

Article 370: PM Modi hits out at NC-Cong alliance over Pakistani Defence Minister's remarks

Simmi Kaur Babbar

Katra (Reasi), Sep 19: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Congress and NC alliance following remarks by Pakistan's Defence Minister regarding Article 370 and accused the coalition of pursuing the neighbouring country's agenda.

balle Pakistan mein ho rahi hai' (They are being celebrated in Pakistan)," Modi declared at a massive rally in Katra, the base camp for Mata Vaishnodevi cave shrine. The prime minister pointed out Pakistan's open support for Congress and NC, and said, "Nobody talks about them here, but they are in currency there. Pakistan is happy with their manifesto. Pakistan's defence minister has openly supported the Congress and the National Conference."

port of BJP candidates in the newly formed Shri Vaishnodevi constituency in Reasi district, Modi said, "They (Congress-NC alliance) aim to revive Pakistan's old agenda. Today, they

bring back Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir." The Prime Minister addressed a rally early in the day in Srinagar summer capital. It was after 10 long years that Modi addressed a rally in Katra, where he had flagged off train service in July 2014. Modi emphasised the BJP's commitment to national development, urging voters to support a government dedicated to this cause.



want to implement the same old agenda of Pakistan." Sending a clear message to Pakistan, he said, "Modi wants to convey to them in stern language that we will not allow Pakistan's agenda to be implemented in Jammu and Kashmir. No power on Earth can

Ex-RG Kar principal Sandip Ghosh's medical registration cancelled

Kolkata, Sep 19: The West Bengal Medical Council (WBMC) on Thursday cancelled the registration of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital's former principal Sandip Ghosh, an official said. Ghosh, who is in CBI custody, has been removed from the list of Registered Medical Practitioners maintained by the WBMC, he said.

Open for talks to any farmers' group

New Delhi, Sep 19: Agriculture minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Thursday said the answer to farmers' issues was dialogue, for which he would start an initiative named Samvad Se Samadhan (solution through discussions) to interact with farm organisations directly.

TDP claims 'beef tallow' in Tirupati laddus, shows 'lab report' from Gujarat

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, Sep 19: The ruling Telugu Desam Party on Thursday claimed that a Gujarat-based livestock laboratory has confirmed the presence of "beef tallow", "lard" (relating to pig fat), and fish oil in the ghee used for the preparation of the world-renowned Tirupati laddu.



of Analysis and Learning in Livestock and Food (CALF) at the National Dairy Development Board in Gujarat, alleging the presence of animal fat in the ghee used to make the renowned Tirupati laddus during the YSRCP administration. It report indicat-

ed that the ghee contained traces of fish oil, beef tallow, and lard, the latter being a semi-solid white fat derived from pig fatty tissue. "The lab reports of the samples certify that beef tallow, animal fat - lard, and fish oil were used in the preparation of ghee supplied to Tirumala, and the S value is only 19.7," TDP spokesperson Anam Venkata Ramana Reddy was quoted as saying by ANI.

India rejects report on alleged arms diversion to Ukraine as 'mischievous'

ST Correspondent



New Delhi, Sep 19: The ministry of external affairs (MEA) on Thursday denounced a media report that implied violations by India in its defence exports as "speculative and misleading." A Reuters report alleged that Indian-made artillery shells sold to European customers had found their way to Ukraine, where they

Bengal junior docs to partially lift 'cease work', resume emergency duties from Saturday

Kolkata, Sep 19: Agitating junior doctors announced that they will "partially" lift their 'cease work' and partially rejoin their duties at emergency and essential services in state-run hospitals from Saturday as the West Bengal government has accepted most of their demands.

SC rejects telecom companies' curative petition on AGR dues

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

NEW DELHI: Sep 19: The Supreme Court has dismissed curative petitions by telecom companies such as Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea against an October 2019 verdict that requires them to pay over ₹1 lakh crore towards adjusted gross revenue dues (AGR) to the department of telecommunications (DoT).

