging PLA confrontation, Jairam Ramesh challenges Modi govt's LAC claims

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, January 31: The Congress has released a compelling video, dated January 2024, revealing an alleged confrontation between Indian shepherds and China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) near Patrolling Points 35 and 36 in the Chushul sector. The footage has intensified accusations against the Narendra Modi-led government, challenging its assertions of stability at the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a statement, accused the Modi government of attempting to downplay a significant territorial setback, using what he termed the "DDLJ approach": Deny, Distract, Lie, and Justify. The video purportedly shows PLA troops, accompanied by an armored vehicle, obstructing shepherds' access to grazing areas well

tently refuted the government's narrative, exposing details such as the loss of access to 26 out of 65 patrolling points and the alleged agreement on buffer zones that concede additional territory. The video, accord-



ing to Congress, is the latest example of such revelations. The statement also highlighted China's continued denial of access

to strategic areas, including the Depsang Plains and Demchok, despite 18 rounds of military talks. Ramesh underscored the alleged failure of PM Modi to restore the

status quo in Ladakh over four years and accused him of allowing China to increase its influence in Bhutan, posing a threat to India's Siliguri Corridor. The Congress leader insisted on accountability, urging PM Modi to explain to the people of India when and how the status quo would be restored. The party pledged to continue its fight for justice for soldiers through the Jay Jawan campaign, emphasising the need for resolution not only for the armed forces but also for displaced shepherds vulnerable to PLA patrols. As tensions persist along the border, the Congress party seeks to keep the spotlight on alleged

government failures in safeguarding India's territorial integrity, promising to address the issue should they come to power in the future.

In last 10 years, 25 crore people have come out of poverty

New Delhi, January 31: President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament at the start of the Budget Session. The President said, "This is my first address in new Parliament building which was built at the beginning of 'Amrit Kaal'." She congratulated PM Modi for passing the women's reservation bill. Building of Ram temple has been a dream of centuries, it is a reality now, President Murmu said. According to NITI Aayog, in the last 10 years, nearly 25 crore people have come out of poverty, she said, adding, "In the last 10 years, we have seen India become one of the top five economies from 'Fragile 5'." Earlier, the country's rate of inflation was in double digits which is now within 4 per cent, the President said. In the last 10 years, India has seen completion of many such works in national interest for which people had been waiting for decades, Murmu said, adding, "We have been hearing slogans of eradicating poverty for long; now for the first time, we are seeing poverty being eradicated on a large scale.'

Chandigarh Mayoral poills: AAP to move Supreme Court for early hearing: CM Bhagwant Mann

within India's claim. Ramesh claimed that

Ladakhi sources on the ground have consis-

Naresh Malhotra

Chandigarh, January 31: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will move the Supreme Court seeking an early hearing of its plea on Chandigarh mayoral polls, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Wednesday. His statement came hours after the Punjab and Haryana High Court refused to grant any interim relief on the AAP's petition for setting aside Tuesday's mayoral election and seeking fresh mayoral polls. The HC also asked the Chandigarh administration to file its reply within three weeks and has adjourned the matter till February 26. The AAP-Congress alliance has alleged tampering with ballot papers by the presiding officer Anil Masih, a charge rejected by him and the BJP which won the election to all three posts. "We will move Supreme Court. We will seek an early hearing in the matter. There is a video of the whole thing," Mann said

prepare a report. The Chief Minister was replying to queries at a news conference here on the sidelines of chairing a meeting with the Deputy Commissioners during which he also reviewed works of various departments. "What happened vesterday in the mayoral polls is murder of democracy. "Before this too, such things have been happening under their rule. But yesterday there was video footage too of the whole thing... To save democracy is everyone's responsibili-

ty and all of us should make efforts," he said. Mann had on Tuesday alleged "cheating" in the Chandigarh mayoral polls and said the day will be remem-

and questioned why the Chandigarh bered as a black day for the country's in a setback to the Congress-AAP administration required three weeks to democracy. The Aam Aadmi Party alliance. The division bench of justices



(AAP) has sought fresh elections under the supervision of a retired High Court judge. The BJP had swept Chandigarh mayoral polls, retaining all three posts,

Sudhir Singh and Harsh Bunger on Wednesday also issued notices to the Chandigarh administration, the municipal corporation, presiding officer Anil Masih and newly elected mayor Manoj Sonkar, among others, to file their replies within three weeks. The petition was filed by AAP councillor Kuldeep Kumar, who was the candidate for the mayor's post. It alleged that the "election was not held in a free and fair manner and there was a gross violation while counting of votes, with tampering of the ballot papers and then declaring them invalid...". The Congress and AAP had predict-

ed an easy victory in the 35-member House of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, projecting it as an early test for the INDIA bloc.

Sanjay Kundu reinstated as Himachal **Pradesh Director General of Police**

Shimla, January 31: Sanjay Kundu has been reinstated as the Himachal Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) weeks after being transferred to the Ayush department as principal secretary following a High Court order in a case filed by a Palampur-based businessman. À notification restoring him as the state police chief has been issued, officials said on Wednesday. His transfer order issued on January 2 has been withdrawn in compliance with a Supreme Court directive of January 12 that set aside the Himachal Pradesh High Court order to remove him as DGP over allegations that he tried to pressure businessman Nishant Sharma. Sharma also claimed to have received a threat to his life. A bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, and also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, had passed the order after hearing Kundu's plea challenging a January 9 order of the HC which had dismissed his petition for a recall of the earlier direction to

Supreme Court, while setting aside the high court's direction to remove Kundu from the post of DGP, directed that Kundu shall exercise no control whatsoever in respect of the probe which is to be carried out in the matter by a Special Investigation Team (SIT). On January 9, the Himachal Pradesh High Court had dismissed the review petition to recall the orders of December 26, 2023, directing the Home secretary to transfer them to other posts where they have no opportunity to influence the investigations in Palampur business Nishant Sharma's complaint case. In his complaint, Nishant Sharma has alleged threat to him, his family and property. He had also questioned the role of the Director General of Police who had allegedly made calls to him, asking him to come to Shimla. Earlier, a case of defamation was registered against Sharma on the complaint of the DGP for harming his reputation and attempting to malign his image.

remove him as police chief. The

Man gets double life sentence for killing wife, step-son

CHENNAI. A 46-year-old man who killed his wife and step-son was convicted of double murder and given a double life sentence by a court on Monday. He was also fined Rs 20,000. The convict was identified as Raji alias Danger David of Andhra Pradesh. In 2014, he married his relative Gunasundari who was previously married and had a seven-year-old son Mahesh Kumar.

A few months later, Gunasundari and David separated ways and she went to live with her mother at New Washermenpet. Gunasundari was seven months pregnant at the time.In November 2014, David came to his motherin-law Nagavalli's house and started an argument with Gunasundari. In a fit of rage, he attacked Gunasundari, Mahesh and Nagavalli with a knife and fled. Gunasundari and Mahesh died on the spot while Nagavalli was sent to the hospital for treatment. The New Washermenpet police registered a case and were able to arrest David eight years later from Chennai in 2022.

Panchayat president's husband, four others held for extortion in Chennai

CHENNAI. Five people including a village panchayat president's husband were arrested by the Tambaram city police for threatening and extorting a private company. Tension prevailed at the Guduvanchery police station on Tuesday after about 100 people protested seeking their release. Nagarajan, a real estate businessman, is the husband of Kattankulathur village panchayat president Bhagavathi. "We received complaints that he was involved in the activities of the panchayat president and took decisions on her behalf. Several store owners in the locality were threatened by him and his associates to pay monthly bribes," said a police officer. Recently, Nagarajan and a few others threatened a private company selling sand. "They had demanded 20 trucks of sand for road construction in the locality. He and his associates also attacked the men at the company and demanded a monthly bribe. They also threatened to burn down all the trucks if they failed to oblige," said the

After the police detained Nagarajan and five others, a group of 100 villagers protested in front of the police station. They demanded immediate release of Nagarajan. The police registered a case under sections including IPC 147 (rioting), 341 (wrongful restraint), 387 (extortion), 307 (attempt to murder), 506 (ii) (criminal intimidation). All the six were remanded in judicial custody, said the police. The police registered a case under sections including IPC 147 (rioting), 341 (wrongful restraint), 387 (extortion), 307 (attempt to murder), 506 (ii) (criminal intimidation). All the six were remanded in judicial custody, said the police.

Ranjith Sreenivas murder: Court finds case rarest of rare

ALAPPUZHA. The Mavelikkara Additional District Session Court-I found the Ranjith Sreenivas murder a rarest of the rare case after the prosecution argued that the SDPI-PDF activists had prepared a hit list to spread hatred among the people and between different communities. The evidence presented prompted the court to award death sentences to all the accused.Public Prosecutor Prathap G Padickal said the court accepted all findings of the prosecution, as reflected in the judgment. "The murderers committed the crime in front of the victim's mother, wife and daughter. Nine of the accused broke into the house and hacked Ranjith to death. They mutilated his body with swords. At the time, three of the accused stood guard outside the house and three



others on the road. They had prepared a list which the investigation officers dug out. So the prosecution presented in the court that the murder was a pre-planned one and not merely in retaliation to the murder of SDPI leader K S Shan a day earlier. The court considered these points," Prathap said. The hit list, which included the name of Ranjith, found on the mobile phone belonging to the third accused, Anoop, turned out to be crucial in proving the case and the role of the PFI-SDPI men.

Ranjith's wife Lisha said the judgment comes as a relief."The accused mutilated his face brutally and it prevented us from performing funeral rituals like 'vaykkari idal'. His demise is a huge loss to our family," Lisha said. His mother, Vinodhini, said the court has served the family justice.

Tambaram corporation encroaching waterbodies, allege residents

-Activists allege that the lake bund is continuously encroached and the land is what remains of the bund.

CHENNAI. The Tambaram corporation has been accused of water body encroachments as few infrastructure projects were alleged to be on water bodies or adjoining areas.On January 26, foundation stones were laid for construction of a health and wellness centre on a vacant land at Aishwarya Nagar in Chrompet. But some of the residents opposed the construction work alleging that the land was part of Putheri Lake. Activists allege that the lake bund is continuously encroached and the land is what remains of the bund. According to locals, an earlier plan by the revenue department to construct a building was also halted following opposition. "Putheri Lake was encroached even before the merger with the Tambaram Corporation. But authorities continued to flout the rules and turned a blind event encroachments." said turned a blind eye to encroachments," said Anandan, a resident.

The sewage pumping station in Pammal was alleged to be on a site belonging to a temple pond. However, the corporation had clarified that it is not a full fledged water body and necessary permissions were obtained from concerned authorities. The National Green Tribunal in a judgement in July 2022 directed the Chengalpattu

district administration, water resources department and the Tambaram Corporation to conduct a survey and fix boundaries of the lake. "If there is any encroachment, then they are directed to take steps to remove the encroachment and protect the water body against encroachment and pollution," the judgement read.One-and-a-half years later, activists allege that the order is not implemented. "There are many encroachments including a few corporation



buildings in the lake area. But authorities are hesitant to act on it," said David Manohar, a resident and activist.Revenue department officials said that the land parcel is partly poramboke and partly lake area. "Due to this mixed nature, we avoided construction works in the area," the official said. However

corporation officials dismissed allegations of encroachments of water bodies. "The land is not encroached. We have verified records before initiating any works. We are not unaware of the legal consequences that could follow, if we had encroached," a senior

Drumsticks to matta rice, exports soar with migrating tastes

KOCHI. The humble drumstick (Moringa oleifera) is venturing into new frontiers, crossing oceans to uncharted territories like never before, all to meet the evolving tastes of migrating Keralites. A former restaurateur, now engaged in brewing in London, has been importing Palakkadan Matta rice to the United Kingdom since 2019 to craft a beer that authentically captures the flavours of the state. The export of Kerala-specific vegetables, curry powders and rice is on the rise, reaching non-traditional markets such as Canada, the UK, Australia, and Ireland. The surge in exports aligns

with the growing migration of Malayalis to these regions, creating a diverse culinary influence. The demand for the ubiquitous drumstick, native to southern India, initially puzzled Thiruvananthapuram-based Krishna Traders which has been in the trade for 45 years. "Simultaneously, the demand for small onions, especially the 'nattukai' variety used to make 'theeyal', is on the rise," Manoj Raveendranath, partner of Krishna Traders, told TNIE."In the past,



the export of exotic items from the Indian subcontinent was limited. Earlier, expatriates would frequently resort to substituting or making do with alternative vegetables to compensate for the absence of Kerala-specific products. However, the new generation of expatriates is displaying a greater willingness to invest in food items directly imported from Kerala," he said. Manoj noted that trade to the new markets has surged by 300% in the past two years, while traditional markets are experiencing saturation.

Vivek Pillai, who has been crafting 'Komban' — a unique craft beer using Palakkadan Matta rice in London, said his motivation was to develop a beer that could authentically represent Kerala. "I had a few ingredients in mind, but they had to harmonise with our recipe. After consultations with the team, we concluded that Palakkadan Matta rice would be the ideal ingredient, seamlessly blending with our current formulation," he said. Confirming the trend, Vinod Manjila, of Manjilas Food Tech, the owners of the Double Horse brand, said there is an increase in the rise of exports

to non-GCC countries, and this is due to the increase in migration of Malayalis to these countries."We also find the natives of these countries trying Kerala cuisine because of the rich experience of their travel to Kerala and the availability of new Kerala eateries in those countries," he added. Ubais Ali from Mezhukkattil Mills, a prominent supplier of coconut products, said the migration of dependents of nurses has spurred the establishment of retail stores and restaurants to meet the demands

CPI in Ernakulam grapples with internal turmoil

KOCHI .In an ongoing internal strife within the CPI, a district council member from Vypeen has resigned from the primary membership, citing undue harassment. E C Sivadas, announced his resignation from the party and all associated posts. He was recently demoted to the Cherai local committee as a disciplinary action. This adds to a recent trend where the CPI has witnessed the departure of prominent leaders in the district or

disciplinary actions being taken against them.In January 2024, former district secretary P Raju faced removal from all elected posts over alleged financial irregularities and was demoted to work at the Kedamangalam branch.Sivadas informed TNIE that he has consistently raised concerns with the state committee



over the past two years about the unjust treatment towards numerous party workers and the anti-party activities of some members."I have been a dedicated party worker for the past 35 years, resigning from my teaching job. I served as the Vypeen mandalam secretary for CPI for almost 15 years. Certain former CPM members, expelled from the party for anti-

party activities, are now influencing and controlling CPI. They engage in anti-party activities and remove anyone who questions them," he explained.He mentioned that he was demoted following an inquiry into a fabricated complaint.

Meanwhile, K M Dinakaran, Ernakulam district secretary of CPI, told TNIE that the disciplinary action of demoting Sivadas for six months was taken following an inquiry committee report, prompted by a complaint

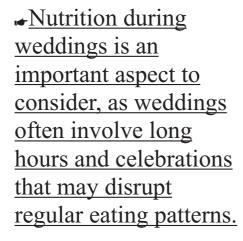
against him. Regarding Sivadas' resignation, Dinakaran mentioned that the party has not officially received any communication on this matter so far.Former vice-president of Kuzhupilly panchayat, K A Sivan, AIYF district joint secretary K S Jayadeep, and Dennis Komath recently resigned from the CPI citing internal issues.

Highrich collected Rs 1,157.32 cr from public: ED

KOCHI. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has stated that Thrissur-based Highrich Online Shoppe Pvt Ltd was involved in one of the largest financial frauds in Kerala. The ED report filed at the PMLA Court in Kochi opposing the anticipatory bail plea filed by the company's managing director K D Prathapan and his wife Sreena Prathapan, who was also its CEO, revealed that the company fraudulently collected Rs 1,157.32 crore from the public and the proceeds of crime stood at Rs 212.45 crore."An in-depth investigation is necessary against the petitioners as the scam is reportedly one of the largest in the state. It is noticed that several complaints were lodged by the affected parties in different police stations against the petitioners and registration of crimes is under way," said the report. Highrich Online Shoppe, founded in 2019, collected funds from the public in the guise of online grocery stores.Later, the firm initiated projects like Highrich OTT and cryptocurrency named HR coins to attract further investments. The company operates around 630 franchisees across India. To attract more customers to these franchisees, the company introduced the 'first purchase'scheme, 'digital coupon'scheme, and activation to privileged ID schemes. According to ED, the accused collected deposits by promoting an illegal 'money circulation scheme' under the guise of selling grocery products."The company is not running any substantive income-generating business by using the deposits. The alleged business of direct selling of products to the members is not contributing any substantive income for the company. A major portion of the money collected from new members is utilised for distribution to existing members as incentives. The rest of the money is diverted as the profit of the petitioners," the ED report said.After questioning the chief operations officer, marketing manager, company promoters and associates, the ED found that the company collected Rs 1,157.32 crore as membership fees from members by attracting them into a fraudulent MLM scheme and recorded as purchase consignment advance in the book of account for the year 2023-24.

"The deposit collections by the company are grouped and parked under two heads- Grocery Pin of Rs 19.21 crore, and HR coin of Rs 1138.11 crore. Most of the money collected was utilised for redistribution to the members as an incentive/commission in the typical 'Ponzi Scheme' format. The rest of the money is the profit siphoned off by the company and its promoters which is a part of the proceeds of crime generated by the said company and its directors," the report said.

Eat right at weddings



CHENNAI .eddings are an event of love, laughter, family, and most importantly food. We wait for weddings just to devour the food served there with our friends and family. Food is a significant element of weddings and the culinary experience plays a crucial role in creating memorable celebrations. Nutrition during weddings is an important aspect to consider, as weddings often involve long hours, energy-demanding activities, and celebrations that may disrupt

regular eating patterns. Here are some considerations for maintaining good nutrition during weddings:Don't skip the salad: This might not be the first thing you want to reach out to among the whole buffet spread there. However, like with productivity, get the hardest tasks done first. Go for the salad spread first (kosambari, sundal, poriyal). This will add some fibre to your diet which will

make digestion easier while also providing you with some satiety. Opt for non-creambased, lite, or fat-free salad dressing or, just go with a small amount of olive oil and vinegar.Starters: Any dish with the words stuffed, double, triple, crispy, etc, are the Points to remember the high amount of fat and salt. There is no harm in trying them, but definitely control portion size.

Soups: Soups are great for you to feel satiated and sometimes a cup of soup and some grilled protein is all you need. So, don't miss the soup.Protein: Include any grilled or tandoor-ed protein as a part of your meal. This could be paneer tikka, grilled chicken/fish, chaap. Choosing stewed, sautéed, or grilled food over fried and baked



food will be easier on the gut. Dal and egg curries work great for protein intake.Fruits: Fruit juices can contain a lot of sugar, hence opt for whole fruits to get the fiber in and to

avoid the extra sugar.

ones that you may want to refrain from due to Hydration: It's common to forget to hydrate during weddings. Dehydration can lead to fatigue and dizziness. Remember to drink water regularly throughout the day.Meal before meal: To prevent going overboard at the wedding, have a small snack before leaving to avoid overeating. Mindful eating: Mindful eating is an approach to food consumption that involves paying full attention to the experience of eating, without judgment. It encourages awareness of the tastes, smells, textures, and feelings

associated with eating, as well as an understanding of one's hunger and

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NEWS BOX

Earmark dog feeding points in 15 days, MCG asks RWAs

Gurgaon. The MCG on Tuesday asked RWAs to designate feeding points for stray dogs and submit a plan to the civic body within 15 days. The corporation had issued the same order in December last year. However, several societies and colonies have still not designated areas for feeding dogs.

MCG will also constitute two committees— one to address the complaints and grievances related to stray dogs, and the other to inspect the dog shelter at Basai and monitor the sterilisation and vaccination of stray dogs.Narhari Singh Banger, MCG commissioner, said that as according to the Animal Birth Control Rules 2023, RWAs and apartment associations should plan feeding arrangements for stray dogs. "The population of dogs should be considered when identifying such feeding points, which should be away from the play areas of children, entry and exit points of the societies and colonies, staircases and areas frequented by senior citizens to avoid any accidents. The RWAs should also make guidelines for the same," said Banger, adding that two more dog shelters will soon be established by the civic body. The residents can send their complaints on WhatsApp helpline number 7290075866 or call on tollfree number 1800-180-1817. The commissioner also said that residents should get their pet dogs registered with MCG as the corporation offers doorstep pet dog registration services. For this, MCG has hired a private

54% college teachers women in Hry, but most in junior posts

Gurgaon: Nearly 54% of the teachers in Haryana colleges are women, but most of them are in junior posts. The state has a total of 41,098 teachers. A total of 22,086 of them are women and 19,012 (46.3%) are men, according to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) for the 2021-22 academic session.

When it comes to higher posts such as professors, however, men are predominant — of 3,738 professors in the state in 2021-22, 67.4% (2,519) are men. There are only 1,219 (32.6%) women professors.

The report of the survey, which was conducted across 1,089 colleges in the state, was released last week.

At college level, educators are categorised into various posts, including professors, associate professors, lecturers, demonstrators or tutors, temporary teachers and visiting staff that may include professors or lecturers from other institutions. The survey, which was carried out by the Union education ministry, shows that most lecturer, demonstrator and even temporary teacher positions are occupied by women. In fact, 81.4% of demonstrators or tutors in the Haryana colleges are women, against only 313 men. Similarly, 66.3% (1,486) of 2,241 temporary teachers in these colleges are women, against 755 men.

Lecturers are those who are recruited based on a postgraduate degree, a BEd degree and the entrance exam conducted by state government or Centre. They don't need to have a PhD in a specific subject. Of 28,763 lecturers in Haryana, 54.8% (15,770) are women. When it comes to associate professors, the numbers are fairly even — of a total of 4,199, 51.9% (2,179) are men and 48.1% (2,020) women. The situation is similar for visiting teachers, with 53.5% (253) men and 46.5% (220) women.

Man who supplied shooters for airline staffer's murder held



Noida. The man who carried out a recce and provided shooters to kill an Air India crew member outside a gym in Sector 104 earlier this month on the instructions of gangster Kapil Mann was arrested after a gunfight on Tuesday.Suraj Maan, a resident of Lotus Panache in Sector 110 and an AI employee, was the brother of Pravesh Mann, a gangster currently lodged in Mandoli prison under charges of the Gangster Act and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). Kapil Mann, also lodged in the same prison, allegedly planned the murder over a decade-old rivalry between the two Mann families over a plot in Khera Khurd village in Delhi. Additional DCP (Noida) Manish Kumar Mishra said the suspect, Naveen Sharma, apparently joined Kapil Mann's gang in 2021 and is considered close to him. In 2021, Sharma killed a Delhi businessman on Kapil Mann's instruction and earned his favour."Sharma carries a bounty of Rs 25,000 on his arrest. On Tuesday, a police team from Sector 39 were conducting checks in the Sector 43 area. Around 7 am, they flagged down a two-wheeler, but the rider opened fire at the cops. Sharma was shot at during a reconciliatory fire. He was taken into custody and a pistol and some cartridges were recovered from his possession," the officer said. Sharma is said to have told his interrogators that on Kapil Mann's instruction he had carried out a recce before the AI crew member was shot dead by three men in his car just after he had walked out of a gym. Sharma claimed the gangster often spoke about taking revenge for his father's murder and hatched a plan to kill Suraj in January when he was brought to Delhi's Rohini court for a hearing in the presence of his girlfriend Kajal Khatri, brother Harjeet Mann and accomplices Mannu Mann, Dheeraj Mann, Shakti Mann, Sanjeet and Sonu alias Vikas besides Sharma," DCP Harish Chander said. Kapil allegedly directed Sharma, Shakti Mann and Sanjeet to track Suraj's day-to-day movement. Shakti Mann and Sanjeet were named in the complaint filed in Suraj's murder along with Dheeraj Mann, the DC said.ACP Rajneesh Verma said Kapil Mann was also planning to kill Parvesh Mann and his gang members inside the prison. Police sources told TOI there was a possibility that some Delhi Police personnel had provided Suraj's location and information to Kapil Mann.

Farmers clash with cops outside GNIDA office, roads in Knowledge Park choke

Noida: Farmers protesting outside the Greater Noida Authority office for 10% abadi plots as compensation for land acquired for new industrial areas clashed with nearly 250 cops deployed at the site on Tuesday. The protest staged by farmers triggered snarls in the Knowledge Park area a day after arterial roads in Noida saw heavy jams on Monday when the farmers rallied near the Chilla border.

The farmers, who gathered in large numbers on Tuesday, said they have received several assurances since the protests started five months ago, but nothing has materialised."For more than five months, we have been patient. But, on Tuesday, we collectively decided to intensify our protests. If our demands continue to fall on deaf ears, the protest will become bigger in the coming days,' said an office bearer of a farmers outfit.Earlier, the farmers had submitted their demands to the Authority, which assured them of providing additional compensation and jobs to youths in the family, among other things.Farmers, however, have continued to protest as the



Authority is yet to concede to their demand for 10% residential plots on the developed land. The Authority has sent this demand to the state government for approval. Officials, meanwhile, said they would organise camps in villages to determine the eligibility of the farmers to

get 6% of the developed land, according to the existing norms.

GNIDA CEO NG Ravi Kumar had instructed the officials to set up camps in villages to facilitate the process. Officer on special duty Himanshu Verma said a team from the land records department

will organise a camp at the primary health centre in Dadha on Feb 1 from 11am. Another camp will be organised in Sirsa village on Feb 2.An ACEO-level official will also be present at the camps. Farmers can visit the camps with the relevant documents to check their eligibility. "If anyone has any objections, they can register them at the camps," an official said. We also published the following articles recentlyProtesting farmers block major roads into ParisFrench farmers blockaded major motorways around Paris, protesting against income, red tape, and environmental policies. The farmers aim to choke off the capital in a final battle for farming and survival. Protests by farmers have also been seen in other European countries.

THE SIKH TIMES

No jobs, kin of dead farmers protest outside mins houseProtesters demand compensation and jobs. Over 400 families still await jobs promised by Punjab government. Telangana government urged to address pending

Structural audit dues: Town planner to serve notice to builders, RWAs

Gurgaon. After repeated reminders and months of wait, additional deputy commissioner Hitesh Meena has issued written orders to district town planner (enforcement wing) Manish Yadav to serve final notices to builder managements as well as RWAs of 23 group housing societies to expedite the structural audit. The district administration will also hold a meeting with developers and RWAs to settle the issues which are halting and delaying the process, adding to the concerns of families living in the highrise buildings.

District town planner (enforcement) Manish Yadav said, "The enforcement team will issue notices to developer management and concerned RWAs of these housing societies, who have yet not deposited the amount and drawings so

that the audit work can be completed. In DTPE and PWD department. some cases, the builder management of societies are ready to deposit the money but the RWA is not coming forward to pay the dues."At present, the structural audit of 38 group housing societies is being conducted by the district administration in two phases — 15 societies in the first phase and 23 societies in the second phase. The structural audit of 15 societies in the first phase stopped after visual inspection as the developers of nine societies did not deposit the money for the second round which is for nondestructive and destructive tests.

The action taken report in the matter has been sent to the deputy commissioner for further action. Similarly, visual inspection work in 23 societies of the second phase was done by a joint team of officials of

NAME CHANGE

ABRAR AHMAD S/O MOHAM-

ROAD, BATLA HOUSE, OKHLA

NEW DELHI-110025, mistakenl

entered my father name NAEEN AHMAD in my passport whereas

the correct name of my father's is "MOHAMMAD NAEEM" and to be known as "MOHAMMAD NAEEM"

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public at large that our client, Mr. Mohd Sabir

Malik & Mrs. Basrat Malik who have approached Indo Star Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. for the purchasing

of Built-Up Ground Floor without Roof/Terrace Rights, Built on West/Back Side Portion of

Plot/Property Bearing No. WZ-14 -A, Plot No. 33, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds., Part of Rect No. 32, Killa

No. 2, (Khasra No. 32/12), Situated in the area of Village Khyala Delhi,

State Delhi Colony Known as Rav

Nagar, New Delhi - 110018. Mrs. Sayara Begam Purchased this property from Mrs. Sagufta Ansari

and became owner vide Sale Deed regd. as Doc. No. 3955, Vol. No. 24255, Pages 63-71, Book No.1, dated 09.04.2019, SR-II Basai Darapur. It is to mention that the Original Sale Deed Dated 15.05.2018. Executed by Mr. Acros.

15.05.2018 Executed by Mr. Asrar Hussain S/o. Mr. Riyaz Hussain in favour of Mrs. Sagufta Ansari W/o.

Mr. Mohd Afzal Ansari in respect of Ground Floor Without Roof/Terrace Rights, Built - Up West/Back Side

Portion of Plot/Property Bearing No. WZ-14 - A, Plot No. 33, area measuring 50 Sq.Yds. (41.8 Sq.Mtrs),

Part of Rect No. 32, Killa No. 12 (Khasra No. 32/12), Situated in the

area of Village Khyala Delhi, State

Delhi Colony Known as Ravi Nagar, New Delhi - 110018. (Regd. as Doc. No. 5644, Vol. No. 23722, Pages

148-156, SR-II) is lost by the Customer. And the said property is

going to be mortgaged in Indo Star Home Finance Pvt. Ltd., Netaj

Subhash Place Branch, Pitampura New Delhi. All persons, if any

ncluding bank, financial institutions or any party/ies having any claim Objection to Khasra Number)

emand, right, interest in respect of against the said property or any

art thereof by way of inheritance

assignment, mortgage, charge possession, lien or otherwise, are

ereby required to make the same

for all purpose in future

To reduce the expenditure, as demanded by developers and RWAs, in the subsequent rounds.ADC had combined both the phases into one and fixed the cost at around Rs 3.5 per square ft.We also published the following articles recentlyPCMC appeals to societies to allow entry of survey teamsPimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation appeals to housing societies to cooperate with survey for Maratha reservation. Difficulties faced in entering some societies and slums. Avinash Shinde urges people to allow entry and cooperate with survey teams.

Women empowerment sign of growing societyMayor Indrani Ponvasanth emphasized women empowerment during the Republic Day event on the

Madurai corporation campus. She felicitated long-serving corporation drivers and recognized the contributions of sanitary workers, health officials, medical officers, and engineers. The mayor highlighted ongoing projects, including the Mullaperiyar drinking water project and revamping of parks and tanks in the city. 107178005

Ramgarh DC felicitates 30 for contribution to societyRamgarh deputy commissioner felicitated people at Republic Day celebration. Class toppers got blazers. DC unfurled flag, inspected parade. Tableaux by 16 departments. 30 people felicitated, including Deodhari Karmali, Rajesh Kumar Nagi, Vaibhav Kumar Sharma, Om Prakash Mahto. 26 officials also felicitated. Blazers given to 6 girl

Snap supply to illegal shops on govt land, residents tell discom

Gurgaon. After flagging concerns about safety and security due to unauthorised construction and illegal commercial activities, residents of housing projects and private landowners off Galleria Road have written to Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) demanding immediate disconnection of power supply to these unauthorised shops and vendors.In a letter to DHBVN superintending engineer PK Chauhan, the land owners said these power connection meters are installed on their land, but connections have been provided to

NAME CHANGE

, Ata Mohammad, S/o Rajibul Kho, R/o Plot No-143-C- F/f, Block R-Extension

Delhi, Delhi-110059., Have Changed My Name to Aftab Khan S/o Rajibu

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as BABITA alias SUNITA RANI D/o LAL CHAND and W/o MUKESH KUMAR, R/o P

125A/2, Gali No. 8, Shankar Nagar Extension, Krishna Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051, have changed

NAME CHANGE Pruthviraj son of no-2809615A Nk Rupnur Kashinath Bharmu R/O vill-

Khanderajuri POST- Khanderajur TEH - Miraj DIST - Sangli Maharashtra

PIN CODE -416410 have changed m

name from Pruthviraj to Pruthvira cashinath rupnur For allfuture purpos

es vide Affidavit dated 31/01 /2024

NAME CHANGE

MAHDUBAI M/O 2801279k Ha

hanage milind chhabu Vill-hiwar nazar Post-daithane gunjal Tel- ahmed

nagar District -ahmednagar State Maharashtra Pin 414103 Have

changed name from MAHDUBAI to MANDABAI CHHABU THANGE for al

future purpose vide affidavit Date 31 Jan 2024 before Notary Public Delhi

NAME CHANGE

t is for general information tha SUKHDEV SINGH NEGI S/o Late

I,SUKHIJEV SINGH NEGI 5/0 Late Shri. B.S. Negi, R/O H.No.B-86, Phase-1, Aya Nagar, New Delhi-110047, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SUKHDEV SINGH in my service

SUKHDEV SINGH NEGI, which

NAME CHANGE

SAPNA RANI GANDHI W/O SHYAN

SUNDAR MALHOTRA residing at 842 MANTOLA PAHAR GANJ SWAM

RAM TIRTH NAGAR DELHI-110055

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as SHANTI BHATNAGAR VERMA W/o PRANAYA VERMA, R/o House

No.78, Anukampa Chitra Vihar, Behind, Swasthya Vihar, Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092, have changed

my name and shall hereafter be known as SHURUTI BHATNAGAR

nay be amended accordingly.

pefore Notary public, Delhi

department of district No meter reading, residents say administration and discom by the getting inflated power bills landowners seeking disconnection action.A senior DHBVN official said, "We have received complaints in the matter. We have received the revenue report now and the concerned executive engineer has been instructed to verify the records with the revenue department and take appropriate legal action."The official further said that in the past, the department had imposed fine for extending the power supply from the erected meter beyond permissible limits.

NAME CHANGE

FARAH JAVED W/o ISHRAT ZAFAF

esiding at K-46, GROUND FLOOR

BATLA HOUSE, OKHLA, DELHI

110025 have changed my name to FARHA JAVED for all future purpose

NAME CHANGE

KARIYAV KANWAR Mother

lo. 16022383A Rank-NK Name-IKRAM presently residing at 266

25A. GALI NO-30. B J S COLONY

JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN-342006, have changed my name from KARIYAV KANWAR to DARIYAV

KANWAR for all future purposes and in my son's service records my

date of birth wrongly mentioned as 22/03/1965 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1967 vide

affidavit dated 31/01/2024 before

NAME CHANGE

ZULFIQAR AHMAD S/O KHALID

SAIFULLAH residing at E-100 2ND FLOOR ABDUL FAZAL ENCLAVE HARI KHOTI ROAD NEW FRIENDS

changed my name to ZULFIQUAR AHMAD for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE

I, PUNAMPUNEET KAUR Daughter of JC-501163H Rank-HONY LT, Name-BALJIT SINGH

resently residing at VPO-POOHLI, EH-NATHANA, DISTRICT-

BATHINDA, PUNJAB-151102 have

hanged my name from PUNAM-PUNEET KAUR to POONAMP-

de affidavit dated 31/01/2024 efore Notary Public, Delhi.

NEET KAUR for all future purpose

NAME CHANGE

Raviraj son of no-2809615A Nk Rupnur Kashinath Bharmu R/O vill-Khanderajuri POST- Khanderajuri

TEH - Miraj DIST - Sangli Maharashtra PIN CODE -416410 have changed my

name from Raviraj to Raviraj kashinath

upnur For allfuture purposes vide ffidavit dated 31/01 /2024 before

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Sultan Singh S/o Sh. Ram Lal and his wife Rajani R/o C-246,

Sanjay Colony, Okhla Phase-II, Nev Delhi 110020, have severed all rela

ons with their son Jatan and dis

wned him from their all moveable

ecome disobedient and out of control

of my clients. If anybody deals with him will do so at his/her own risk, cost

and consequences, My clients sha

Onkar Pandey Advocat

Ch.No.679 Saket Cou

New Delhi -1

not be responsible for his any acts.

Notary public, Delhi

OLONY DELHI-110025

otary Public, Delhi.

following articles recently nowResidents of Sector 105 in

Noida are fuming over inflated electricity bills. The bills are being generated based on earlier readings as meter readings have not been taken for the past few months. The readings are done through MRI by two companies, Terasoftware and Sai Computers. Power supply to PVTG home

awaits JBVNL nod: OfficialsA detailed project report (DPR) worth Rs 5.65 crore has been sent to the JBVNL for approval and

HAUGHARA

Notary Public, Delhi

NAME CHANGE

ARTI KUMARI wife of No

5781099Y Rank-HAV Name SHIORAJ PANDIT presently residing at BIMARI, BHOJPUR ARA

BIHAR-802154 have changed my name from ARTI KUMARI to ART

DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 31/01/2024 before

PUBLIC NOTICE

formation is given to general pul

c at large that our clients Ms. Rain

the owner of Freehold Residentia

lot No. 18 & 19, area measuring

200+200= 400 sq. yd. out of Khasra No. 92/2, situated at Village Meerpur Turk in the abadi o

(haioori Khas Illaga Shahdara

Delhi-94. By Virtue of Notarized GPA with ATS & Will dated 08.12.2003 & Notarized GPA with

ATS & Will dated 15.12.2003 nov

our client is declaring that that any

other Person does not have an

ight over the said property. Same property sold too be Mr. Nitin Gupta

and same has been financed by CICI Home Finance Co. Ltd Branch: KAUSHAMBI, UP. If any

erson(s) has any objection(s) of

claim(s) with respect to the right title or interest in the Said Property

nen contact us within 07 days fron

ne date of Publication of this notice

nd or the same to the undersigned

[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA]

f found by anyone. Thereafter no

BHOJPUF

NAME CHANGE

, Manjushri W/O No jc-462465w Nb/sub- Bhoite abhaysinh daulat Vil - kinhai Post- kinhai Tah - koregaor Dist - satara Maharashtra Pin code 415021 Have changed name from manjushri to manjushri abhaysin phoite for all future purpose vid Affidavit Date 31 Jan 2024 befor lotary Public Delhi

NAME CHANGE

VARSHA YADAV, W/O MRINA KHURANA, R/O H. NO.-184, First Floor, Sector -5 wavecity ,NH-24, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh -201002 aged 7 years and he shall hereafte be known as YUVIN YADAV.