causes manifest injustice. The curative petition challenged the court's October 24, 2019 judgment that ruled in favour of the government, permitting DoT to include all non-telecom revenue in calculations of AGR. As per the figures originally

group (₹16,798 crore) and Airtel (₹12,389 crore). Review petitions filed by the companies against the verdict were dismissed in January 2020. Saddled with a huge liability that threatened their business and with insolvency proceedings pending against some of the companies - Airtel, Reliance Telecom, Sistema Shyam and Videocon Telecommunications - the Centre proposed to the court in March 2020 to permit the AGR dues to be paid by way of 20 equal instalments. The Centre's application was partly allowed on September 1, 2020. The court allowed the telcos to pay annual instalments for 10 years, from April 2021 to March 31, 2031. Companies were directed to pay a penalty and penal interest in case of default besides being liable for contempt of court proceedings. Since this order effectively modified the October 2019 judgment, the effective challenge in

the curative petition was against this decision. During proceedings in the top court in 2020, the Centre said some of the AGR dues stood paid and revised the total outstanding dues to roughly over ₹1.43 lakh crore. The Bharti Airtel group deposited ₹18,000 crore bringing its outstanding balance to ₹25,976 crore while Vodafone Idea deposited ₹3,500 crore swelling its unpaid corpus to ₹54,754 crore. Even Tata had dues worth over ₹12,600 crore. Even government telecom providers BSNL and MTNL had accumulated dues to the tune of ₹5835 crore and ₹4352 crore respectively. To be sure, the concept of AGR is a revenue-sharing agreement which arose in the light of the policy framed by the government under provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act which gives the Centre exclusive privilege of establishing, maintaining and working telegraphs. The October 2019 judgment upheld the Government's interpretation that revenues from various heads will be included in calculating AGR.



'Look at our photos, decide': Akhilesh Yadav's fresh 'mafia' swipe at Yogi Adityanath

Naresh Malhotra

Lucknow, Sep 19: Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday took a swipe at Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath, doubling down on his recent remark that there is not much difference between a mathadheesh (head of a mutt) and a mafia.

said, adding, "a donkey will see others as donkeys." He suggested that Yadav's perceptions are influenced by his own experiences during his time in office. "He himself is a leader of mafias and criminals," the minister asserted. On Wednesday, Adityanath also accused the SP of cowering down to criminals and denigrating religious leaders. "Samajwadi Party members used to rub their noses in front of notorious mafias and criminals. As per their culture, they call religious leaders mafias," Adityanath said at an event, referring to Yadav's controversial statement. "They exploited the youth, forced farmers to commit suicide and traders were forced to migrate and incidents like the Kairana (exodus) happened because of them. Hindu traders had to

move out of Kairana because of them," he added. Without naming Akhilesh

vailing in the state. Yadav's comments have also drawn the ire of Hindu outfits. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) strongly condemned his remark and demanded an apology from the SP chief, calling his statement "highly condemnable and objectionable." "This is not the first time Akhilesh Yadav has insulted Hindu beliefs and saints to please his vote bank. He should apologise to the entire Hindu society, including the revered saints," VHP joint general secretary Surendra Jain said. "Akhilesh Yadav and the leaders of his alliance should apologise to the entire Hindu society, including the revered saints, for his anti-Hindu statement, else the Hindu society will not tolerate this insult and will give a befitting reply through every democratic means," the VHP functionary added.



News box

Global mental health experts at meet in city this weekend

Mumbai. As non-medical approaches to mental health slowly gain traction in India, Mumbai is gearing up to host the ninth edition of Frances Tustin Memorial Trust Conference from Sept 20-22. This international gathering, bringing together mental health experts—psychotherapists, psychoanalysts, special educators and other mental health professionals—is a step towards that shift.

Focusing on the theme 'Early ruptures and their impact on the individual's psyche', the conference will explore how childhood psychological wounds can lead to lifelong conditions such as anxiety, depression and developmental disorders.

A collaboration between Indian Psychoanalytic Society (Mumbai chapter) and Frances Tustin Memorial Trust in Israel, the meet will feature global experts like Alina Schellekes (Israel), Chiara Cattelan (Italy), Jeanne Magagna (UK) and Armelle Hours (France), and India's Micky Bhatia and Minnie Dastur, among others, who will present their research and share insights. The gathering aims to explore new approaches that professionals can use in their daily work with patients and find better ways to address deep-seated trauma across all age groups, from infants to adults.

The conference is inspired by Frances Tustin, a pioneering child psychotherapist from northern England who made groundbreaking advances in understanding and treating autism in both children and adults starting in the 1950s. Mumbai's own Psychoanalytic Therapy & Research Centre (PTRC) has been developing psychoanalysis therapy in India since the 1970s. Today, PTRC provides therapy for all age groups with fees on a sliding scale so that anyone can receive help. This conference is part of its ongoing efforts to enhance mental health care and broaden its reach.