NAME CHANGE

Sangeeta Gupta D/o Late Shri Rar n M.N. Rao F Sector-11, Dhawan Giri Apartment, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, 201301 have changed my name after marriage with Shri M. N. Rao to Sangeeta Rao for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE KETAKI PRAJAPATI Wife of No 5210490H Rank-HAV Name-RAJEN DRA KUMAR presently residing a VPO-PAPRENDA, TEH+DIST BANDA, UTTAR PRADESH-21000°

31/01/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated

Open Tender Notice No. endering) are invited by Divisiona Railway Manager (Signal & [elecomm]/ Varanasi/ N. E. Railway for and behalf of the President o India for the following works: **SN:-**1 Tender Notice No. and Description of Work:- NER-BSB0SnT-OT-01-2024: Name of work: Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of AMARA RAJA make IPS & Mini IPS for 36 months (03 years) of BSB Division Details:- Approx. Value:- Rs 15565592.88, **Earnest Money:**-Rs. 227800.00/-, **Cost of Tender** Form:- Rs. 00.00/-, Completion period:- 36 Months, Tender Closing date & Time:- 22.02.2024 up to 15.00 Hrs., 1. Tender Online

Advocate

ave changed my name from KETAKI PRAJAPATI to KETKI PRAJAPATI for

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY NER-BSB0SnT-OT-01-2024 "Open Tenders" through Online (E

date 22.02.2024. 2. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian railways i.e. www.ireps.gov.in.

Divl. Rly. Manager (S&T) **Varanas**

F-211, Sector-3 Vaishali, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201010 CPRO/Signal-95 (Contact at 09958871432 Do Not Smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train

Sr. Divisional Engineer-I/Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of President

Name of work with location, cost of work and Earnest money: Hiring of multi utility vehicles and leading of P.Way materials in the section of

Website particulars, published tender, notice location etc complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downlo

Similar nature of work: Any Engeenering work or transportation work NOTE: All attachments must be self attested by the tenderers and the affidavi should be submitted in the new format attached with tender conditions as pe

No.: 128-W/280/Tender Notice/23-24/W-I (NIT-51) Dated: 30.01.2024

Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.Gem.gov.in

, KALINDI TIWARI Mother of No. 17005685M Rank-NK Name- SHA-TRUGHAN TIWARI R/o VILL-BHIM-PUR, PO & DIST-DEORIA, UTTAR PRADESH-274001, have changed my name from KALINDI TIWARI to KALINDA for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 31/01/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as I, SAQIB Son o mohammad hashim residing at h no-2523, kucha baqaullah, tiraha behram khan, darya ganj, delhi-110002 hav changed my name and shall hereaft oe known as sagib khan.

NAME CHANGE

I, VINOD KUMAR S/O BHRAHMANAND residing at 158-A, DDA FLATS, HARI NAGAR, ASHRAM, DELHI-110014 have changed my name to VINOD GUPTA permanently.

NAME CHANGE

, Mohd Zeeshan s/o Hassin Uddir R/o at H.NO.1208/B, Street No.39/4 Nr. Khajoor Wali Masjid, Jafrabad Delhi-110053, have changed my ame to Zeeshan permanently

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, on behalf of my clients Khale Khar and his Wife Bilkis Bano, residing a New F-230. Gali No-8. Near Mandii Gurudwara, Raghubir Nagar Tagor Garden S.O. West Delhi-110027 hereby inform that my clients have severed their relations and have dis-bouned their son, Mubin@ Aahil, from all their movable and immovable prop erties. Whoever deals with him should be doing so at their own risk and responsibility. Furthermore, it is to be responsibility. Furthermore, it is to be noted that there are ongoing court cases against Mubin@ Aahil. In the future, if Mubin@ Aahil becomes involved in any criminal or civil case, his family, including his parents and elder brother Afzal Khan, will bear no esponsibility for his actions.

Rahul Mishra Advocate

Chamber No., C.L.Joseph Block

PUBLIC NOTICE Information is given to general public a large that my client Mrs. Suman Sharma

W/o Mr. Prem Chand Sharma who is the owner of Residential Plot on Land area measuring 125+35=160 Sq. Yds, i.e 133.78 Sq. Meters, out of Khasra No.619 Situated at Village Nangla Firoz Mohanpu Pargana Jalalabad, Tehsil & Distric Ghaziabad owner through two Sale Deed vide (1) Sale Deed dated 28.12.2011 exe cuted by Mr. Devinder Singh in respect of Residential Plot on Land area measurin Sale Deed dated 11.12.2013 executed by Mr. Inderpal Singh in respect of Residentia Plot on Land area measuring 35 Sq. Yds ide Doc. No.17461, and same property t be financed by Satya Micro Housing Finance Private Limited, having its regis ered office at Dpt-519 5th Floor, Dlf Pri Tower Block-F Okhla Phase 1, New Delhi 110020 & having its corporate Office at Prius Heights, 7th Floor, Sector 125, Noida-201303. That, Original Sale Deed dated 27.06.1997 executed by Mi Inderpal Singh in favour of Mr. Devinde Singh in respect of Plot on land area me uring 125 Sq. Yds., vide Doc. No.1457 Book No.1, Vol. No.417, on pages 88-91 egistered on 27.06.1997 in SR Ghaziabad has been lost/misplaced and FIR for the same has been lodged through FIR dated 27.01.2024 vide L.A.R No.20240000061136. If any person(s) objection for subject property, then kindly nay contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from date of this notice on below men tioned address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and

> [ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocat Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.

of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work

on IREPS as per Railway Board's letter No.2015/CE-I/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016. Completion Period: 24 Months

Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 15.00 hrs on 23.02.2024 opening of e-tender at 15.00 hrs. on 23.02.2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY e-OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE Approx. Cost: Rs. 1,82,79,682.84/-, Earnest Money: 2,41,400/-

Earnest Money should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. **Note**: FDR or Demand Draft will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited

known in writing within 7 days with the documentary evidence from the date of publication, falling which the said claim of the person/s, if any will be considered waived and settled. Ms. Rani Shilpee (Advocate) Office Add: H. No. T/181, UGF, Shukar Bazaar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059

NEWS BOX

US woman, 60, falls into garbage truck, gets compacted 4 times, rescued later

New Hampshire. A 60-year-old woman was miraculously rescued from inside a garbage truck after she accidentally fell into a dumpster outside her residence in New Hampshire, United States. The woman was found injured after being compacted in the truck, at least four times. According to her statement to the firefighters, she fell into the dumpster when she was trying to throw out a bag of trash. It is unknown how long she remained inside the truck before being noticed by the driver on the internal camera. Acting swiftly, the driver called 911, initiating a dramatic rescue operation. With the help of specialised equipment to cut through the metal and remove compacted debris, the woman was taken out in a 30minute effort. The woman, yet to be identified, was hospitalised on Monday with critical injuries and is recovering, news outlet Boston 25 reported. The firefighters said that they are still examining how the incident happened. The woman was in agony and not alert enough to answer the officials' questions.

At least 19 killed after bus collides with truck on highway in Mexico

Mexico City A fiery highway collision between a truck and a bus filled with passengers in Mexico's northwestern Sinaloa state early on Tuesday killed at least 19 people, according to local news outlet N+.

Local authorities have yet to announce a death toll, or how many others were injured in the accident, which took place along a coastal highway that connects the beach front cities of Mazatlan and Los Mochis. Circulation on the highway was closed due to the accident, according to the N+ report.Images of the aftermath of the accident in the early morning hours of Tuesday showed the charred vehicles still burning, with flames and smoke billowing out, as emergency personnel arrived on the scene.

France passes historic bill in 1st step to enshrine abortion as constitutional right

Paris, France's National Assembly on Tuesday overwhelmingly approved a bill meant to enshrine a woman's right to an abortion in the French Constitution, the first key step in a legislative process that also requires a vote in the Senate.

The measure has been promised by President Emmanuel Macron following a rollback of abortion rights in the United States. The bill was voted Tuesday evening by the lower house of parliament by 493 votes for and 30 against. "Tonight, the National Assembly and the government did not miss their rendez-vous with women's history," Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti said. Macron's government wants Article 34 of France's constitution amended to include that "the law determines the conditions by which is exercised the freedom of women to have recourse to an abortion, which is guaranteed." A constitutional amendment must pass both chambers of parliament and then be approved either in a referendum or by a three-fifths majority of a joint session of parliament. Macron's government is aiming for the second method, though the measure's level of support in the Senate is less certain than in the National Assembly.

None of France's major political parties represented in parliament is questioning the right to abortion.

Yet some members of the conservative majority in the Senate have criticized the wording of the proposal, making its passage there more uncertain. If the same version of the bill ultimately passes both houses, Macron would call a special session of all legislators in attempts to win a three-fifths vote.

Abortion in France was decriminalized under a 1975 law, but there is nothing in the constitution that would guarantee abortion rights. The government argued in its introduction to the bill that the right to abortion is threatened in the United States, where the Supreme Court in 2022 overturned a 50-year-old ruling that had guaranteed the right to an abortion.

H-1B visa application process to begin March 6

Washington. The H-1B visa application submission process for the fiscal year 2025 would start from March 6, a US federal agency said Tuesday as it announced a major overhaul of its annual lottery for this speciality occupation visa.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. The new system, among other things, includes provision of a beneficiary-centric selection process for registrations by employers. As a result, unlike in the past of multiple applications by an individual that often resulted in abuse in fraud of the system, the H-1B visa applications would now be counted and accepted based on individual applicants. Even if one individual files multiple applications for various companies, they would be counted as one application based on their personal credentials like passport numbers.US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) also announced a set of new rules which are aimed at strengthening the integrity of and reducing the potential for fraud in the H-1B registration process. This includes reducing the potential for gaming the registration system and ensuring each beneficiary would have the same chance of being selected, regardless of the number of registrations submitted on their behalf, the federal agency said. We're always looking for ways to bolster integrity and curtail the potential for fraud while improving and streamlining our application processes," said USCIS Director Ur M. Jaddou."The improvements in these areas should make H-1B selections more equitable for petitioners and beneficiaries and will allow for the H-¹B process to be fully electronic from registration, if applicable, until final decision and transmission of approved petitions to the Department of State," he said.USCIS said the initial registration period for the fiscal 2025 H-1B cap will open at noon Eastern on March 6, and run through March 22. During this period, prospective petitioners and their representatives, if applicable, must use a USCIS online account to register each beneficiary electronically for the selection process and pay the associated registration fee for each beneficiary. Starting February 28, companies would be allowed to open their account which can be used to start and complete the registration process.

Donald Trump's lawyer says judge's possible conflict may taint Jean Carroll ruling

Taipei. Taiwan's government expressed anger after China "unilaterally" changed a flight path close to the sensitive median line in the Taiwan Strait, saying it appeared to be a deliberate attempt to change the status quo for possible military means. China's civil aviation administrationsaid in a short statement late Tuesday that from Thursday it was cancelling an "offset measure" for the southbound operation of the M503 flight route, which is just west of the strait's median line. The median line had for years served as an unofficial barrier between Chinese-claimed Taiwan and China, but China says it does not recognise its existence and Chinese warplanes now regularly fly over it as Beijing seeks to pressure Taipei to accept its sovereignty claims.China also said it was opening routes from west to east - in other words in the direction of Taiwan - on two flight paths from the Chinese cities of Xiamen and Fuzhou, which are close to the Taiwanese-controlled island groups of Kinmen and Matsu, which have regular flights to Taiwan. Taiwan's civil aviation



administration and the China-policy-making Mainland Affairs Council both labelled the move as "unilateral" and that they strongly protested it. The Mainland Affairs Council said China was ignoring flight safety, disrespecting Taiwan and trying to "package" civil aviation for political or military considerations to

potentially change the status quo in the strait."If the mainland side clings obstinately to its course, it must bear any serious consequences affecting crossstrait relations," it said. Chieh Chung, a military researcher at Taiwan's National Policy Foundation, said the new route

pre-warning and reaction time for Taiwan's air defences."It is trying to completely eliminate and deny the existence of the median line," he said. China's Taiwan Affairs Office described the changes as "routine" and to help alleviate pressure on airspace."It is also conducive to improving cross-strait flight operations and further facilitating cross-strait people-to-people exchanges, which are in line with the common interests of compatriots on both sides of the strait," it said in a statement. The M503 route is mostly used by Chinese airlines and also by foreign airlines going to and from cities like Shanghai in Southeast Asia. Flights to and from Taiwan and China's Xiamen and Fuzhou take a circuitous route avoiding the median line, rather than flying directly across the strait. Taiwan has complained about the M503 route before, in 2018, when it said China opened the northbound part of it without first informing Taipei in contravention of a 2015 deal to first discuss such flight paths.

Hotelier gives \$1 million for Trump's legal fees, vows to donate \$20 million more

Nevada. Hotelier Robert Bigelow told hush money payments to a porn star. Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump \$1 million for his legal fees and agreed to donate another \$20 million to a pro-Trump outside group for campaign purposes."I gave him \$1 million towards his legal fees a few weeks ago. I made a promise to give him \$20 million more, that will be to the super PAC," the Nevada-based owner of Budget Suites of America said in an interview. The commitments, which have not been previously reported, show some big money is coalescing around Trump, the runaway frontrunner to clinch the Republican presidential nomination to face Democrat Joe Biden in the November general election.Bigelow's donations also highlight the unusual role some political donors are playing as Trump faces four pending criminal cases this year. Those cases include two over his efforts to reverse his 2020 presidential election loss, one over his handling of classified documents upon leaving office and another over his

Reuters on Tuesday he gave Bigelow, who also founded Bigelow Aerospace and funds investigations into extraterrestrial life, said he felt For all of Trump's political success, Trump was being unfairly targeted in the criminal cases and that his sympathy towards the former

president had motivated the donation. was just sympathetic. They didn't solicit anything from me," Bigelow said. The \$20 million would be spread out but "starts right away," he added.

The Justice Department says it acts without political bias.All of Trump's Republican rivals, bar former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, have dropped out of the race, and Trump is all but assured of clinching the nomination. Trump and his team have been seeking to peel wealthy benefactors away from Haley, making calls trying to convince donors to switch sides. Trump has gone so far as to warn the donors they would be banished from his orbit if they made further donations.Bigelow initially backed Florida Governor Ron DeSantis for the Republican

nomination, but dropped him in part over his strict anti-abortion policies.BILLS AND FINES

however, his legal costs are rapidly mounting. Trump was hit last week with an \$83 million verdict in a defamation case brought by writer E. Jean Carroll, and a judge is set to rule any day now on the New York Attorney General's request for \$370 million in penalties for his misrepresentations to banks about his net worth.The New York Times reported earlier on Tuesday that pro-Trump groups spent some \$50 million on legal bills and "investigation-related" expenses in 2023. Reuters was not immediately able to confirm that figure.Bigelow said he could not remember the exact name of the entity to which he sent the \$1 million, but Trump's Save America PAC has been an important vehicle for paying his legal fees. When asked whether he was considering donating more to help pay Trump's legal fees, Bigelow declined

US launches fresh 5-week selection criteria for H-1B visa

Washington. The US has formally launched a pilot programme to renew the much sought-after H-1B foreign work visas domestically, a move that is likely to benefit thousands of Indian tech professionals. The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.Launched on January 29, the pilot renewal programme will run till April 1. It will allow H-1B visa holders who are currently in status to renew their visas in the US before a temporary trip abroad. An announcement in this regard was made during the historic State visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June last year.In a statement on Monday,



the State Department said the pilot programme will accept applications from January 29, 2024, through April 1, 2024, or when all application slots are filled, whichever comes first. This is for the first time in nearly two decades that a limited number of H-1B nonimmigrants will be able to renew their visas from within the US.The State Department said the pilot programme is voluntary and it will allow approximately 4,000 applications each week, with 2,000 for

applicants whose prior H-1B visas were issued by its diplomatic missions Canada, and another 2,000 for applicants whose prior H-1B visas were issued by US embassies and consulates in India. Application slots will be released on January 29, February 5, February 12, February 19, and February 26. Applicants will only be able to apply through the portal linked below during the specified dates above, it said, adding that applications will be handled on a first-received, first-processed basis

until the weekly limit is reached. Applicants who are unable to apply on one application date may reattempt application on any of the remaining application dates during the entry period. The application period will close when all application slots are filled or on April 1, 2024, whichever

Elon Musk must give up 'biggest ever' \$56 billion Tesla pay package: US court

A Delaware judge on Tuesday ruled that Elon Musk's record-breaking \$56 billion Tesla pay package could be tossed, calling the compensation granted by the EV maker's board "an unfathomable sum" that was unfair to shareholders. Shares of Tesla dropped about 3% in extended trade. The ruling may sweep away the largest pay package in corporate America. The judge found it was negotiated by directors who appeared beholden to their headline-making CEO, one the world's richest people, and the promise of allowing him to share in the company's enormous growth."Swept up by the rhetoric of 'all upside,' or perhaps starry eyed by Musk's superstar appeal, the board never asked the \$55.8 billion question: Was the plan even necessary for Tesla to retain Musk and achieve its goals?" wrote Kathaleen McCormick of Delaware's Court of Chancery.McCormick's opinion directed the Tesla shareholder who challenged the pay plan to work with Elon Musk's legal team on an order implementing the decision. The decision can be appealed once the parties agree on a final order and on fees for the shareholder's attorneys, which will be paid by Tesla."Never incorporate your company in the state of Delaware," Musk said in a post on X, the social media platform he bought in 2022. Originally named Twitter, Musk moved its state of incorporation to Nevada from Delaware after his purchase.

Musk's lawyer did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment."Good day for the good guys," said an email from Greg Varallo, an attorney for the Tesla shareholder Richard Tornetta who brought the lawsuit in 2018. The ruling can be appealed to the Delaware Supreme Court.

The incredible size of the biggest compensation plan ever -- an unfathomable sum -- seems to have been calibrated to help Musk achieve what he believed would make 'a good future for humanity'," wrote McCormick in her 201-page opinion. Musk testified during the compensation trial in November 2022 that the money would be used to finance interplanetary travel."It's a way to get humanity to Mars," he testified. "So Tesla can assist in potentially achieving that."Tesla's agreement with Musk contributes a significant part of his fortune, which according to Forbes magazine was \$210.6 billion, just ahead of LVMH CEO Bernard Arnault of France and his family.

Joe Biden says he has decided on response to killing of 3 US troops in Jordan

Washington US President Joe Biden on Tuesday indicated he had decided how to respond after the killing of three American service members Sunday in a drone attack in Jordan that his administration has pinned on Iran-backed militia groups, saying he does not want to expand the war in the Middle East but demurring on specifics.