Driver crashes SUV into Nawab Malik's son-in-law

MUMBAI. NCP functionary Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan suffered a brain clot after his driver crashed into him with his SUV outside a Kurla hospital on Tuesday, pushing him for about 10-15ft and pinning him between the vehicle and the boundary wall of an SRA building.

The driver, Abdul Ansari, told police he accidentally accelerated instead of hitting the brakes. He knocked down a few parked bikes and crashed into Khan. Police have prima facie ruled out foul play. Doctors have kept Khan, who also sustained fractures to his ribs, shoulder and neck, under observation in the ICU for 48 hours.

Malik's brother Kaptan Malik said Khan and his wife, Nilofar, were waiting outside Criticare hospital after a routine check-up, for their car. "The driver did not pick up their calls. A security guard went and told the driver, who was fast asleep, that Sameer was calling him. In a hurry, Ansari started the vehicle. Seeing the vehicle approach, Sameer moved forward, but the driver accelerated it and rammed into him," he said. Nilofar escaped with minor injuries.

CA says fiancée, kin framed him in stalking case after taking Rs 12L, kills self on FB Live

MUMBAI. Accusing his fiancée and her family of framing him in a stalking case and assaulting him after taking Rs 12.5 lakh from him, a 33-year-old chartered accountant from Jharkhand allegedly hanged himself at his rented Govandi home minutes after going live on Facebook on Tuesday. He also alleged that police had refused to intervene in the financial dispute, which had prompted him to knock on the court's doors.

Police said Sandeep Paswan had shown suicidal tendencies over the past year. They were alerted by friends and viewers to alarming live chats from him but were able to zero in on his location only after his death.



Deonar police registered an accidental death case, and after finding the Facebook Live video,

they were also adding the charge of abetment to suicide against the fiancée and her family.

Police said around 7am Tuesday, Sandeep went live on Facebook in his flat, showing bruises on his body and a torn T-shirt, and accused his fiancée and distant relative, Sapna Paswan, and her family of assaulting him and pushing him to take his life. "They told me, 'Why are you still alive? Just die, or we will kill you. They have humiliated me and ruined my life,'" he said.

Six injured in fire cracker explosion at Telangana's Kishanbagh

The family is reportedly in the business of manufacturing firecrackers and storing them in their house.

HYDERABAD. Six people of a family, including a three-year-old and a nine-year-old, sustained injuries after the firecrackers they had stored in their house at Kishanbagh accidentally exploded on Wednesday.

"Sixty-year-old Shakeera Begum sustained severe head injuries and is in a critical condition while the others are stable," the police said. The family is reportedly in the business of manufacturing firecrackers and storing them in their house.

"At around 4PM, a laisun pataka stored in the house caught fire and exploded. The blast led to a

massive sound causing the asbestos sheet, which was the roof, fell down on the family," DCP South Zone Sneha Mehra told.

The victims have been identified as Hafeez, Waseem, Shakeera Begum, Neha Begum, Sameena Begum and Saniya Begum. "Shakeera Begum sustained a head injury, while the others were injured on their faces and hands as per preliminary reports," Mehra said.

Hearing the explosion at the house, the family's neighbours rushed to help the injured persons. The Bahadurpura

police shifted the injured to Osmania General Hospital for medical treatment.

The AIMIM Bahadurpura MLA Mohammed Mubeen also rushed to the spot and facilitated in shifting the injured persons to the hospital.

Taking to social media platform X, the MLA said that he spoke to the resident medical officer of the Osmania Hospital regarding the update on the health condition of the family.

Those who are in a stable condition will be discharged within two days, Mubeen said, sharing what the RMO informed him.



TISS revokes its ban on student outfit, tweaks 'honour code'

MUMBAI. TISS has revoked its ban on Progressive Students' Forum (PSF), Left-leaning students' collective, and modified its honour code to remove a mandatory pledge from students against "indulging in any political, anti-establishment, unpatriotic discussions, demonstrations, dharna or any form of activities that disturb the academic environment of the institute".

The ban, imposed on Aug 19 after calling PSF unauthorised and illegal, was revoked on Monday evening after a review by the institute's "competent authority" and following "detailed deliberations", said TISS in its order. It said the decision was taken to "preserve the values of mutual respect, unity and academic integrity". PSF has been active on the campus since 2012.