US officials said they are still determining which of several Iran-backed groups was responsible for the first killing of American troops in a wave of attacks against US forces in the region since the October 7 Hamas assault on Israel. Biden plans to attend the dignified transfer to mark the fallen troops' return to American soil on Friday and answered in the affirmative when asked by reporters if he'd decided on a response, as he indicated he was aiming to prevent further escalation."I don't think we need a wider war in the Middle East," Biden said at the White House before departing for a fundraising trip to Florida. "That's not what I'm looking for."It was not immediately clear whether Biden meant he had decided on a specific retaliatory plan. A US official told The Associated Press that the Pentagon is still assessing options to respond to the attack in Jordan. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters traveling with Biden

aboard Air Force One that he would not

preview the U.S. response, but indicated it would come in phases."It's very possible that what you'll see is a tiered approach here, not just a single action, but potentially multiple actions over a period of he said. Meanwhile, the Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Kataib Hezbollah, one of several groups eyed by U.S. officials, announced Tuesday in a statement "the suspension of military and security operations against the occupation forces in order

to prevent embarrassment to the Iraqi government."The attacks on U.S. forces by Iraqi militias over the past four months have placed the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani in an awkward position. Sudani was brought to power by Iranian-allied factions but has also attempted to stay in Washington's good graces and has condemned the attacks on U.S. forces serving in Iraq as part of an international commission to fight the Islamic State. Iraqi and U.S. officials on Saturday opened talks aimed at winding down the commission's presence. Kirby said that Biden spoke with the soldiers' families Tuesday morning and extended his condolences, pledging full assistance to the families as they grieve. In separate calls with the families, Biden also gauged their feelings about his attendance at



Friday's dignified transfer of the fallen service members' remains at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Friday, and "all of them supported his presence there," Kirby said.

"He was grateful for their time. He expressed to them how proud we all are of their service," Kirby said of Biden's calls with the families. "How we mourn and feel sorrow over their loss.'

Kirby added: "The president will be going to the dignified transfer on Friday.

The solemn ceremony marks the return of fallen service members to American soil as they journey to their final resting place, with silent honor guards carrying flagdraped transfer cases holding the remains from transport aircraft to military vehicles. The Pentagon identified those killed in the attack as Sgt. William Jerome Rivers, 46, of Carrollton, Georgia; Spc.

Kennedy Ladon Sanders, 24, of Waycross, Georgia; and Spc. Breonna Alexsondria Moffett, 23, of Savannah, Georgia. The Army Reserve announced on Tuesday that it had posthumously promoted Sanders and Moffett to the rank of sergeant. There have been a total of 166 attacks on U.S. military installations since Oct. 18, including 67 in Iraq, 98 in Syria and now one in Jordan, a U.S. military official said. On Tuesday, Al-Asad Air Base in

Western Iraq was targeted again by a single rocket, but there was no damage and no injuries in that attack, a U.S military official said. The three soldiers killed in the Jordan strike were the first U.S. military fatalities in the Middle East since the war between Israel and Hamas broke out. One contractor has also died as the result of a heart attack after a strike on Al-Asad in December.In 2021, Biden attended the dignified transfer of the remains of 13 troops killed in a suicide attack during the Û.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Separately, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany said it expected to receive 3 U.S. service members who were injured in the drone attack, including one listed in critical, but stable, condition. The Pentagon has said at least 40 troops were injured alongside the three killed in action.

Buses from Kilambakkam to central, northern districts in TN see just 50% occupancy on Day 1

CHENNAI: TNSTC mofussil buses bound for central and northern districts had moderate occupancy on the first day after their operations were shifted from CMBT to KCBT, Kilambakkam and MMBT. According to sources, the buses had 40-50% occupancy. Meanwhile, GST and Vandalur-Kelambakkam roads witnessed heavy traffic during rush hours. A total of 710 services bound for Tiruchy, Salem, Virudhachalam, Kallakuruchi, Kumbakonam, Chidambaram, Neyveli, Cuddalore and other places started operations from KCBT and 160 from MMBT. However, arterial inner ring road and intersections at KK Nagar and Ashok Nagar witnessed less traffic.As a result, vehicular congestion significantly reduced on Kodambakkam high road. However, vehicles on the Vandalur-Kilambakkam road were caught in heavy traffic during rush hours and commuters said they spent nearly 90 minutes to reach KCBT."MTC services are being operated to Tambaram and Guindy every two to three minutes. For the benefit of people residing in the northern parts of Chennai city, 20% of TNSTC services have been shifted to MMBT. Depending on the patronage, routes will be rationalised," Transport Minister S S Sivasankar said.

Kalai Thiruvizha: Over 1,000 winners honoured during prize ceremony

CHENNAI. A total of 1,418 government school students, who had won various competitions held as part of the state-level Kalai Thiruvizha (Art Festival), were honoured during a ceremony held at Anna Centenary Library on Tuesday. At the ceremony, one student each from classes 6-8, classes 9-10, and classes 11-12, who had won the highest number of competitions w a s g i v e n t h e t i t l e 'Kalaiarasan'/Kalaiarasi'.According to the school education department, 19,02,220 students from 13,238 government school across the state took part in Kalai Thiruvizha. The department had received 40,25,837 entries originally, and of these, 6,85,324 students qualified for the block level and 1.96,874 students went to compete at the district level. Subsequently, 15,930 students made it to the state-level, with 1,418 of them winning several competitions. The school education department had introduced Kalai Thiruvizha for encouraging government school students to showcase their various artistic abilities. Moreover, 50 students who perform exceptionally well will also be taken on an exposure tour to foreign countries. Notably, last year, the event had drawn 28 lakh entries.

GN Mills service road in Coimbatore closed for pipeline work



COIMBATORE. Motorists complained they suffered long delays as Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage (TWAD) board officials closed a stretch at GN Mills Road on Monday with making prior announcement and diverted traffic on Mettupalayam road to facilitate pipeline installation for Pillur Scheme 3 works.TWAD board officials closed a stretch of the service road of the GN Mills flyover and diverted vehicles proceeding from Kavundampalayam to Thudiyalur via Udayampalayam Road. This triggered traffic snarls in the area and left motorists fuming at the officials.

Speaking to TNIE, TWAD Board Executive Engineer (Pillur Scheme 3 Project) Sellamuthu said, "During the construction of the GN Mills flyover, the highways department had removed the 3 ft dia pipeline on the Mettupalayam Road that was already installed for the Pillur Scheme 3 project in order to finish constructing the ramp.

As we're planning to commission the project soon, the pipeline installation works have been kick-started now. The police department has given the prior information about rerouting and even installed a take diversion board. The works will be completed soon and the road will be reopened after 3 days. The road restoration works will begin later"

Seven years on, Rs 16-crore river bridge yet to 'bridge' Ariyalur, Cuddalore districts in TN

While a causeway came up over the waterbody a few years ago, it was damaged by the monsoon rain over the past few years, rendering it unusable.

ARIYALUR. The construction of a bridge across River Vellaru connecting Kottaikkadu in the district and Soundaracholapuram in Cuddalore, which resumed after a delay of around two years, continues progressing slowly, alleging residents. They demand the authorities concerned to complete it at the earliest. Over 300 families residing at Kottaikkadu in Sendurai block of the district and those in over 15 neighbouring villages, including Alathiyur, Thetheri, Adhanakurichi and Pudupalayam, have to cross the river to reach places like Pennadam, Thittakudi and Virudhachalam in Cuddalore district to access shops, educational institutions. hospitals and banks. While a causeway came up over the waterbody a few years ago, it was damaged by the monsoon rain over the past few years, rendering it unusable. As a result, locals had few options - particularly during the monsoon when the river runs with water - but to take K Velpandi, a farmer from Pudupalayam a circuitous route of about 10 kilometres to

reach places like Pennadam and Virudhachalam via Ganapathikurichi and Murugankudi.In 2017, the then AIADMK government commenced work on a bridge over the river connecting the two districts at a cost of Rs 11.5 crore. Save for work on the bridge gradient, the structure was completed by the state Highways 2020, officials said. Following a period of inactivity spanning over a year, a further allocation of Rs 5 crore was made towards the completion of the bridge. The work, however, has been progressing at snail's pace since due to an inadequate number of workers, sources said. M Gnanamoorthy, who has led protests demanding completion of the bridge, said, "We are frustrated by the delay in the structure's completion. People are forced to move through the riverbed to reach their destination which is unsafe, especially at

said, "Before the bridge's construction, we

used to take our produce to Cuddalore through the sand causeway across the river. The causeway, however, gets submerged whenever it rains.'

When contacted, an official from Thanjavur

Project Wing of the state highways department told TNIE, "The bridge work was suspended due to financial constraints. Work for its completion is going on



TNPSC issues notification for filling 6,244 posts through Group IV exam

CHENNAI. Much to the relief of job aspirants, the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) on Tuesday released a notification for the recruitment of 6,244 positions across various group IV categories. This marks the first time that roles such as forest watcher, forest guard and milk recorder are to be filled through exams conducted by the commission.Until now, these were filled by the respective departments through compassionate grounds and departmental recruitment giving preference to locals. The last TNPSC group IV exam took place in July 2022, filling 10,178 positions. Job seekers expressed disappointment over the limited number of vacancies announced despite no exam being held last

year. Under the group IV category, positions such as VAO, junior assistant, typists, junior inspector of cooperative societies, bill collector and others are included with the examination scheduled



considered for forest department positions such as forest guard, forest guard with a driving licence, forest watcher and forest watcher (tribal youth) while filling application. Candidates not interested in these positions can select the option 'posts other than forest guard/forest watcher' or choose 'all the posts.'"Candidates who apply for 'all the posts' will be shortlisted for forest department positions based on their rankings. However, many prefer not to choose these roles as they involve 8 to 12-hour shifts within reserved forests, typically favoured by locals or those from nearby areas," explained a teacher at a TNPSC coaching

A section of job seekers rued that until 2019, an average of 10,000 to 12,000 group IV positions were filled through TNPSC exams. Due to the lockdown, exams were not conducted in 2020 and 2021.L Rajesh Kumar from Theni said,

"Approximately 18.5 lakh candidates took the group IV exam in July 2022, with results announced last March. Given the huge demand for these jobs, the number of vacancies is too less and should be

TN plans welfare panel, quota in jobs & education for LGBTQIA+ community

CHENNAI. The Tamil Nadu government has proposed to constitute a state commission with quasi-judicial powers for protecting the rights of LGBTQIA+ community, to investigate complaints, and to enforce laws and schemes meant for their welfare. The draft also proposes to provide horizontal reservation in education and employment for transgender and intersex persons. The proposal was part of the draft Tamil Nadu Sexual and Gender Minorities (LGBTQIA+) policy submitted before Justice N Anand Venkatesh of the Madras High Court by State Public Prosecutor Hasan Mohammed Jinnah on Monday.nlisting the features of the policy, the judge said, "A Sexual and Gender Minorities Commission is suggested to be formed with quasi-judicial powers to determine, investigate and enforce the law, schemes, and programmes as per state laws and policy." A state legislation for establishing the commission, amendment of rules for legal services to include free legal aid for LGBTQIA+ persons, amendment of PWDVA (protection of women from domestic violence) rules to include domestic and family violence on sexual and gender minorities, amendment of Juvenile Justice Rules to recognise vulnerabilities of gender-nonconforming children, and state legislation for recognition of DFA (deed of familial association) for protecting same-gender families are the other key recommendations made in the draft.

To address rights, welfare of trans individuals

The judge lauded the government saying the unveiling of the policy is a "commendable stride" towards recognising and addressing the rights and welfare of trans and intersex individuals in the state. The policy underscores a notable commitment to empowerment and inclusivity, articulating detailed rights related to movement, property, and public office for the LGBTQ+ community. The ambitious objectives of the policy reflect a conscientious effort to create an enabling environment, encourage voluntary action, and expand outreach activities. The emphasis on combating discrimination and violence against sexual and gender minorities, alongside the push for sensitisation across various groups signals a commendable endeavour to eradicate societal biases, the judge

Water Resources Department gets Rs 630 crore to repair rain-hit waterbodies in TN

CHENNAI. Following the recent heavy rains in the state, the Water Resources Department (WRD) is set to undertake a significant restoration initiative involving water bodies in Chennai and Madurai, at a cost of Rs 630 crore, with Rs 350 crore earmarked for Chennai and the rest for Madurai. A government order (GO) regarding the same will be issued after Chief Minister MK Stalin returns from Spain.A senior WRD official told TNIE, "WRD had submitted a Rs 1,000 crore project report for restoration in the Madurai region, addressing substantial damage to water bodies in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi. However, the state's initial fund allocation stands at Rs 280 crore.""During the recent spell of heavy rainfall in southern districts, over 500 water bodies, including Thamirabarani River, suffered severe



damage. Linking channels to the river were breached, making it impossible to store water in the lakes to their full capacity. Currently, these lakes have been filled to only 50% of their capacity," the official added.Due to facing challenges in securing funds from the state government, the WRD approached the central government. Subsequently, Finance Minister Nirmala

Sitharaman approved obtaining loans from the World Bank through reimbursement method. The World Bank, in turn, agreed for an initial sum of Rs 500 crore for Chennai and Madurai regions. Due to the financial constraints, WRD has decided to focus on restoring water bodies in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi. Works are expected to begin by the first week of March.Another official noted, "In the Chennai region, WRD aims to address flood mitigation,

missing links and issues with the stormwater drains across Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram districts. With parliamentary elections right around the corner, the state government has instructed all departments to expedite all scheduled works. And so, WRD is set to float tenders for the project this week."

CCMC stops real estate firm from encroaching road in TVS Nagar

City Municipal Corporation (CCMC) on Monday stopped a real estate and property firm from encroaching a public road in TVS Nagar in Ward 16 of the West zone for allegedly building a compound wall for its gated co,unity project. The action was taken based on complaints lodged by residents of ward 16. There are over 1,000 residential units in the Saj Garden, Jayalakshmi Garden, Ganapathy Garden, Tharun Garden, KR Nagar Garden, Abbas Garden and Periyanna Nagar in the TVS Nagar in Ward 16. The residents allege they are facing water supply problems for a long time.M Naseer, assistant conservator of forest (Retd) and a resident of the area told TNIE that CCMC officials have been demanding Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000

COIMBATORE. The Coimbatore from each household to fixing the pipelines if there are issues in water leakage and pressure issues."Drinking water is supplied to our area once in two weeks. Due to the water shortage issues, a majority of the people here have been buying water in tanker trucks. The officials have not taken any steps to address the issue, and are giving silly reasons," he added. Naseer also complained that a popular real estate firm was trying to encroach the 60 ft wide Periyanna Nagar-Abbas Garden link road. The firm is trying to build a compound wall across the road to form a gated community and sell housing plots in the area, he alleged. When inquired about it, ward 16 assistant engineer and west zone assistant town planning officer (in-charge) CS Rajesh Venugopal told TNIE, "We shall bear all expenses and fix

the main line or common pipeline.But if the residents are having issues with individual connections, then they need to spend money from their pockets to fix the issues and restore the road after cutting it for repair work. For restoring the road, they can avail a challan from the civic body and for pipeline repair works, they can talk with the licensed plumbers and get one from them."As far as the encroachment is concerned, the private firm's attempt to build compound walls across the public road was stopped by the officials after CCMC was alerted about the matter, added the official.On Monday, over 15 residents from the ward met with Mayor Kalpana Anandakumar and filed their complaints against the civic body officials and the real estate firm.

→ As far as the encroachment is concerned, the private firm's attempt to build compound walls across the public road was stopped by the officials.



Fear of losing ground drives Nitish

BIHAR Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is the proverbial cat with nine lives. He has remained at the helm in state politics for more than 20 years despite his shaky foundations. His party, the Janata Dal (United), is not formidable either in the state or at the national level. But he has tried to stay ahead of his competitors not through numbers but thanks to the fact that the BJP has not been too sure of itself in the state and has been willing to let him have the reins of power. This time, he has dumped the ruling Mahagathbandhan, which includes the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), the Congress and Left parties. The BJP and the JD(U) had together won 33 of the 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar in 2019; the former wants to do an encore in the upcoming General Election. It is for this reason that Nitish has snuggled back into the NDA's fold. But how well is he placed on his home turf? It is the fear of losing ground that has been driving him hither and thither, first into the arms of the RJD and then the BJP. There is speculation that Nitish's exit from INDIA would weaken Opposition unity so much that there would not be any contest in the parliamentary elections. It is presumed that Nitish was a sort of lynchpin for the bloc and his departure would leave it rudderless. Nitish has for long been an overvalued political asset. He has not stormed the national arena on his own, unlike George Fernandes, his old socialist comrade. Nitish, along with Lalu Yadav, Sharad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan, was a product of Jayaprakash Narayan's protest movement of the early 1970s; they became recognisable faces of a new generation of leaders. But they remained where they were. They did not leverage their success to make an impact on the national stage. A similar thing happened with Jyotiraditya Scindia, Sachin Pilot and Milind Deora in the Congress; Scindia and Deora have since moved on. However, Lalu Yadav managed to consolidate his party (RJD) in Bihar, while Nitish's JD(U) started lagging behind. And it is with the help of BJP that Nitish managed to stabilise his position in the JD(U) and lead it to victory. The JD(U) base in Bihar is not as wide as that of the RJD. In the 2020 Assembly election, the JD(U) had won only 43 seats, well behind the BJP (74) and the RJD (75).

It is because of his long stay as chief minister that every once in a while, Nitish tries to break out of Bihar and look at the national scene. He thinks that his sobriety gives him an edge over Lalu Yadav's image of a lovable maverick. But sobriety is not gravitas. Nitish has been overestimating his stature as a leader of national importance. And when he senses that his plan to grow as a national leader does not seem to be working out, he wants to save his position as chief minister at whatever cost. In 2013, he wanted to challenge Narendra Modi but soon realised that he was no match for him because the BJP had a larger footprint across the country and there was the RSS network of volunteers working quietly as foot soldiers of the party. The JD(U) could not match the BJP at the organisational level across the country. So, he went back to the NDA camp. When INDIA was being formed, he again sensed an opportunity and thought that he would be given due regard as the CM of Bihar, an important Hindi-speaking state. He expected to be given precedence over West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee. He wanted to head INDIA, but the Banerjee. He wanted to head INDIA, but the honour was denied to him because there was little doubt that the Congress had to be the spearhead, a fact that was realised even by Mamata. When Mamata mischievously proposed that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge should be declared the prime ministerial candidate of the alliance, a JD(U) leader asked: 'Who is Kharge?' It was implied that being a politician from a non-Hindispeaking state. Kharge could not stake claim to speaking state, Kharge could not stake claim to become a national leader, whereas Nitish was fit to play that role. Nitish did not want to be number two in the Opposition ranks. In the NDA, his position is not in the front but he will continue to be the CM. Notably, Nitish does not have much of a following in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, the hub of the Hindi heartland, and he can hardly hope that JD(U) will make inroads there. Modi made a superb move when he contested from UP in 2019, knowing very well the electoral importance of the state which sends 80 MPs to the Lok Sabha. Nitish and his supporters do not seem to realise that in the Hindi belt, a politician from Bihar does not stand much of a chance outside his

South Africa leads the way with ICJ case against Israel

Neither China nor India is likely to put the interests of the Global South before their own and that is why we see South Africa taking up the Palestine issue.