Following the ban, it had sent a detailed appeal letter to the chancellor of the institute, seeking his intervention, and support for it had poured in from alumni and teachers.



In the same Monday order, the institute asked students to adhere to a revised honour code, dated Sept 16, which has toned down the controversial pledge. The pledge had been met with widespread criticism and students had termed it "undemocratic".

The new honour code states: "...I acknowledge that TISS reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the violations of its rules, policies, or for any other reasons as specified in the institute's regulations. I commit to refrain from any actions or activities that may disrupt the

academic environment or damage the reputation of the institute..."

The institute urged students and faculty to "refrain from any actions or activities that may disrupt the academic atmosphere or tarnish the reputation of the institute". "TISS administration remains committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for all members of the institute..." it said.

In a statement, PSF welcomed the revocation of the ban and said it will continue its struggle for the students' community.

It called the ban an "undemocratic" attempt to restrict the fundamental right of students to free speech and expression. "The revision of the honour code is an assertion that university campuses shall continue to be spaces for open discussions and debates that will provide a platform for students to put forward their opinions without any fear," it said in a statement.

Area sabha meet: Residents flag water contamination

CHENNAI. Chennai Corporation Mayor R Priya held an area sabha meet in ward 74 at Perambur Jamalia on Wednesday, which was attended by corporation officials and representatives from all 10 area sabhas in the ward. Residents from Brislee Nagar, Jothi Nagar and others raised civic issues, including concerns about drinking water contamination.

During the sabha, the residents brought up the issue of a possible sewage contaminating the metro water supply in Andiappan Street, as the drinking water has a foul odour. An official told TNIE that the contamination might be due to ongoing CMRL works. The officials assured residents that the issue would be addressed.

They also requested the conversion of cement-concrete roads to bitumen roads, saying cement roads complicate service work for underground utilities. The mayor said that since the cement concrete roads have already been sanctioned, they cannot be changed now; however, it may be considered in future proposals. Residents requested the installation of transformers at four locations in ward 74 and the



officials said the matter would be escalated to Tangedco. Citing the presence of vacant land in Jothi Nagar and Brislee Nagar, residents requested the construction of an anganwadi. The other issues include non-functioning or missing streetlights, damaged manholes, clearing drain blockages, and paving of roads. The mayor directed the authorities concerned to take action.

Kerala: Improper waste dumping leaves Kalamassery residents worried

The municipal authorities have not taken any action, though the officials concerned were informed of the inconveniences caused by the mismanagement of waste.

KOCHI. Many areas in Kalamassery, including near Cusat and the Naval Armament Depot (NAD), have become dumping grounds despite a regular collection of food and plastic waste from households. The improper waste management has raised a fear of diseases among the local residents.

For several months, the waste dumped along the NAD Road has not been cleared, encouraging the public to throw even more waste at those points, according to local residents. The municipal authorities have not taken any action, though the officials concerned were informed of the inconveniences caused by the mismanagement of waste, they pointed out. Shabeer Ahamed, who lives in the area, said the local body is not acting against violators. "The waste has been dumped there for several months now. I wrote to Minister P Rajeev,



who is also the local MLA, about the situation and the trouble we are facing. Though he has directed the local authorities and the district administration to take the steps necessary, the officials concerned haven't taken any initiative to solve the issue," he said. Shabeer pointed out that the

waste dumped carelessly is also leading to the spread of contagious diseases. "There have been reports that the number of dengue cases and other diseases reported in the area are rapidly increasing. Poor waste management also contributes to the situation. The authorities need to act

immediately," he said.

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News box

Pak minister on Article 370 restoration: On same page with Congress alliance

World. Pakistani defence minister Khawaja Asif has said that the Shehbaz Sharif government and the Congress-National Conference alliance were on the same page on the issue of restoration of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. The remark comes in the midst of Assembly elections in J&K, the first since the erstwhile state's special status was scrapped in 2019. In an interview with Geo News, Khawaja Asif said there was a "high chance" that the Congress-National Conference alliance would win the Assembly polls and come to power in the Union Territory. "They (the alliance) have made it an election issue. Pakistan and the National Conference-Congress alliance are on the same page in Jammu and Kashmir to restore Article 370 and 35A," Asif said. While the National Conference has vowed to restore Article 370, the Congress has been completely silent about it and has not even mentioned it in its manifesto. The Congress has, however, promised its commitment towards restoring full statehood status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The revocation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two union territories has remained an emotive issue for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly those in the Valley. The restoration of Article 370 has prominently featured in the manifestos of the National Conference and Mehbooba Mufti's PDP.