EVEN as India and China vie with each other to lead the Global South, South Africa may have taken a lead of sorts. Both New Delhi and Beijing play it their own way when it comes to leading what was once known as the Third World and is today called the Global South. Both steer clear of formal alliances, but India's ties with the US have become intense and assumed a strategic dimension, as indeed have China's relations with Russia.

uth Africa has stolen a march on India and China by getting the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to examine a war being waged against a Global South country through the lens of 'genocide' rather than the prevailing humanitarian laws relating to war. This is a fraught issue for the Global South, which is often at the receiving end of wars and mayhem. Genocide is a loaded word, and it's an irony of ironies that Israel's conduct is being examined in relation to it. It was, after all, after the terrible Holocaust that the Genocide Convention that outlaws the destructive actions (physical or mental) against a national, ethnic or religious group was formulated in 1948.

A 17-member bench of the ICJ ruled that Israel's war in Gaza may be violative of the Genocide Convention. It did not call for a ceasefire, but called on Israel to prevent acts outlined in Article 2 of the Convention. The court will take time to make its final determination. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa termed it "a decisive victory for the international rule of the law". On the other hand, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the court's decision not to call for a ceasefire was a victory for Israel.In the meantime, the court has called on Israel to limit the harm to Palestinian civilians and asked Israel to take a number of measures to ameliorate the conditions of the Palestinians and report on compliance within a month. What is important has been the support that South Africa received from countries of the Global South, regardless of their current geopolitical inclinations. Countries like Turkey, Jordan, Brazil, Colombia, Bolivia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Venezuela, Namibia and the Maldives have publicly backed the South Africans. The EU was silent on the case and Israelis received US support. The Indian judge at the ICJ, Dalveer Bhandari, went along with the judgment, but the government has remained silent on the interim ruling. The Chinese, too, have not commented on the ruling.

India's position on the Israel-Hamas crisis has been 'proper' but not leader-like. The Modi government has never made its admiration for Israel secret and the Prime Minister himself has looked at his Israeli counterpart in terms of friendship. India has aligned itself to the US-led initiatives to normalise Israel's role in the region. One is through the India-Israel-US-UAE (I2U2) grouping and the other through the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. These initiatives cannot now avoid confronting the Israel-Palestine issue frontally instead of bypassing it, as they had sought to do earlier.



The term 'Global South' may resonate in current geopolitics, but it remains substantively nebulous. It manifests itself in various organisations such as the African Union, League of Arab States or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). New Delhi self-consciously projected itself as a leader of the Global South grouping while chairing the G20 last year. But almost immediately it was evident that it would have to contend with China, which successfully promoted expansion of BRICS.India's leadership of the Global South depends on the substance of Indian foreign policy, not its rhetoric. India is now substantially aligned with the US and can even be termed as a 'Western' state geopolitically. This manifests itself in its association with the Quad and the relationships with Japan and Australia in the western pacific and with France and the UAE in the western Indian Ocean.

Whether it is east or west of the Indo-Pacific region, India confronts China as a major political rival. But even as India takes baby steps by reaching out to the Philippines in the western Pacific, China is moving to position itself as an alternative to the US in West Asia. It has already promoted the Iran-Saudi Arabia détente and offered to broker a peace between Israel and the Palestinians at the outbreak of the conflict but has done little since.

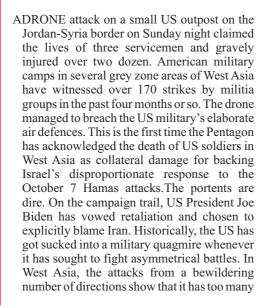
Beijing is now being called on by the US to assist in reining in the Houthis through its influence on Iran. This was the purpose of the meeting last week between US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.India's Western alignment is not a permanent feature. New Delhi has always sought to be its own pole in what it says ought to be a multilateral international order, hence its insistence on maintaining good ties with Russia and Iran. The Western orientation is occasioned by an opportunistic desire to take advantage of China's estrangement with the West.

What has held India back till now is its economy. Now, there are expectations that all restraints on the Indian economy have eased and the country is poised for a period of sustained and high economic growth, which will also translate into enhanced military capacity.

The Global South is a rhetorical stepping stone for New Delhi to project a larger-than-life image. Neither China nor India is likely to put the interests of the Global South before their own and that is why we see South Africa taking up the contentious issue of Palestine.

Attack on US outpost

America getting sucked into a regional war





enemies to be counted. Targeting Iran, as the Republicans have been urging Biden to do, will be like disturbing a beehive. The immense resilience of the region's militia groups is proven by their survival for decades in a very tough neighbourhood.

The situation can get out of hand for the US. The entire world will suffer the consequences, going by the adverse impact of the Red Sea attacks. The reason for the sudden burst of hostility by Islamist groups is obvious: American backing for Israel's unabated military assault on Gaza. Western countries need to reassess their policies that have allowed the killings to continue. With the most sophisticated systems unable to protect its troops, the US needs to address the cause that has brought its soldiers in the line of fire.

India treads warily as Maldives bolsters ties with China

New Delhi hopes that the new Maldivian govt will abandon its strong views on India and agree to a new modus vivendi on working together.

THE recent visit of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu to China was grand in terms of expectations but low on outcome. Muizzu had to cool his heels in Fujian province for two days before he got to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on January 11.

China agreed to upgrade its relationship with the Maldives to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership', which it has with over 41 countries, and provide assistance under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which involves more than 155 countries. China decided to give a grant of \$130 million to the Maldives for various projects, invest about \$50 million on a tourism zone in Hulhumale and build 30,000 housing units at Rasmale. The two countries signed 20 agreements to promote cooperation in the BRI, tourism, digital economy, disaster risk reduction, blue economy and other sectors. However, no Chinese return visit at the highest level was agreed upon at this time.

China is interested in using the Maldives to collect intelligence on Western and Indian strategic and naval activities in the Indian Ocean through the use of its assets, including spy ship Xiang Yang Hong 3, which has obtained permission to berth at Male. Beijing has also been involved in conducting hydrographic surveys of the Indian Ocean, exploring the ocean beds for oil and gas deposits and mapping the activities of the submarines of its adversaries. Chinese companies have invested about \$1.37 billion in the Maldives since 2014 — after it joined the BRI — in expanding the Velana International Airport in Male and the cross-sea China-Maldives Friendship Bridge. China's debt of \$1.3 billion accounts for 20 per cent of Maldives' total debt, as per an International Monetary Fund report. China's trade with the Maldives in the first 11 months of 2023 was \$700 million. India has given financial support of more than \$2 billion to the Maldives, with bilateral trade amounting to \$500 million in the fiscal year 2022-23. The Maldives' ties with India are comparatively historical, richer, deeper and dedicated to enhancing the domestic resilience of that

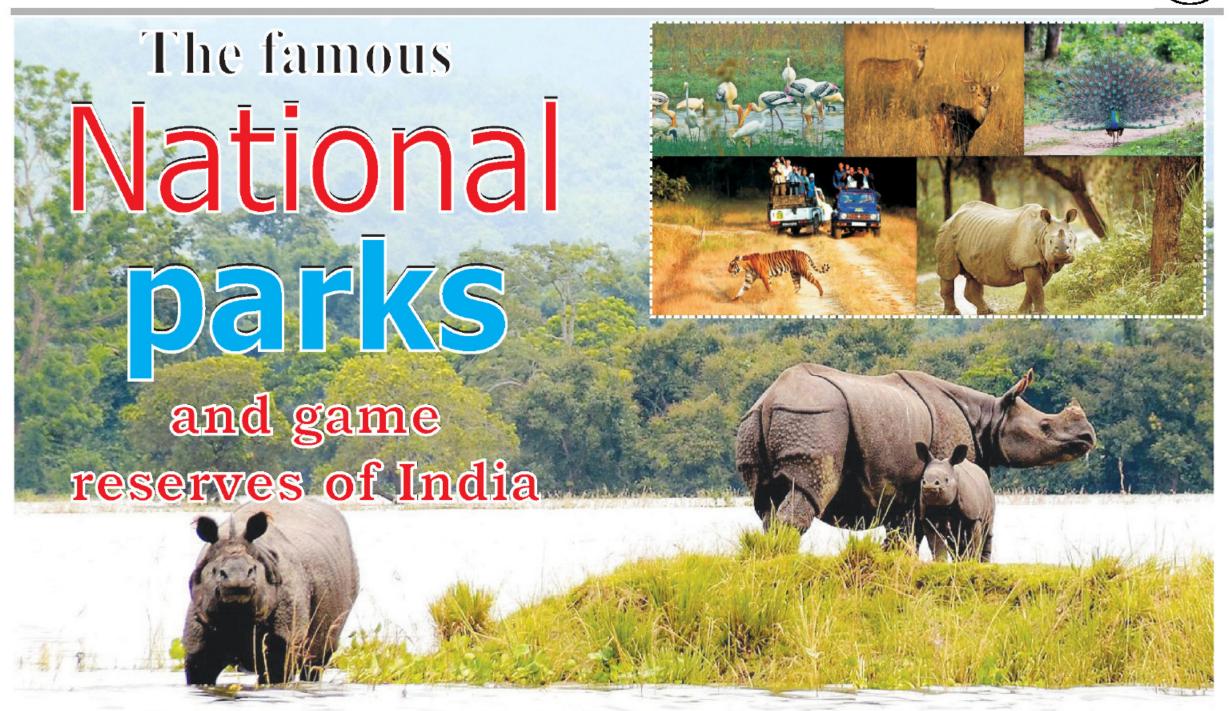


country. India is in close proximity to the Maldives, unlike the relatively distant China. Traditionally, India has been the first responder in any Maldivian crisis. It responded positively during the 1988 coup attempt, the 2004 tsunami, the 2014 water crisis and the 2020-21 Covid-19 pandemic.

Tourism is the most important economic activity in the Maldives, contributing over 30 per cent to its GDP and 60 per cent to its foreign exchange earnings. India has been the lead source of tourist arrivals in the Maldives for many years, accounting for 22 per cent of the tourists last year. Calls within India for a boycott of the Maldives as a vacation destination could have a big impact on the Maldivian economy. India has gifted two helicopters and one Dornier aircraft to the Maldives to conduct medical and rescue operations and monitor its vast Exclusive Economic Zone. Around 75 Indian Navy and Coast Guard personnel stationed in the Maldives are under the

operational command of the Maldivian National Defence Force. They are operating and maintaining the equipment and training the Maldivians in their use. India has met about 70 per cent of the Maldives' defence training requirements, gifted a coastal radar system, built the new Ministry of Defence headquarters, provided 24 utility vehicles and undertaken joint anti-narcotics missions and several military exercises.t is important to understand the factors that led to Muizzu's victory in the 2023 presidential elections. There has been a gradual shift in the Maldivian national identity syncretic culture (a mix of Buddhism and Islam) to a more fundamentalist and doctrinal Salafism and from a progressive secular state to a rigid and Islamic one. The US Departments of State and Treasury have designated 20 operatives and 29 companies in the Maldives as terrorists and their supporters. The poll victory was largely due to a split in the ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP). Former President Mohamed Nasheed resigned midway along with his 12 MPs, and his attempts to negotiate with incumbent President Ibrahim Solih proved unsuccessful. Furthermore, Nasheed's supporters secured 7 per cent of the votes (Muizzu's coalition bagged 46 per cent, whereas Solih's MDP received 39 per cent) in the elections, ultimately contributing to Muizzu's triumph.

Muizzu's animus against India is based on his Salafist leanings, the propaganda about the alleged ill-treatment of Muslims in India, India's close ties with the US and Israel and the moves by many Muslim conservative countries to diversify their ties with China for economic benefits.eijing has a habit of overpromising and underdelivering and there are misgivings about China's debt trap diplomacy which has hurt many developing countries. It does not appear that China wishes to push India out of the Maldives and substitute its assistance programmes. The berthing of Chinese spy ships and warships at the Maldivian port will draw the adverse attention of not only India but also the US and other Western countries as the Maldives is near one of the densest trading routes in the world and over 80 per cent of the energy imports to the Indian subcontinent pass through these shipping lanes. India has adopted a cautious approach in its dealings with the new government in Maldives. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Muizzu in Dubai in December last year and expressed India's interest in continuing its multifaceted cooperation with the Maldives. Minister of Earth Sciences Kiren Rijiju was sent to represent India at Muizzu's installation in November. Senior officials from India visited Male earlier this month to engage with the new government and work out parameters of future cooperation with them. India hopes that the new Maldivian government will abandon its strong views on India and agree to a new modus vivendi on working with her, understanding the country's multifarious needs and limitations of the assistance from China.



Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary

Binsar covers the top of the Jhandi Dhar hills, and is a mid-altitude wildlife sanctuary, home to wild boar, deer, monkey, black bear, porcupine, mountain goat, red fox, jackal, pine marten, leopards, 200 species of birds and more. At the top of the local hills there's a point with an amazing view of the Himalayan range: a 300-km wide stretch of peaks that include Kedarnath (6942 m), Chaukhamba (7140 m), Trishul (7120 m), Nanda Devi (7816 m), Nanda Kot (6611 m) and Panchchuli (6904 m).

Sundarbans National Park

Including the region of mangrove forests between the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, Sundarbans National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to the Royal Bengal Tiger. Other park fixtures include the Sajnekhali Sanctuary with its large bird population and Bhagabatpur, which is the world's largest hatchery of estuarine crocodiles. The best time to visit the park is from September to May when the winter chill brings out the Royal Bengal Tigers to rest in the sunlight.

Manas National Park

Assam is a place of huge biodiversity, since it is largely

Manas National Park, located on the lowest slopes of the Eastern Himalayas, preserves rainforests packed with rare tree species and wetlands fed by some of the highest rainfall levels on earth, not to mention the Manas River, a tributary of the sacred Brahmaputra River. Species, such as the Asian elephant and Indian rhinoceros, which are dwindling fast in other areas, are beginning to thrive here with the assistance of various conservation projects. These animals, as well as tigers, leopards, langurs, Indian wild dogs, pangolins, sloth bears, gibbons, monitor lizards and expansive fauna have made wildlife watching and eco-tourism increasingly popular among those who are happy with the basic accommodation available in this unspoiled chunk of

The only permanent human aspect of the Manas National Park is Agrang village, located in the very centre, in the tiger reserve; apart from being an isolated and beautiful forest community, it's also talked about for incidents of villagers being eaten by tigers in the 1970s!

Kaziranga National Park

In the heart of Assam, this park is one of the last areas in eastern India undisturbed by human presence. It is inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses. as well as many mammals, including tigers, elephants,

India, rich in flora and fauna, is home to some globally-recognised national parks and game reserves. From Uttarakhand's Jim Corbett National Park to West Bengal's Sundarbans National Park, all attract nature and wildlife enthusiasts in large numbers every year. Mentioned here are few of the famous parks and reserves of the country.

panthers and bears, and thousands of birds.

Jim Corbett National Park

A protected area housing India's endangered Bengal Tiger, the Corbett National Park, a jungle in the shadows of the Himalayas, is also home to over 650 species of animal different kinds of plants.

Named after Jim Corbett, the Irish, Indian-born hunter and naturalist, it was the first park established in India when it was first created in 1936 as Hailey National Park. The park didn't fare so well during WWII when it suffered poaching and tree felling, but Jim Corbett Park is now a major eco-

Cold vacations that will warm your soul

Gulmarg, India

For an Indian destination that's breathtakingly beautiful and also a hub for winter sports, Gulmarg-at the higher reaches While most tourists avoid making a trip to Budapest of the Kashmir Valley-is undoubtedly heaven on during the winter months, a dash of snow only

otherplaces do. Owing to its

Budapest, Hungary

earth. In the winter months it exudes a charm few enhances the city's beauty, making it one of the best vinter destinations in Europe. The biggest perk of

visiting during the winter months, is the lack of

Nagano, Japan

Having first appeared on the global map after hosting the Winter Olympics, Nagano is today hailed as one of the premier ski destinations in the world, and although that might be the city's claim to fame, there's lots more to do for those who're not hitting the

Ireland

While winter might not seem like the best time to visit Ireland—given the fewer daylight hours—it is definitely a good time for those looking to escape the throngs of tourists and keen to explore a side to the city that is usually reserved for the locals. Although

Munich, Germany

With its Christmas markets, glittering lights, mulled wine and roast goose, Munich is an attractive holiday destination all year round, but the city takes on a certain charm during the white months of winter. Whether you're partaking of the many activities

Salzburg, Austria

Whether you know it as the city of Mozart, of as the home of the Von Trapp family, Salzburg is best visited during the winter months—even though it's peak tourist season and rates are sky-high-when it's at its picturesque best. Whether you're exploring the Old

Tromso, Norway

As far as winter destinations go, Norway is probably the first place that comes to mind. Make your way to

> Tromso-popularly referred to as the capital of the Arctic-which is breathtakingly beautiful during the winter months. One of Norway's most

Banff, Canada

Many people consider Banff the ultimate winter destination, and with good reason. Few places are as picturesque as this Canadian town—the scenery is absolutely magnificent, with a blanket of snow as far as the eye can see-and there's a long list of activities

Yosemite, California

Winter is the least crowded and possibly the most beautiful time to visit Yosemite. With its cascading waterfalls, snowy meadows, gurgling streams, alpine sunsets, hiking trails and pines draped with frozen icicles—the breathtaking beauty of a

Prague, Czech Republic

Winters in Prague are nothing short of magical. December marks the beginning of the cold season, which lasts all the way up to February. Whether you go in time to relish the festivities of the Christmas season in December, the fireworks in January of the



Has Mumbai's iconic Mahalaxmi Racecourse run its course?

New Delhi. A deafening roar fills the packed Mumbai stadium as the game nears its end. The entire atmosphere is charged up. The who's who of the city are in the stands. The scenes are, however, not from a cricket match being played at the Wankhede Stadium but the Mumbai Derby, one of the biggest horse racing events that is held annually at Mumbai's Mahalaxmi Racecourse. Apart from cricket, if there is one sport that has legions of enthusiasts and brings the city's top socialites, industrialists and Bollywood stars together, it is horse racing. The click of the turnstiles, gates slamming open, and the thunder of hooves as powerful horses gallop down the track at high speeds all make for an adrenaline-pumping atmosphere. However, this 140-year-old tradition may soon be a thing of the past as the Royal Western India Turf Club (RWITČ), which manages Mumbai's iconic Mahalaxmi Racecourse, is currently engaged in a turf war with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) over its 225-acre ground.

The club's 99-year lease on the ground expired back in 2013. Since then, the existence of the racecourse, located in one of Mumbai's primest locations, has hanged fire. Recently, the BMC and the Maharashtra government renewed plans of setting up a theme park in the area and Situated next to the Arabian Sea and relocating the racecourse.

The BMC's move has faced stiff resistance from a section of the RWITC, politicians -including the Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Aadtiya Thackeray -- and activists, who have called it the only "green lung" of Mumbai. First, here is a brief history of how the Mahalaxmi Racecourse, which once hosted foreign leaders such as Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and the King of Saudi Arabia, came into existence.