India abstains from UN resolution to end Israel's occupation of Palestine

World. India abstained from voting in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Wednesday, as the 193-member body passed a resolution demanding that Israel end its unlawful presence in the occupied Palestinian territories within 12 months. The resolution received 124 votes in favour, 14 against, and 43 abstentions, news agency PTI reported. Among the nations abstaining were key players like Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Nepal, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. Those opposing the resolution included Israel and the United States, who have consistently defended Israel's policies in the region. The resolution, officially titled "Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences Arising from Israel's Policies and Practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem", calls for Israel to "bring to an end without delay its unlawful presence" and notes that Israel's continued actions constitute a "wrongful act of a continuing character" that must be addressed under international law. The international community cannot look away while international law is repeatedly violated, said the Palestinian representative to the UN in a moving speech, calling for immediate action. The resolution also disapproved what it described as Israel's "continued and total disregard" of its obligations under international law, adding that such breaches threaten regional and global peace. Israel's ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, rejected the resolution, calling it "another politically motivated move designed to undermine Israel's legitimacy." The US also expressed concerns, stating that the resolution "will not contribute to peace but instead exacerbate tensions in the region."

Social media posts falsely claim explosives found near Trump's New York rally

New York. Law enforcement officials on Long Island worked quickly on Wednesday to publicly knock down social media posts falsely reporting that explosives had been found in a car near former President Donald Trump's planned rally in New York. The false reports of an explosive began circulating hours before the Republican presidential nominee's campaign event at Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, just days after he was apparently the target of a second possible assassination attempt. Nassau County Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder said police questioned and detained a person who "may have been training a bomb detection dog," near the site of the rally and "falsely reported explosives being found." Lt. Scott Skrynecki, a spokesperson for the county police, said in follow-up messages that the person, who police have not yet identified, was a civilian and not a member of a law enforcement agency. He also said the person was not working at or affiliated with the event, which is expected to draw thousands of Trump supporters to the arena that was formerly the home of the NHL's New York Islanders.

The rally is Trump's first on Long Island, a suburban area just east of New York City, since 2017. In 2020, President Joe Biden defeated Trump by a roughly 4 per cent margin on Long Island, besting him in Nassau County by about 60,000 votes, though Trump carried neighbouring Suffolk County by more than 200 votes. Earlier on Wednesday, Skrynecki and other county officials responded swiftly to knock down the online claims, which appear to have started with a post from a reporter citing unnamed sources in the local police department. The claims were then shared widely on X, formerly Twitter, by a number of prominent accounts.

Iranian hackers sent stolen Trump campaign information to Biden's team: Report

Washington. Iranian hackers sought to interest President Joe Biden's campaign in information stolen from rival Donald Trump's campaign, sending unsolicited emails to people associated with the then-Democratic candidate in an effort to interfere in the 2024 election, the FBI and other federal agencies said Wednesday. There's no indication that any of the recipients responded, officials said, and several media organizations who have said they also were approached with stolen material did not publish it. Kamala Harris' presidential campaign called the emails from Iran "unwelcome and unacceptable malicious activity" that were received by only a few people who regarded them as spam or phishing attempts. The emails were received before the hack of the Trump campaign was publicly acknowledged, and there's no evidence the recipients of the emails knew their origin. The announcement is the latest US government effort to call out what officials say is Iran's brazen, ongoing work to interfere in the election, including a

hack-and-leak campaign that the FBI and other federal agencies linked last month to Tehran. US officials in recent months have used criminal charges, sanctions and public advisories to detail actions taken by foreign adversaries to influence the election, including an indictment targeting a covert Russian effort to spread pro-Russia content to US audiences. It's a stark turnabout from the government's response in 2016, when Obama administration officials were criticised for not being forthcoming about the Russian interference they were seeing on Trump's behalf as he ran against Democrat Hillary Clinton. In this case, the hackers sent emails in late June and early July to people who were associated with Biden's campaign before he dropped out. The emails "contained an excerpt taken from stolen, non-public material from former President Trump's campaign as text in the emails," according to a statement released by the FBI, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.



The agencies have said the Trump campaign hack and an attempted breach of the Biden-Harris campaign are part of an effort to undermine voters' faith in the election and to stoke discord. The FBI informed Trump aides within the last 48 hours that information hacked by Iran had been sent to the Biden campaign, according to a senior campaign official granted anonymity to speak because of the sensitive nature of the investigation. The Trump campaign disclosed on August 10 that it had been hacked and said Iranian actors had stolen and distributed sensitive internal documents. At least three news outlets — Politico, The

New York Times and The Washington Post — were leaked confidential material from inside the Trump campaign. So far, each has refused to reveal any details about what it received. Politico reported that it began receiving emails on July 22 from an anonymous account. The source — an AOL email account identified only as "Robert" — passed along what appeared to be a research dossier that the campaign had apparently done on the Republican vice presidential nominee, Ohio Senator JD Vance. The document was dated February 23, almost five months before Trump selected Vance as his running mate. In a statement, Harris campaign spokesperson Morgan Finkelstein said the campaign has cooperated with law enforcement since learning that people associated with Biden's team were among the recipients of the emails. "We're not aware of any material being sent directly to the campaign; a few individuals were targeted on their personal emails with what looked like a spam or phishing attempt," Finkelstein said.

Trump says God saved him, promises to bring back religion in US

World. Donald Trump, former US President and Republican candidate for the 2024 presidential race, rejoiced in the adulation of thousands of supporters on Long Island in New York, stating that the recent attempts to kill him were foiled by God.

Addressing the gathering, Trump said, "We're going to bring back religion into our country." Forecasting that he would be the first Republican candidate to win New York State in 40 years, the 78-year-old leader stated that the recent attempts to assassinate him had "hardened my resolve." The Republican presidential nominee told a crowd of 16,000 at Nassau Coliseum that "these encounters with death have not broken my will," just three days after a gunman was discovered hiding in the bushes at Trump's Florida golf course as he was about to putt. "They've given me a much greater and stronger mission, only hardening my resolve to use my time on Earth to make America great again for all Americans, to put America first," Trump stated while referring to an earlier assassination attempt at a July 13 rally in western Pennsylvania, where a bullet grazed his ear. "The reason I'm here," Trump told the roaring crowd, was because "we are going to win New York." "That's the first time in many years that a Republican can honestly say it, and we're going to do it," Trump added. Trump, standing before an enthusiastic crowd of thousands in New York, made his case for a 2024 return to the White House with bold promises and an electric atmosphere. "We have to do it. We do it, and the election nationwide is over. We will take over the White House, and we fix up our country," Trump declared, eliciting cheers from the throngs of supporters who had come from all over



the state and even nearby regions to see the Republican candidate in person. The rally, held at a stadium packed to capacity, had all the hallmarks of a Trump event: the red "Make America Great

Again" hats, blaring music, and a palpable sense of spectacle, the New York Post reported. For Trump, the stakes couldn't be higher, and he made sure to emphasise that as he spoke, often pausing to soak in the roaring approval of the crowd. "We're going to have the greatest win in history when we pull this one-off. It will be legendary," Trump contemplated, with a trademark grin that signalled confidence. Yet, the former president's tone also carried an undercurrent of urgency. Crime, inflation, and immigration — Trump's usual talking points — were front and centre in his speech.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs to stay behind bars pending trial in sex trafficking case

New York. Rap mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs will remain imprisoned pending trial on racketeering and sex trafficking charges, after a judge denied his appeal on Wednesday. Judge Andrew Carter upheld the previous day's ruling that the bail package proposed by his defence team — which included a \$50 million bond secured by his Miami home — was insufficient given his history of violence and substance abuse, and the possibility of witness tampering. "It did not go our way," Combs' lawyer Marc Agnifilo told journalists outside the federal courthouse in Manhattan following the ruling. He vowed to keep pushing for Combs' release on bail and also said he would urge the trial to move forward "as quickly as possible."

"Wherever he is, his resolve is the same. He believes he's innocent," Agnifilo said, adding that the prison conditions Combs is being held in are "inhumane." On Tuesday, the 54-year-old Combs was indicted on three criminal counts that allege he sexually abused women and coerced them into drug-fuelled sex parties using threats and violence. Along with racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking, Combs is charged with one count of transporting victims across state lines to engage in prostitution. Prosecutors say Combs was the don of a criminal enterprise that ensnared women and forced them to commit sex acts under the threat of violence, financial insecurity and reputational ruin.