HOW THE RACECOURSE CAME UP IN MAHALAXMI

Like cricket, horse racing was introduced in India by the British. It was back in 1777 that India got its first racecourse at Guindy in Chennai (then Madras). Years later, in 1802, four British officials -- Captain G Hall, Sir Charles Forbes, P Hadow and A Campbell -- established the Bombay Turf Club and chose Byculla as the site for horseracing. To this day, annual races are held named after them to commemorate their contribution to racing in Mumbai.Later, industrialist Cusrow N Wadia, who headed the Bombay Dyeing textile company, proposed shifting the racecourse from Byculla to a 225-acre plot

boasting of one of the most scenic views in Mumbai, Wadia wanted to transform the area into a showpiece. He gave an interest-free loan, reportedly of Rs 60 lakh, to the Western India Turf Club to build a racecourse and grandstands in Mahalaxmi and the work was completed in 1883. The name of the club was changed to Royal Western India Turf Club (RWITC) in 1935 after the then emperor, King George V, gave his approval to add "royal" to the club's name. The club retained its name even after Independence.

he first Indian Derby at the Mahalaxmi Racecourse was held in 1943 and was won by a horse owned by the King of Baroda. Foreign jockeys (who ride the horses in a race) dominated the Indian Derby until 1949, when Kheem Singh became the first Indian jockey to win the event, as per a report in The Hindu.The RWITC was initially given a 30-year lease in 1934. It was later renewed in 1964 for another 30 years. A 19-year lease was signed in 1994, which expired in 2013. Since then, the future of the racecourse has uncertain.

in Mahalaxmi, which was then a WHY IS MAHALAXMI SUCH A

COVETED AREA IN MUMBAI?

While Mumbai has quite a few green areas such as the Aarey Forest and Sanjay Gandhi National Park, the Mahalaxmi region offers mesmerising views of the Arabian Sea and is near to heritage and cultural locations such as the Mahalaxmi Temple and Haji Ali. Besides, affluent areas such as Worli and Lower Parel are just a stone's throw away.It also boasts excellent connectivity to important roads such as the Eastern Freeway, Bandra-Worli Sealink and Lalbaug flyover.

Currently, the asking rate for a residential property in the area is around Rs 60,000 per square foot. In fact, builders promote the area to prospective buyers, citing its proximity to the racecourse.

As per the land sharing pattern of the Mahalaxmi Racecourse, the BMC owns one-third, while the rest of the land belongs to the Maharashtra government. The racecourse has been at the centre of controversy since 2004. A RWITC panel had then tried to strike a deal with a firm, Pegasus Infrastructure, to develop a golf course, hotel and an exhibition-cumconvention centre on a large chunk of the plot. However, the deal ran into

controversy with opposition from environmentalists and certain sections of the Congress party, which was in power at the Centre. Soon after, the RWITC management was replaced, and the new committee cancelled the deal. Nine years later, in 2013, controversy erupted again after the RWITC's lease expired. Then, senior Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan was the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, while the BMC was controlled by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Šhiv Sena.Mahalaxmi RacecourseActor Shah Rukh Khan in a vintage car exhibition at Mahalaxmi Racecourse in 2008In 2013, the BMC decided against extending the lease and unveiled a proposal.

Probe Agency Raids In J&K, Punjab and UP In **Bharat Papers Case**



New Delhi. The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday raided locations in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh in a ? 200 crore alleged bank loan fraud case linked to the Bharat Papers Ltd. (BPL), official sources said. At least nine premises in these regions are being searched by the central agency under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Incorporated in September, 2006, the BPL is an associate of the Bharat Box Factory Industries Limited (BBFIL), a paper board packaging industry based in Jammu and Ludhiana.

The primary allegations against the company are that its directors have perpetrated a bank loan fraud of about? 200 crore with a consortium of banks with lead bank as the State Bank of India. The other banks include J&K Bank, PNB and Karur Vysya Bank.It is alleged that the accused "siphoned off" funds to sister concerns/bogus entities and undertook sale of imported/indigenous machinery without permission of lender banks by raising "fake" invoices.

The directors of the Bharat Papers Limited are Rajinder Kumar, Parveen Kumar, Baljinder Singh, Anil Kumar, and Anil Kashyap.

Delhi Wakes Up To

Dense Fog, Flight And

Train Ops Affected

Chandigarh mayor polls: Officer denies tampering, claims ballot change was requested New Delhi. The Chandigarh

mayoral election on Tuesday was marred by controversy as opposition parties accused the BJP of foul play. Presiding Officer Anil Masih, at the centre of the row following allegations of ballot tampering, defended his actions during the vote count, claiming that

members of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress had requested the replacement of 11 ballots due to marks and spots." A total of 36 votes were cast. When we were issuing the ballot papers, a few AAP and Congress Councillors were concerned that the papers had spots and marks - so, they asked me to change around 11 ballot papers," Masih told news agency ANI. "I honoured their request and kept the ballot papers in question on the side and issued them fresh ballot papers. According to Masih, chaos erupted when the results were about



invalid. Masih alleged that instead of verifying the ballots, AAP and some Congress councillors caused disruptions."I asked the polling agent of AAP-Congress candidate to check the ballot paper but instead of doing that AAP and a few Congress councillors jumped on the table to disrupt the process, captured the ballot papers and tore them upâ€æ AAP and Congress hatched a conspiracy to derail the election process," he claimed.The BJP

emerged victorious in the Chandigarh mayoral polls, securing the top three positions and dealing a significant blow to the AAP and Congress alliance, which contested the elections together under the INDIA bloc banner.Opposition councillors claimed ballot tampering after the invalidation of eight votes, with AAP citing video evidence

allegedly showing Masih marking ballots. The BJP rubbished the allegations.

AAP MP Raghav Chadha called for legal action against Masih and the filing of a criminal case. The party also petitioned the Punjab and Haryana High Court to annul the results and conduct fresh elections overseen by a retired judge.Leaders from various opposition parties, including the Congress, AAP, and Samajwadi Party, united in their criticism of the BJP, which they alleged was "killing" democracy and "disregarding Constitutional

Haryanvi Student Brutally Killed In US By Homeless Drug Addict He Sheltered, Fed For Past 2 Days

New Delhi. Vivek Saini, a 25-year-old Indian student who had recently completed his MBA degree in the US, was brutally murdered by a homeless man whom he had befriended and helped for two days in Lithonia, Georgia. The horrific crime was captured on camera, showing the attacker, Julian Faulkner, hitting Saini repeatedly on the head with a hammer, nearly 50 times. Saini, who worked part-time at a store that gave shelter to Faulkner, had shown compassion to the homeless man and offered him food, water, and a jacket to keep him warm, according to M9 News Channel.Saini's coworkers at the Chevron Food Mart told WSB-TV Atlanta that they let Faulkner stay inside the store on the night of January 15, as it was cold outside. "He asked us for chips, and Coke. We gave him everything, including water," one of them said. "He asked if I could get a blanket, and I said we don't have blankets so I gave him a jacket," another employee said. "He was sitting here all the time and we never asked him to get out because we know that it's cold.'

The next day, Saini was on his way home when he asked Faulkner to leave the store or face the police, as he was concerned for the safety of the customers and the staff. That's when Faulkner snapped and attacked Saini with a hammer, killing him on the spot. The police arrived at the scene and found Faulkner standing over Saini's dead body. They arrested him and charged him with murder.

Bright Future Cut Short

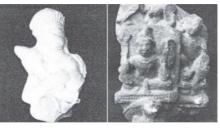
Saini, who had moved to the US two years ago after finishing his B Tech degree in India, had recently graduated with an MBA degree and was looking for a good job. Saini's family in Haryana's Bhagwanpur village is in shock and grief over the loss of their son, who was a brilliant student and a kind-hearted person. His parents, Gurjeet Singh and Lalita Saini, are too distraught to talk about the tragedy. The Indian consulate in Atlanta has arranged for the repatriation of Saini's body, which reached India on January 24.

Indian Mission In Atlanta Expresses Anguish

The Consulate General of India in Atlanta has expressed its deep sorrow and outrage over the "brutal attack" that resulted in the death of Saini, an Indian national and student.

Sculptures of 'Lord Vishnu', 'Hanuman' found in Gyanvapi complex: Survey report

NEW DELHI. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) report on the Gyanvapi complex has brought to the fore artefacts that point to the presence and veneration of deities such as Lord Vishnu and Lord Hanuman at the site. Once thought to be a site devoted to Lord Shiva, the artefacts unearthed by ASI indicate the worship of Lord Vishnu and Lord Hanuman as well. The excavation uncovered various revered deities within the temple complex, indicating a rich blend of cultures that flourished there.Among the significant finds is the lower half of



deity's iconic posture. Additionally, an Early Medieval sculpture fragment depicts a halfhuman, half-snake figure, possibly representing an attendant of Lord Vishnu's Varaha avatar.Further

traditional posture, holding a chakra and shankha. Although damaged, the deity's regal adornment is still discernible.Another Late Medieval sculpture captures the lower part of Hanuman's image, with feet firmly set, one upon a rock.wo more sculptures of Vishnu from the Early Medieval period were found, one depicting the deity standing on a pedestal with three of his four hands and face badly damaged. The other shows a devotee and an attendant by Vishnu's side, illustrating the deity's importance to his followers.Lastly, a Late Medieval sculpture portrays the

a sculpture of Hanuman, with one leg discoveries include a broken back-slab upper half of Hanuman, with one hand placed on a rock, indicative of the gripping a 'gada'. of a four-handed Vishnu seated in a Sakshee Malikkh's Appeal To Anurag Thakur Targets Suspended Wrestling Boss

Sakshee Malikkh has questioned how a suspended official can misuse the federation's funds and warned that the fake certificates will put sportspersons into trouble in the future

In response to the adverse weather conditions, Delhi Airport issued a passenger advisory. The advisory highlighted potential disruptions for flights that are not CAT III compliant. Passengers were urged to contact their respective airlines for updated flight information. Visuals from various locations in Delhi showed residents huddling around bonfires to shield themselves from the biting cold. The plummeting temperatures have not only affected personal comfort but have also led to challenges in daily commuting. Several trains arriving to and departing from Delhi were also delayed due to the thick layer of fog.Residents in the Red Fort area voiced their concerns, citing delays in bus services and, in some instances, a complete absence of public transportation due to the severe weather conditions. The weather is not only impacting daily routines but also affecting businesses, as customers shy away from venturing out

New Delhi. Delhi and surrounding areas woke up to a dense layer of fog this morning, severely impacting visibility on roads. The bone-chilling winter has exacerbated the situation, prompting authorities to issue advisories and causing disruptions in

transportation services.

in the intense fog.

Speaking to ANI, a local shopkeeper shared, "We are resorting to bonfires to keep ourselves warm, and this cold spell is expected to continue till February. Due to the dense fog, customers are not visiting my shop."Tuesday witnessed a similar situation as thick fog blanketed the national capital and significant parts of North India, causing disruptions in flight and train

New Delhi. A month after the Centre suspended the newly-elected panel of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), Olympic bronze medallist Sakshee Mallikh has alleged that suspended WFI president Sanjay Singh is organising championships and giving out fake certificates.

Ms Malikkh has questioned how a suspended official can misuse the federation's funds and warned that the fake certificates will put sportspersons into trouble in the future. She has appealed to Sports Minister Anurag Thakur to intervene in the matter. The national wrestling championship organised by the Sports Ministry is to be held in Jaipur, but Sanjay Singh is illegally organising a separate national championship to assert his dominance and signing certificates," Ms Malikkh alleged in a post on X. When

sportspersons seek jobs on the basis of these certificates, they will face action even though they are not at fault. Action should be taken against Sanjay Singh," she added

The WFI panel was suspended last month, days after it was elected, over hasty announcement of Under-15 and Under-20 nationals. Suspending the body, the ministry also said the new body was working under complete control of former office-bearers - an apparent reference to BJP MP and former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.Allegations of sexual harassment against the former wrestling boss had sparked a protest by the country's top wrestlers, including Ms Malikkh, Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat. After several delays due to court battles, an election to form a new panel was held in December and Sanjay Singh, an aide of Brij Bhushan



Sharan Singh, was elected Soon after, the Sports Ministry suspended president. Disappointed at the results, Ms Malikkh announced a shocking decision to quit wrestling and put her boots on the table during a media interaction. Days later, Mr Punia returned his Padma Shri in

the wrestling body. "The new body has not followed the WFI constitution. The Federation stands suspended till further orders. WFI will not be taking care of day to day activities of wrestling," an official had then said.

India's rivers and seas are home to many stunning bridges that are specimens of both architectural brilliance and great engineering. Attracting travellers and daily commuters in equal measure, these pedestrian, rail and road

<u>Bandra-Worli Sea Link, Mumbai</u>

Race the winds as you drive under the stunning silver cone cables of the Bandra-Worli Sea Link and gaze at the stunning sunsets of Arabian Sea. Opened in 2009, the 5.6 km-long bridge is India's answer to San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge and

<u>Pamban Bridge, Rameshwaram</u>

Literally rising above the waters of the Indian Ocean, this 100-year-old rail and road bridge connects a two km-long stretch between Rameshwaram on Pamban Island and the Indian mainland. The engineering marvel not only offers spectacular views of the

Kolia Bhomora Setu. Sonitpur

The plummeting waters of the Brahmaputra River are also home to the 3-km-long Kolia Bhomora Setu, which connects Sonitpur on the north bank with Nagaon District on the south bank. Drive over this engineering marvel during evenings, when the sky

Godavari Bridge.

<u>Rajahmu</u>ndry

The second of the three bridges built on Godavari the largest river of south India the Godavari Bridge is a rail-cum-road bridge which runs 4.2 km long. Years of perfect planning led to the construction of this striking masterpiece. The road deck runs

Godavari Arch Bridge.

Rajahmundry

One of the longest prestressed concrete arch bridges in Asia, the Godavari Arch Bridge is the third link built on the Stunning Indian you must cross



Godavari River. Standing tall on 28 piers, the 2.7-km-long stretch is shadowed by stunning parabolic arches,

New Yamuna Bridge, Allahabad

The longest cable-stayed bridge in India, the New Yamuna Bridge is a magnificent roadbridge that runs across the Yamuna River, connecting the city of Allahabad to Naini. Comprising of six lanes (including pedestrian and bicycle lanes), the bridge is

oneofthe

Vidyasagar Setu.

Running 3.6 km over the Hooghly River and linking the cities of Kolkata and Howrah, Vidyasagar Setu is the longest cable-stayed bridge in India and Asia. It comprises of nine traffic lanes that allow a total of 30,000 vehicles to traverse through it

Nivedita Setu. Kolkata

Designed to withstand 48,000 vehicles each day, Nivedita Setu is a cablestayed bridge built over Hooghly River in Kolkata. Stretching up to a kilometre, the bridge comprises of seven spans helping in the easy movement of traffic in the City of

Howrah Bridge, Kolkata

One of the most recognised landmarks of the City of Joy, the Howrah Bridge is a engineering wonder that carries more than

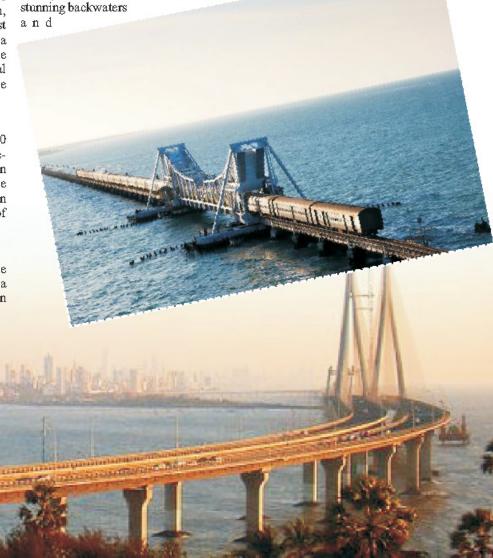
connects Edappally and Vallarpadam in Kochi Spanning over 4.6 km, it is earmarked only fo trains carrying freight. Built of 11700 tonnes o reinforced steel

<u>Ram Ihula and Lakshman Ihula</u> Rishikesh

The most iconic structures in Rishikesh, Ran-Jhula and Lakshman Jhula are two iron suspension bridges built on the Ganga River Offering spectacular views of this small hil town's surrounding valleys and dense

<u>Living root bridges. Cherrapunji</u>

Cherrapunji's living root bridges are made by intertwining the aerial roots of banyan trees 100,000 vehicles and over 150,000 They are hand-crafted by members of the pedestrians each day. Constructed on the Khasi tribe of Meghalya and used for crossing streams and gorges. Of these, the double decker suspension bridge



waters of Bay of Bengal, the bridge was built

The longest rail bridge in India, the Vembanad

Vembanad Bridge, Kochi

Bridge overlooks Kerala's

The magnificent

of India Shahi dynasty in the 16th and 17th centuries, the fort

The magnificent forts of India

The best way to discover the treasure trove of Indian history is to work your way through its countless monuments and forts. Silent and stunning reminders of a rich past, these forts in India are replete with sagas of romance, chivalry, valour, inevitable deceit

Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur

Perched on a perpendicular cliff, 400 feet above the city, Jodhpur's Mehrangarh Fort is one of the most magnificent forts in India. Imposing and invincible, the fort exudes a haunting beauty that beckons all.

Gwalior Fort, Gwalior

Perched majestically atop a steep mass of sandstone, Gwalior Fort is an imposing sight that dominates the city of Gwalior. This hilltop fort has stood witness to several momentous battles over the course of history, and encloses temples, palaces, step wells and

Golconda Fort, Hyderabad

Situated on the outskirts of Hyderabad, the imposing Golconda Fort sweeps you off your feet with its countless tales. The capital of the Qutub Wandering around the plateau on top is like touching the sky, with a collection of sublimely beautiful

Chittorgarh is one of the greatest forts in Rajasthan.

Aguada Fort, Goa

Overlooking the mouth of the Mandovi River, Fort Aguada is a Portuguese fort that reflects the true essence of Goa. More famous as the setting for countless Hindi movie sequences, the fort was built in 1612 to safeguard Old Goa from potential enemy attacks.

Panhala Fort, Panhala

Blanketed in clouds, Panhala Fort is the biggest fort in the Decean Plateau. Initially built around the 12th century, the

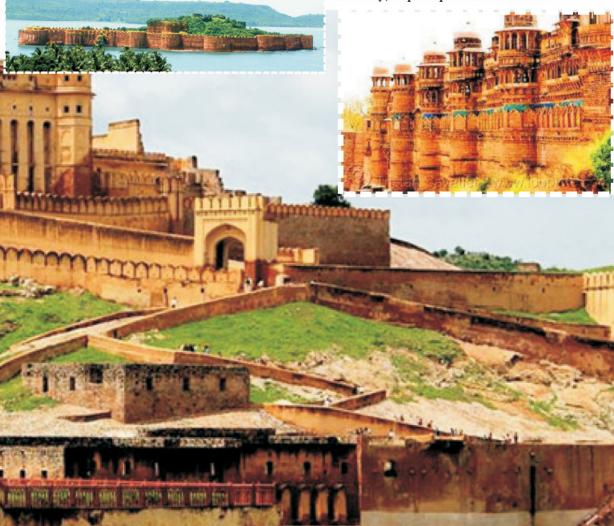
fort was the scene for many historical events, the most famous of which revolve around the Maratha leader Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Red Fort, Delhi

The Red Fort conjures up images of the splendour of Mughal Delhi imperial elephants swaying by, royal armies standing guard, court ladies being carried in palanquins and other vestiges of royal pomp. The greatest icon of Delhi, the Red Fort, named so for

Murud Janjira Fort, Raigad

The sleepy fishing hamlet of Murud is home to the magnificent island fortress of Janjira, standing about 500 m offshore. It is one of the strongest marine forts in India, and remained undefeated during the course of history, despite repeated attacks. When



is replete with beautiful palaces and ancient Agra Fort, Agra

Standing next to, and often overshadowed by Agra's most famous monument Taj Mahal, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the finest Mughal forts in India. Built during the 16th century, the red sandstone fort encloses palaces, mosques and

Amber Fort, Jaipur

Standing atop rugged hills on the periphery of Jaipur, Amber Fort is a fascinating blend of Hindu and Mughal architecture. One of the highlights of this stunning fort is the uphill elephant ride towards the main entrance.

Jaisalmer Fort, Jaisalmer

Rising majestically from the sandy terrain of the great Thar Desert, Jaisalmer Fort, also known as the Golden Fort of Rajasthan, merges splendidly with the golden desert hues and the setting sun. The fort is the epitome of Indian architecture and is one of the

Chittorgarh Fort, Chittorgarh

Rising from the plains like a huge rock island, nearly 6 km long and surrounded on all sides by 150 m cliffs,

Sensex, Nifty gain after flat opening; Tata Motors up 3%, L&T falls over 6%

New Delhi. Benchmark stock market indices gained after opening the trading session on a flat note on

The S&P BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty50 fell in early trade, tracking weakness in Asian markets ahead of the US Federal Reserve's crucial policy decision and commentary. However, the 30-share Sensex was up 227.35 points to 71,367.25 at 10:13 am, while the Nifty50 gained 78.25 points to trade at 21,600.35. Broader market indices were also trading in the green even as investors remained cautious ahead of tomorrow's Interim Budget 2024-25 presentation.Nifty Bank and Nifty Financial Services indices gained over 1 per cent, providing strong support to the domestic market benchmarks. All the other sectoral indices were also trading in the green.

The top 5 gainers on the Nifty50 were Tata Motors, Dr Reddy's, M&M, HDFC Bank and Cipla. On the other hand, the top losers were Larsen & Toubro, Titan, SBI Life, Bharti Airtel and Apollo Hospitals.

Tata Motors shares have gained over 3 per cent in early trade after hitting an all-time high yesterday. The rally in the automaker's shares come ahead of its Q3 results. Meanwhile, shares of Larsen & Toubro fell sharply by over 6 per cent after it missed Q3 profit estimates.

Ahead of today's market opening, Mandar Bhojane, research analyst at Choice Broking, said the benchmark indices were expected to open with a negative bias. "Analysing the daily chart reveals the formation of a dark cloud cover, signaling a bearish outlook in the short term. The support level is identified at 21,500, and a significant drop below this level may trigger a corrective phase in the market," he said."Conversely, sustained trading above 21,500 could pave the way for an upward movement,"

Government cuts import duty on mobile phone parts to 10%

New Delhi. India has decided to slash the import duty on key components used in the production of mobile

The import duty reduction, which was announced by the finance ministry through a late Tuesday notification, sees the rate drop from 15 per cent to 10 per cent.

The move is strategically designed to spur export activities from India, the third-largest economy in Asia. The revised import duty rate of 10 per cent is applicable to various components critical for mobile phone assembly. These components include battery covers, main lenses, back covers, and other mechanical items composed of plastic and metal. The decision aligns with recent reports from earlier this month, where indications suggested that India was contemplating lowering import duties specifically on components that play a crucial role in the manufacturing of high-end mobile phones. This reduction is expected to positively impact the mobile phone industry, promoting growth and competitiveness in the global market.

Zooom takes to the skies again, resumes operations in India

New Delhi. Domestic airline, Zooom, is set to make its comeback in India with flight services from Delhi to Ayodhya resuming on January 31, 2024

The airline's initial passenger flight will see it use the Bombardier CRJ200ER aircraft for operations on the sought-after New Delhi - Ayodhya route.

"We are pleased to announce the return of Zooom with services connecting Ayodhya and Delhi. Zooom is committed to improving regional connectivity in India, with the new flights aiming to link people, cultures, and regions to this spiritual hub," Zooom's Chief Executive Officer, Atul Gambhir said. Highlighting the growing domestic air travel trend in India, Gambhir attributes this surge to factors like affordable airline options, efficient booking systems, improved customer experiences, and flexible schedules.

Zooom aims to align with these trends, focusing on enhancing the overall travel experience and making it more attractive for quality-conscious individuals.

Additionally, he outlined Zooom's continued support for the Government's Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS-UDAN) by launching services focused on UDAN routes as part of its revival strategy.

Looking ahead, he mentioned plans to explore new routes and expand the network to include more tier-2 cities, providing passengers with additional travel options.

Gambhir, drawing from his extensive experience in the aviation industry with key roles in firms like Air One Aviation Pvt Ltd and Air One Charters Pvt Ltd, intends to bring innovation and enhanced efficiency to the forefront of the Indian aviation sector with Zooom.

Call drops will remain priority: New TRAI chief

NEW DELHI. Checking call drops, providing quality service, and aligning with the new Telecommunications Act are some of the priorities for the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), said Anil Kumar Lahoti, the new Chairman of the regulator body.Lahoti, the former Chairman of the Railway Board, has been appointed as the Chairman of Trai and has assumed his duties from Tuesday. The position had been vacant for nearly four months since the retirement of PD Vaghela on September 30.

"Of course, the first priority is the quality of service. It is a very broad domain with quite a lot under it, so that will remain the priority. This is a sector where new challenges emerge every day, particularly in terms of regulation, and we have to keep pace with them. The new telecom bill has come, and we have to align with it and ensure that it is properly implemented," said Lahoti.Lahoti, the new chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), is from the Indian Railway Service of Engineers from the 1984 batch. He was superannuated as Chairman and CEO, Railway Board, on August 31, 2023, after a career spanning 36 years and 11 months in Indian Railway.

Budget 2024: The great Indian jobs dilemma facing the Finance Minister

New Delhi. When Nirmala Sitharaman rises to present the budget (a vote on account, as she has emphasised), India's first fulltime woman Finance Minister will be on the verge of completing a full term in the job too. This is a seminal achievement. And to mark the occasion, it will be fitting if she gives space in her address to one of the seminal challenges facing us as a nation -- jobs.Our employment problem is one of the most complex economic and social problems that we face. It is a problem that has been in the making for many decades, as the employment level has grown slower than the growth in population just too often. Our employment level between 1999 to 2019 grew by just 1000 whomas our population grows to an expensive transfer of the property of the p 1.0%, whereas our population grew at an annual rate of 1.44%, resulting in the employed persons to population ratio falling from 39.7% to 36.4%. It then came as no surprise that the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for 2017-18 showed the unemployment rate to be 6.1% -- a 45year high.In some sense, we have achieved the distinction of being the most populous country in the world without

solving the problem of employment or even finding a solution that can take us in the direction of providing quality earning opportunities for our youth.Declining unemployment does not always lead to economic progressThe recent PLFS reports suggest that the unemployment rate has declined from its 45-year peak of 6.1% to 4.2% in 2020-21 and further to 3.2% in 2022-23. The decline in the unemployment rate does not help solve the real economic problem, as it has on the back of people going back to agriculture. That is, we have not solved the employment problem, we have ended up making it invisible.We are back with the old problem of under- or disguised employment, as agriculture and allied activities are largely seasonal activities and don't keep people busy for more than a few months in a year. It is, therefore, not surprising that the government is having to extend the national food subsidy programme (PMGKAY) to cover 80 crore people for another five years. Disguised employment implies an 'in-your-

face' productivity lossRBI maintains a Employment in manufacturing and services



KLEMS, that helps measures productivity at the industry level. The chart and the table below support the earlier statement that we have created a productivity problem while hoping to solve the employment problem by letting people go back to agriculture. Agriculture now employs nearly as many people as it employed in 2009 and 20% more than what it employed in 2019.ment back to agriculture lends no credence to the government's policy statement that urbanisation will drive India's growth.

sector too is coming with lower productivityManufacturing, as we all know, has been a laggard in creating employment opportunities for many years. It had, however, been delivering greater productivity. On the other hand, the services sector created a higher level of employment, but with a lower growth in productivity. However, each of these sectors has been creating a relatively high proportion of low value-adding jobs as seen in the chart below. The pandemic has made the situation even more intractable by causing productivity to shrink in both these sectors. Consequently, the aggregate productivity growth during the last two years has declined by over 12%. While we do expect employment and productivity in these two sectors to go up as soon as we recover from the pandemic-related losses in these two sectors, the question still is: Will these sectors recover the losses soon enough and help us reduce dependence on agriculture? We need these two sectors to create 40 million jobs to take back employment in the agricultural sector to the level we had in 2019.

Explained: Why L&T shares fell nearly 7% in early trade

New Delhi. Larsen and Toubro (L&T) shares dipped nearly 7 per cent in early trade on Wednesday, marking the steepest decline in eight months. The drop followed the company's announcement of a third-quarter profit that fell below expectations.India's largest capital goods company reported a 15 per cent rise in net profit at Rs 2,947 crore, compared to Rs 2,553 crore in the year-ago period. Its revenue also gained 19 per cent to Rs 55,128

crore. However, this is lower than what a majority of analysts had estimated for the company, leading to the weakness in its stock price today. It may be noted that L&T also expressed concerns about potential disruptions in the Red Sea revenue coming from overseas



shipping lane, caused by attacks from Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in the Suez Canal. This key shipping route, connecting Asia and Europe, could lead to increased logistics costs for L&T.

operations, L&T is a major supplier of capital goods for including machinery, equipment, vehicles, and tools. The recent quarter saw L&T's profit falling short of market expectations, a departure from three consecutive quarters of exceeding estimates. Moreover, the government's reduction in infrastructure spending ahead of national

elections contributed to this outcome.At 10:36 am, L&T shares were down 5.60 per cent at Rs 3,429.80 apiece. The L&T stock has performed well in the past six months, gaining over 27 per cent, but is down 2.71 per cent since the begining of the year.

Wipro layoffs: Hundreds of midlevel employees to lose jobs, says report

infrastructure projects, New Delhi. IT firm Wipro is likely to cut several jobs, targeting mid-level employees, as the company looks to improve margins, reported The Economic Times. Hundreds of mid-level roles in the company will be trimmed as part of the process, according to two sources quoted in

The report noted that Wipro has the lowest margins among India's four largest IT firms. In the December quarter, Wipro's margin stood at 16 per cent, lower than TCS, Infosys and HCL Technologies One of the sources guested in the Technologies. One of the sources quoted in the report claimed that the process has already begun. "The intimations started being made earlier this month. There are hundreds of midlevel executives onsite who are being let go,' said a source quoted in the ET report, citing "very expensive people" sitting onsite in

Tata Motors most valuable auto company



NEW DELHI. Homegrown Tata Motors has become the most valuable auto company on Dalal Street as its market capitalisation (m-cap) on Tuesday surpassed the m-cap of country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki (MSIL).At the end of Tuesday's session, combined m-cap of Tata Motors and its DVR (Differential Voting Rights) stood at Rs 3.16 lakh crore as against Maruti's m-cap of Rs 3.13 lakh crore. Bajaj Auto is India's third most valuable auto company.

Tata Motors shares have surged over 91% in past one year on the back of improving Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) business and expansion of its electric

vehicle (EV) division. In comparison, Maruti Suzuki shares have gained about 12% in the last one year. Its shares surged 5% intraday on Tuesday to an all-time high of Rs 886 ahead of its Q3FY24 results. Analysts tracking the auto sector believe multiple factors are triggering Tata Motors' share. The most important one is its British subsidiary JLR delivering its highest wholesale volume in 11 quarters during the recently concluded October-December period. Add to it, JLR's order book remained strong with 148,000 client orders at the end of the third quarter."We believe while JLR will continue to see a healthy recovery,

Good performance of JLR, strong leadership position in domestic EV mkt push up m-cap

growth will moderate in Tata Motors' PV and CV businesses in the coming years due to normal base and slowdown in the lower-end PV and LCVs," said brokerage Motilal Oswal in a recent report. Tata Motors' strong leadership position in domestic electric car market and its decision to launch more massmarket EVs is said to be fuelling demand for its shares. "I believe Tata Motors has an early entrant advantage. While the sales growth pace of its ICEpowered passenger vehicle and commercial vehicles may remain under pressure in the near future, demand for its EV will remain healthy. Combined with a resurgence in JLR deliveries, it won't be a surprise if the stock hits a four-digit market this year," said a senior market analyst requesting not to



Capco. Aparna Iyer, Wipro's Chief Financial Officer, has been tasked with improving the margins in the ongoing quarter, according to the source.It is worth mentioning that Wipro said it would by consulting firm Capco for \$1.45 billion in 2021, making its CEO Thierry Delaporte's biggest bet. However, it has struggled like all other consulting businesses as the biggest economies around the globe experienced a slowdown after the Covid-19 pandemic.A Wipro spokesperson quoted in the report did not confirm the job cuts, but said aligning the business and talent to the changing market environment "is a critical part" of the company's strategy. Meanwhile, a second source told the publication that the job cuts were part of a strategy called "Left-Shift". The source indicated that the work of a level 3 employee would be deputed to a level 2 employee, and that of a level 2 employee would be executed by a level 1 employee."The idea is that the work of a Level 1 employee is automated. All companies do this, but it is getting very important," added the source. At around 12:03 pm, shares of Wipro were up 0.60 per cent at Rs 475.35 apiece on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

IMF projects Indian economy to grow at 6.7 per cent in FY24

The IMF also expects India's growth to stay steady at 6.5 per cent in fiscal years, FY25 and FY26

New Delhi. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has changed its growth forecast for India, expecting the economy to expand by 6.7 per cent in the fiscal year 2024, up from the previous estimate of 6.3 per cent. The ÎMF's latest World Economic Outlook update for January highlighted India's booming domestic demand as a key factor contributing to the positive revision.In addition to the upgraded forecast for India, the IMF projects a steady growth rate of 6.5 per cent for the subsequent fiscal years, FY25 and FY26. "Growth in India is projected to remain strong at 6.5 per cent in both 2024 and 2025, with an upgrade from October of 0.2 percentage points for both years, reflecting resilience in domestic



demand," the report said.

The Reserve Bank of India, on the other hand, had previously estimated a slightly The IMF credits the improved global higher GDP growth of 7.4 per cent for India in FY24.The global economic landscape also received a positive outlook from the IMF.Chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said that a 'soft landing' was near. However, Gourinchas cautioned that global growth and trade, while showing resilience, are still behind

historical averages.

Factors driving the positive revision

economic outlook to increased spending, both public and private, despite tight monetary conditions. Additionally, factors such as higher labour force participation, restored supply chains, and lower energy and commodity prices contribute to the positive forecast. The global growth forecast for 2024 is

predicted at 3.1 per cent, a slight upgrade from the October estimate, and the IMF expects unchanged growth of 3.2 per cent in 2025. This remains below the historical average for the 2000-2019 period, which stood at 3.8 per cent.Global trade growth is anticipated to be 3.3 per cent in 2024 and 3.6 per cent in 2025, falling short of the historical average of 4.9 per cent. The IMF identifies around 3,000 trade restrictions imposed in 2023 as a factor weighing down on trade gains. **Inflation insights**

While headline inflation is projected to be 5.8 per cent for 2024, the IMF has lowered the forecast for 2025 to 4.4 per cent .Advanced economies are expected to see an average inflation of 2.6 per cent, with inflation in emerging market and developing economies higher at 8.1 per cent in 2024, easing to 6 per cent in 2025.

The IMF's attention is also drawn to potential disruptions in the Middle East, particularly continued attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, which could impact monetary conditions.

NEWS BOX

SL vs AFG: Sri Lanka pick three uncapped players for one-off Test against Afghanistan

New Delhi. Sri Lanka Cricket have announced their 16-man squad for the one-off Test against the Afghanistan cricket team, which is scheduled to take place on Friday, February 2, 2024. Sri Lanka have named three uncapped players, wicketkeeper-batsman Lahiru Udara, fast howler Chamika Gunasekara, and Milan bowler Chamika Gunasekara, and Milan Rathnayake in the Test squad. While Udara and Gunasekara have previously played T20Is and ODIs for the national team,

Rathnayake has yet to appear in any format.

After a dominating display of cricket against Zimbabwe, a Dhananjaya De Silva-led Sri Lanka side is all set to take on a Hasmutalla Shahidi-led Afghanistan side for a one-off Test. The Sri Lanka side will be getting back to Test cricket for the first time since their disappointing run at the 2023 ODI World Cup. With the return of Sri Lanka to Test Cricket, a lot of familiar names will also Cricket, a lot of familiar names will also return to the longest format of the game. The match is set to mark Dhananjaya De Silva's first chapter as the Test skipper for the Sri Lankan side, with ODI captain Kusal Mendis handling the role of the vice-captain of the squad. Senior players like Dimuth Karunaratne, Angelo Mathews and former skipper Dinesh Chandimal are also part of Sri Lanka's packed squad Sri Lanka's packed squad.

Sri Lanka will be looking to mark a strong



return to Test cricket with the confidence gained from their clashes against Zimbabwe and will be looking to take the upper hand over a seemingly less-experienced Afghanistan side. After an impressive display against a strong side like India, Afghanistan will be looking to make the most out of their only Test fixture till late February.

Sri Lanka full squad

Dhananjaya de Silva (c), Kusal Mendis (vc), Dimuth Karunaratne, Nishan Madushka, Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Ramesh Mendis, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando, Kasun Rajitha, Kamindu Mendis, Prabath Jayasuriya, Lahiru Udara, Chamika Gunasekara, Milan Rathnayake

Afghanistan full squad

Hashmatullah Shahidi (c), Ibrahim Zadran, Abdul Malik, Noor Ali Zadran, Rahmat Shah (vc), Bahir Shah, Nasir Jamal, Ikram Alikhil (wk), Mohammad Ishaq (wk), Qais Ahmad, Zia-ur-Rehman, Zahir Khan, Yamin Ahmadzai, Nijat Masood, Mohammad Saleem and Naveed Zadran

IND vs ENG: Indian team receives heartwarming reception from fans upon touchdown in Vizag for 2nd Test

New Delhi. The fans in Vizag gave the Indian team a heartwarrming reception as they reached the city ahead of the second Test against England, which will begin on February 2.

India will be aiming to bounce back quickly after their 28-run loss to England in the first match in Hyderabad as the visitors took the lead in the series. Debutant Tom Hartley emerged as a hero for the English side, taking seven wickets in the second innings, an impressive recovery after a challenging start to his Test career. His performance, alongside Ollie Pope's near double-century, was



instrumental in setting a formidable target for India. Pope's 196 runs marked him as the Man of the Match. Despite a strong resistance from the Indian lower order, England's persistent attack proved too much, leading to a memorable win that set the tone for the rest of the five-match Test series.

The Indian team left from Hyderabad and arrived in Vizag on January 30, and a video released by the BCCI showed a glimpse of their journey on Tuesday. The players received a great reception at the airport as the fans flocked in numbers to witness the stars.