Japan firm says production of devices used in Lebanon blasts discontinued in 2014

World. Japanese radio equipment maker Icom Inc stated that it cannot confirm whether the walkie-talkies reportedly involved in explosions in Lebanon were shipped by the company. The device, which requires batteries that were discontinued nearly a decade ago, has been out of production since 2014, according to Icom. The company is currently investigating the reports. "Earlier today in worldwide media, there have been reports that two-way radio devices bearing the Icom logo have exploded in Lebanon," the company said in a statement. "We are currently investigating the facts surrounding this matter. We will release updated information as it becomes available on our website," the Tokyo



Stock Exchange-listed firm added. Images of the exploded walkie-talkies showed labels marked with "ICOM" and "Made in Japan," raising concerns over the origin of the devices involved. In the second wave of explosions on Wednesday, 20 people were killed and more than 450 wounded in Hezbollah-controlled areas of Lebanon, according to local officials. A source close to Hezbollah indicated that the devices used by its members detonated in their stronghold in Beirut, while state media reported similar blasts in the southern and eastern regions of the country, news agency Reuters reported. This came a day after hundreds of pager devices used by Hezbollah detonated.

Trudeau uses 'bad actors' grounds to further cut international study permits

In its announcement on Wednesday, the Canadian government also said that it would also tighten rules for foreign worker rules in an effort to reduce the number of temporary residents in the country.

World. The Canadian government announced a further cut in the number of study permits for international students, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau saying the nation will crack down on "bad actors" if they "abuse the immigration system and take advantage of students". In its announcement on Wednesday, the government also said that it would also tighten rules for foreign workers in an effort to reduce the number of temporary residents in Canada.

In a tweet, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said his government would grant 35 per cent fewer international student permits this year, and the number would be reduced by an additional 10 per cent in 2025. "Immigration is an advantage for our economy — but when bad actors abuse the system and take advantage of students, we crack

down," he added. As per the government, Canada plans to issue 437,000 study permits in 2025, which is down 10 per cent from the 485,000 permits issued in 2024. This number will remain the same in 2026. In 2023, the nation approved 509,390, and 175,920 in the first seven months of 2024. Earlier in January, the government had announced a cap on the increase of international student numbers for the next two years, leading to a predicted 35 per cent reduction in student intake in 2024 compared to 2023.

Addressing the media, Foreign Minister Marc Miller said that "coming to Canada was a privilege, not a right." "The reality is that not everyone who wants to come to Canada will be able to, just like not everyone who wants to stay in Canada will be able to," he



added. Regarding work permits for foreign workers, the Foreign Minister said, "We are taking action to strengthen our temporary residence programs and roll out a more comprehensive immigration plan to meet the demands of today's changing landscape." The government also plans to implement additional restrictions on work permits for spouses of some international students and foreign workers, as well as heighten checks before issuing travel visas in a bid to

curb an increase in fraudulent or rejected asylum claims.

The nation had already said earlier that it would reduce the number of temporary residents to 5 per cent of the population, down from 6.8 per cent in April. Wednesday's announcement came two days after the Trudeau-led Liberal Party lost a key seat in a bypoll in Quebec province and a week before Trudeau is set to face a confidence vote after the opposition Conservatives said it would not back an attempt to defeat his minority government. In recent months, the party has witnessed a drop in public opinion polls as Trudeau is under immense pressure over unchecked immigration, which is straining the nation's housing and social services. Reduction in the number of temporary residents.

Harvey Weinstein pleads not guilty to fresh sex crime charge

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said the new indictment of Weinstein is for the sexual assault of a woman in a Manhattan hotel between April 29, 2006 and May 6, 2006.

New York. Disgraced US movie producer Harvey Weinstein pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to a new sex crime charge in New York. Weinstein, 72, who had emergency heart surgery just over a week ago, appeared in a Manhattan courtroom in a wheelchair to enter his plea to a single charge of committing a criminal sexual act. The once-powerful movie mogul was unshaven and appeared pale and visibly

frail during his brief court appearance. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said the new indictment of Weinstein is for the sexual assault of a woman in a Manhattan hotel between April 29, 2006 and May 6, 2006. "Thanks to this survivor who bravely came forward, Harvey Weinstein now stands indicted for an additional alleged violent sexual assault," Bragg said in a statement. Weinstein is serving a 16-year prison sentence after being convicted on rape charges in California. He was also convicted in New York in 2020 of the rape and sexual assault of an actress and of forcibly performing oral sex on a production assistant. He was sentenced to 23 years in prison in that case. A New York appeals