There were even a few 'Rohit, Rohit' chants at the entrance of the team hotel as India would look to recalibrate and go again in the second

Indian camp hit by injuries to KL Rahul and

Ravindra Jadeja

While the reception at Vizag may have been great, the Indian team didn't get off to the best starts when it came to the preparation for the second Test. Both KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja sustained injuries during the Hyderabad Test and was ruled out for the second match of the series. Jadeja suffered a hamstring injury while Rahul had complained of pain in his right quadriceps. The team has roped in the services of Sarfaraz Khan, Saurabh Kumar and Washington Sundar for the second Test.

Mayank Agarwal files police complaint after drinking 'poisonous liquid' in Delhi-bound flight

- **►** Mayank Agarwal was deboarded and rushed to a local hospital in
- **►** Mayank complained of irritation in his throat before the flight took off
- Multiple sources said that Agarwal probably mistook some other transparent liquid as water and drank it

Agartala India opener and Karnataka captain Mayank Agarwal was rushed to a local hospital after falling ill just before his New Delhi-bound flight was about to take off on Tuesday, an incident that shocked the cricket fraternity as the player lodged an official police complaint alleging foul play.

He is believed to be out of danger after drinking liquid from a pouch, which he thought was water, and was kept on his seat as he was on board IndiGo Airlines. Agarwal

lodged a formal complaint with the police through his manager." Mayank Agarwal, an international cricket player. Now he is stable and his vitals are normal. But his manager has lodged a specific complaint under NCCPS (New Capital Complex Police Station) to investigate the matter," SP West Tripura Kiran Kumar said. Asked about details, the top cop also said: "His manager said that when he was sitting in the airplane, there was a pouch in front of him. He drank a little bit and not much, but suddenly there was irritation in his mouth, and suddenly he couldn't talk also and was brought to ILS hospital. He had swelling and ulcers in the mouth. Otherwise, his vitals are stable."

State health secretary Kiran Gitte added: "Police has admitted his complaint and we will investigate as to what happened. As per his manager, he will travel to Bengaluru tomorrow and meanwhile, whatever best treatment is available in Agartala, we will provide him."On behalf of ILS Hospital, manager of Business Development Manoi Kumar Debnath issued a press release, stating that the cricketer was "experiencing some oral irritation and swelling on his lips." After being assessed by the consultants of the hospital in emergency, he was admitted. For now, he is clinically stable and is being constantly clinically monitored."Agarwal,

who has played 21 Tests for India, led Karnataka to a 29-run win against Tripura on Monday."He (Agarwal) is not in any kind of danger. He is under observation currently in a hospital at Agartala, and we will fly him back to Bengaluru once we get an update from the doctors, which we are expecting tonight," a Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) official told PTI on

against Railways in Surat. "He will not be playing in Karnataka's next match (against Railways at Surat from

condition of anonymity. However, Agarwal

will not play the next Ranji Trophy game

February 2). But other than that, there is no truth in any rumours going around. He is stable now, and we are in touch with doctors and other state officials," the official said. Nikin Jose is expected to take over the team's

captaincy in the next match as he is the designated vice-captain.

'MULTIPLE THEORIES' WHAT DID
MAYANKAGARWALDRINK?

IndiGo issued a statement that didn't elaborate

on the reason for a medical emergency. "IndiGo flight 6E 5177 operating from Agartala to Delhi returned to origin due to a

medical emergency onboard. The passenger was off-loaded and was rushed to the hospital for further medical assistance. The aircraft took off again for its destination at 1620h," the airline said in its press release.

Agarwal, who scored 51 and 17 in the last game, was supposed to travel with the whole team to Surat via Delhi, when the incident happened. Karnataka are playing Railways in Surat in their next match. "The team was on the flight and apparently Agarwal started feeling uneasy and vomited a couple of times sitting on the flight. Since he started feeling sick, he de-boarded. From KSCA MR Shahvir Tarapore called and we quickly sent two of our representatives to the ILS

Pakistan must have one captain for all formats: Shahid Afridi urges PCB to appoint skipper for at least 3 years

New Delhi. Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi has made a strong case for the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to adopt a policy of having a single captain across all formats of the game. Afridi's latest remarks come in light of recent changes in the leadership structure of the national team, leadership structure of the national team, where Babar Azam stepped down as captain of all formats after the team's underperformance at the ODI World Cup. Subsequently, Shan Masood and Shaheen Shah Afridi were appointed as Test and T20I captains, respectively. Afridi believes that having one captain would prevent internal conflicts over the captaincy and provide clear leadership within the team. He believes that this approach would also send a clear message to the players also send a clear message to the players about who is in charge."The PCB must have one captain for all formats and there is no need to have a vice-captain. This will give a clear message to all players who is in charge," Afridi told reporters. Moreover, Afridi supports the idea of giving the captain



and team management three-year contracts to ensure stability and allow them time to develop the team without the pressure of

'If you think Muhammad Hafeez is good then don't just judge him on one series give him proper time and the same should apply to the captain as well he should be there for three years." Afridi emphasized the importance of continuity and confidence amongst the players, especially in the lead-up to the World T20 Cup. The 46-year-old suggested that the current T20 squad should be given a long run to prepare for the upcoming tournament."The World T20 Cup is going to be a very tough tournament this year with some very strong teams in the hunt for the title. I also don't think this is the time to make any changes in the format squad," he said.

"We just need to continue with the same group of players and give them confidence. But yes I would like to see Fakhar Zaman and Saim Ayub open the batting in T20s," he said.

More spin No problem: England ready to tackle extreme pitches after mindset shift, says wicketkeeper Ben Foakes

New Delhi. England wicketkeeper Ben Foakes said the touring batters are more prepared mentally to tackle the challenge of turning pitches in India, saying that there has been a "mindset shift" under the regime of Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum. England are expecting a strong response form India after the hosts, led by Rohit Sharma, were stunned in the series opener in Hyderabad. While India are set to make personnel changes, considering the injury concerns, all eyes have been on the pitch in Visakhapatnam, the venue of the second Test, starting February 2. Quite a few are backing India to return to rank turners after they were found wanting on a good sporting pitch in Hyderabad.

Ben Foakes recalled the 2021 tour in which England and India played 4 Tests across only two venues due to Covid-19 restrictions. England rode on a Joe Root masterclass to win the first Test on a flat pitch before India went on to win the remaining three Tests on spicier and more spin-friendly pitches. Axar Patel and R Ashwin shared 59 wickets between them with the former, in his maiden Test series, picking up 27 wickets in just 3 matches as England batters were spooked by the "raging bunsens". The first Test was played on a flat wicket and then they went to raging 'bunsens. All three were probably the worst pitches I've batted on," wicketkeeper Foakes said, as quoted by the BBC. The wicketkeeper-batter, who is known for his safe glovework, said England batters have acknowledged the fact that spinners are bound to dominate on such pitches and that it's okay to fail. Ben Foakes said that the touring batters were bogged down by the fear of failure during their last trip.

"It's more of a mindset shift of how to go about it, because in those conditions the bowler is a massive favourite to win the contest.. It's how many blows you can put in," Foakes said.

"Before, there was a fear of getting out and that put us in our shells. Now it's not worrying that you are getting out and accepting that you probably are on those sorts of surfaces. You can actually go and dominate at times as well,' he added. Notably, Foakes chipped in with a crucial contribution in the first Test, stitching a 112-run stand with Ollie Pope, who swung the momentum in England's favour with a sensational 196.The fearless approach from the England batters was evident in the second innings as Pope led a counter-attack that stunned Rohit Sharma's India. England overturned a first innings deficit of 190 runs and went to set a target of 231 for India. The hosts were bowled out for 202 as England completed a sensational comeback.

While England are high on confidence ahead of the 2nd Test, India are dealing with injury concerns. While Virat Kohli is set to miss the

I love it: Mikel Arteta downplays Ben White-Oleksandr Zinchenko altercation after Arsenal's 2-1 win at Forest

- a nervy affair at City Ground on
- Arsenal defenders White and Zinchenko had a go at each other after concedina
- Arsenal cut down Liverpool's lead at the top of the table to 2 points

London. Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta on Wednesday played down the full-time scuffle between teammates Ben White and Oleksandr Zinchenko after their 2-1 win in a Premier League match at Nottingham Forest on Tuesday. Arteta said he saw the altercation as two proud professionals not being happy after the visitors conceded a late goal in a nervy finish at the City Ground in West Bridgford.Arsenal cut down Liverpool's lead at the top of the Premier League table to 2 points after they won at Forest. The Gunners now have 46 points, 2 fewer than Liverpool, who have a game in hand. The Reds face Chelsea in



another mid-week league match on Wednesday. The match was not only significant for its impact on the standings but also for the dramatic moments it produced, including a scuffle between Arsenal defenders Ben White and Oleksandr Zinchenko that rippled through the team dynamics. The game began with a sense of urgency from Mikel Arteta's side, who dominated possession but found themselves frustrated by a lack of clear-cut chances in the first half. Despite having 81 percent possession, Arsenal managed only one attempt on target before the break. However, their persistence paid off in the second half when Gabriel Jesus broke the

deadlock in the 65th minute with a clever finish from a narrow-angle that somehow squeezed past Nottingham Forest goalkeeper Matt Turner at his near post.Seven minutes later, Jesus turned provider, setting up Bukayo Saka who finished off a rapid counter-attack with a low strike to double Arsenal's lead. The Gunners appeared to be cruising to a comfortable win until the 89th minute when Forest substitute Taiwo Awoniyi capitalized on a mistake by William Saliba to pull one back for the home side, setting up a nervy finish.

I HAVE TO ENCOURAGE THAT: **ARTETA**

Amidst the tension of the closing stages, an incident between Arsenal teammates Ben White and Oleksandr Zinchenko caught the attention of fans and pundits alike. The two players were seen clashing with each other, an occurrence that manager Arteta later described as something he "loved" seeing."I love it, they demand more from each other and they are not happy with the way they concede that and they are trying to resolve it. It was a bit heated, but that means it is not enough playing the way we played, the result has to be bigger," Arteta said after having been in the middle to separate the two players.

Dominic Thiem confirms split with coach, says 2024 is his 'last chance' to make progress in tennis rankings

- Dominic Thiem said this season is his last chance to get back to playing at top level
- Thiem also confirmed that he had parted ways with coach Benjamin **Ebrahimzadeh**
- *Thiem's journey has been fraught with challenges since his wrist injury in 2021

New Delhi. Former US Open champion Dominic Thiem has made startling admissions about his tennis future while outlining his plans for the 2024 season. Notably, Thiem hasn't had the best start to his 2024 season, as the former World No. 3 is yet to win any tour-level events this season. His only two wins have come in the Brisbane International qualifiers. The Austrian has lost two main draw matches, to Rafael Nadal in the first round in Brisbane and Felix Auger-Aliassime in the first round of the Australian Open. Thiem is now planning a return to the tour in March, with a focus on competing in Challenger events in Hungary, Croatia, and Italy to gain crucial ranking points. Thiem's journey has been fraught with challenges since his wrist injury in 2021, which sidelined him for nearly a year and precipitated a significant drop in his standing within the sport. As of

January 29, 2024, he is ranked 90th in the

world, a stark contrast to his previous high of



No. 3 on March 2, 2020. Despite his struggles, Thiem has amassed 17 ATP singles titles throughout his career, all achieved before his wrist injury."I see this as my last chance. If I make it, it can happen quickly," Thiem told Austrian daily Der Standard on Tuesday. "I've been back for two years now since the injury, and I finished 2022 on 100 or so and last year on 98. If I finish the year on 100 again, you have to

think about whether it's still worth it. Thiem, who hired Benjamin Ebrahimzadeh as his coach after splitting with long-time coach Nicolas Massu in April 2023, has now ended his relationship with him as well. He is believed to be in talks with a non-Austrian coach."Yes, I separated from Benny after Australia," Thiem said in a recent press conference in Austria, as per Der Standard. "[The new coach] will be someone who knows me as a player since I was young, so to speak. I see that as the only chance to get the finishing

touches."The Austrian, who hopes to return to the world's top 50 by the end of the year, suggested that the 2024 season would be his last chance. "I see this as my last chance. If I can do it, it can happen quickly," he said. "I've been back for two years since the injury, and I finished 2022 at 100 or so and last year at 98. Should I end the year at 100 again, you have to think about whether the whole thing



ctress Raashii Khanna is set to appear in the upcoming thriller Yodha alongside Sidharth Malhotra and Disha Patani. The film, directed by Sagar Ambre and Pushkar Ojha, has created considerable excitement with its star-studded cast. During a recent Instagram Q&A session, Raashii shared insights into her collaboration with Sidharth and provided fans with a sneak peek into their working

with specific actors and directors in the future.In response to a question about her experience working with Sidharth Malhotra, Raashii Khanna spoke highly of him, saying, "It was a great experience working with Sid. He is so disciplined and he has given it all for Yodha. He has worked very, very hard, especially on the action sequences because they look amazing and I'm looking forward to Yodha actually for his action and everything else."The actress further shared, "He is an amazing guy not just as an actor but as a person I got to know him and he is very spiritual and very sorted."

When questioned about the actors she would like to work with in the future, Raashii Khanna shared an extensive list. Notable names on her wishlist include Mahesh Babu, Thalapathy Vijay, Allu Arjun, Ranbir Kapoor, Shah Rukh Khan, and Hrithik Roshan. The actress also unveiled the list of directors she would like to collaborate with, which includes Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Zoya Akhtar, Raju Hirani, Anurag Kashyap, Mani Ratnam, and more.

Yodha produced by Hiroo Yash Johar, Karan Johar, and Apoorva Mehta under Dharma Productions, is scheduled to be released in theaters on March 15, 2024. The action-packed thriller revolves around an off-duty soldier who takes charge when terrorists hijack a plane, and the engine fails. His strategic plan becomes crucial for the survival of the passengers in this high-stakes situation.

Raashii Khanna made her Hindi film debut in 2013 with Madras Cafe, co-starring alongside John Abraham. Most recently, she played the role of Megha Vyas in the popular Amazon Prime series Farzi, sharing the screen with Shahid Kapoor, Vijay Sethupathi, and Kay Kay Menon. Apart from Yodha, Raashii has a diverse lineup of projects such as Aranmanai 4, The Sabarmati Report, Telusu Kada, Medhavi, and Sardar 2.

Kangana Kanaut

Compares Elon Musk's Human Brain-Chip Implant To Satyug: 'Tech Devtas And Rishis...'

angana Ranaut has backed Elon Musk's Neuralink Corp. for carrying out the first-ever brain implant in a person. Elon's aim is to let people control computers with their minds, and this move is a big step in that direction. Taking to X (formerly known as Twitter) on Tuesday, Elon Musk had tweeted, "The first @Neuralink product is called Telepathy."Elon added, "Enables control of your phone or computer, and through them almost any device, just by thinking. Initial users will be those who have lost the use of their limbs. Imagine if Stephen Hawking could communicate faster than a speed typist or auctioneer. That is the goal."angana started her comment by saying that Satyug was called so because of the ability to communicate without speaking. She wrote, "Satyug was primarily called so because of this technology/ability of communication without speaking, if we see this in our lifetime then it's not impossible to imagine technology Devtas and Rishis and many other celestial beings use in our scriptures, because for most of

these so called atheists biggest challenge is to understand what they don't know/ or haven't seen, as they call everything in our scriptures too far fetched, well not that far anymore."

Audiences can catch Kangana in Emergency, scheduled to hit theaters on June 14. The movie, both written and directed by Kangana, showcases the actor portraying the character of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.The cast includes Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhary, Milind Soman, Shreyas



Talpade, Vishak Nair, and the late Satish Kaushik. Additionally, Kangana has an upcoming psychological thriller alongside R Madhavan, with Vijay directing the film.

Pulkit Samrat and Kriti Kharbanda Engaged, Roka Ceremony Photos Go Viral



actors Pulkit Samrat and Kriti Kharbanda are officially engaged! The lovebirds are keen on beginning their next chapter. An intimate roka ceremony was recently held at one of their friends' places. Several happy photos have now gone viral from their special day. An Instagram handle with the name Ria Luthra shared the photos and wrote, 'Fam Jam! #blessed.' Kriti and Pulkit, along with their friends, donned their brightest smiles. Kriti looked gorgeous in a royal blue Ankarkali dress with golden border. She teamed it with peach-coloured netted dupatta. Pulkit, on the other hand looked elegant in a white kurta with floral prints on it. They even flaunted their engagement rings. It was indeed a delightful evening for their friends and

Earlier, in an interview with the Bombay Times, Pulkit Samrat shared how they complement each other in their relationship. "As best friends or companions, we push each other to grow individually in our own lives and focus on work. Both of us are ambitious individuals. We have had our share of slips in our careers, and so we need that constant push. I am lucky to have her in my life, as she keeps me grounded and on track. So, right now, that's what we are doing just trying to be the best version of ourselves so that we can be even better for each other," he said.On the professional front, following Fukrey 3, Pulkit Samrat has an exciting lineup of projects in his kitty. His upcoming list of movies includes Suswagatam Khushmadeed, Tuesdays, and Saturdays.Meanwhile, Kriti Kharbanda is also gearing up for some captivating projects. She is set to grace the screen in director Ram Chiru's highly-anticipated film, Sanju Mattu Geetha 2, where she will share the screen with acclaimed actors Anant Nag and Nagashekar. Additionally, Kriti will be seen in director Sajid Nadiadwala's upcoming comedy-drama, Housefull 5.

Pulkit was previously married to Salman Khan's rakhi sister, Shweta Rohira, but the two got divorced in 2015, after one year of marriage. Earlier, his name was linked with his Sanam Re co-star, Yami Gautam. The actor made his debut on TV with the popular show Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi in 2006 and appeared on the silver screen with Bittoo Boss in 2012.

Abdu Rozik Is 'Too Happy' About Munawar Faruqui Winning Bigg Boss 17: 'He Can Have More Girlfriends'



unawar Faruqui has emerged as the winner of Bigg Boss 17. After Lentertaining the audience on Salman Khan's popular reality show for months, Munawar was named the winner on Sunday, January 28. As Munawar celebrates his achievement, many celebrities from the entertainment world are also congratulating him and expressing their joy at his win. Among them is also Bigg Boss alum Abdu Rozik. Abdu was recently spotted by the paps and they asked him about his feelings on Munawar's win. He said, "Guys, I'm too much too much happy for him because now he can have lots of girlfriends. Maybe he'll share with me." Abdu added, "Really, I was supporting him from before and even till now. Merabhai, you didreally good."

Besides the shiny Bigg Boss 17 trophy, Munawar Faruqui also took home a swanky new car and a grand cash prize of Rs. 50 lakh. The comedian was overwhelmed with joy when his name was announced as the winner of the popular reality show. His family had also come to support him and were beaming with pride. However, after his win, some people said that Munawar was a 'fixed winner'. In an interview with ETimes, Munawar said, "Yaar fixed winner ko itna sab go through karna pade toh it can't be a fixed winner. If one has to go through so much scrutiny as a supposed fixed winner, then it can't truly be a fixed winner. If I had been a fixed winner, I would have gotten everything on a platter. Pura season gawah hai that I've got nothing on a platter, I've worked hard and