court, however, overturned that conviction in April and Weinstein is now awaiting a retrial on those charges. Judge Curtis Farber scheduled a next court hearing for Weinstein for October 2. The one-time Hollywood heavyweight has suffered from a raft of health issues while in prison and has

spent time in a secure hospital unit. On September 9, Weinstein was rushed to Bellevue Hospital from New York's Rikers Island prison for emergency heart surgery. Allegations against Weinstein helped launch the #MeToo movement in 2017, a watershed moment for women fighting sexual misconduct. More than 80 women accused him of harassment, sexual assault or rape, including prominent actors Angelina Jolie, Gwyneth Paltrow and Ashley Judd. Weinstein claimed any sexual relations in question were consensual. Weinstein and his brother Bob co-founded Miramax Films. Their hits included 1998's "Shakespeare in Love," for which Weinstein shared a best picture Oscar.

News box

GMB searches for land near Gandhinagar for maritime varsity

Ahmedabad. The Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) is actively searching for a suitable land parcel in the vicinity of Gandhinagar and GIFT City to set up a permanent campus for the Gujarat Maritime University (GMU), according to sources. Currently, GMU operates from a temporary campus at the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) in Gandhinagar. The new campus is expected to span at least 20 acres, with a total investment of about Rs 50 crore.

A senior GMB official said, "We established GMU in 2019 and are offering various courses in maritime law, international trade law, and also MBA apart from other courses. Earlier, we planned to set up the campus within the Gujarat International Finance Tech (GIFT) City, but it is not possible to get the desired land there. So, we have started searching for a suitable land parcel of at least 20 acres near GIFT City and Gandhinagar." He said that the land was likely to be finalized in the next few months.

The GMB aims to position GMU as a premier global institution for maritime education.

A GMB official added, "The aim is to serve the global maritime community by producing educated and well-trained professionals in the maritime domain. GMU provides education focused on areas across the value chain of the maritime industry. The university will provide new career opportunities to the youth of Gujarat and other states as well."

"The Indian economy is growing rapidly, and our exports are set to increase with a growing manufacturing base, leading to a high demand for professionals in the maritime sector. Gujarat handles more than 30% of India's cargo, and therefore, we believe the role of GMU will be important," the official added.

Syro Malabar Church: Attempt to ordain new priests flouts papal order

KOCHI. The Samyuktha Sabha Samrakshana Samithi has alleged that a move is happening within the Syro Malabar Church to ordain eight deacons as priests in the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese in violation of the instructions issued by the Pope.

The samithi leaders alleged that discussions to this extent were held on Monday at the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archbishop's House. "It has come to light that discussions were held between those opposing the Uniform Holy Mass and the Apostolic Administrator Mar Bosco Puthur along with Mar Joseph Pamplani at the Archbishop's House.

It is understood that the priests opposed to the Uniform Mass wanted the repeal of the order which said that only those deacons who give a written undertaking to offer only the Synod-approved Mass can be conferred the priesthood," said the samithi representatives. "The bishops told us that a consensus was arrived in which the newly ordained priests can offer Mass facing the people if circumstances are not favourable in the parish they are sent to with the permission of the head of the Archdiocese. This discussion is a violation of the Papal directives and ecclesiastical law," they alleged.

55-year-old hostel warden booked for sexual assault on girls in Andhra's Eluru

VIJAYAWADA. The police have registered a case under the Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act against a 55-year-old man accused of allegedly sexually assaulting students at the Swami Dayananda Saraswati Hostel in Eluru district on Wednesday.

The minor victims reported the abuse to Eluru Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) K Sravan Kumar, who immediately registered the case and launched a manhunt for the accused and his accomplices.

According to the DSP, the accused, B Sasi Kumar, an employee of the BC Welfare Department and hostel warden at Yerraguntapalli village in Chinthalapudi mandal, took over the hostel after the previous operator ceased operations due to financial losses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the investigation, Sasi Kumar had proposed teaching Photoshop and other courses. While some students accepted, others declined due to prior concerns about sexual advances. The victims also reported that Sasi Kumar took a minor girl to his home in Bapatla and returned her after 48 hours.

The students and their parents, distressed by the incident, lodged a complaint with the police. The victims also alleged that the accused used to beam them and committed sexual assault by tying hands and legs.

"Sasi Kumar used to act as a chief warden of the hostel along with his second wife and other women. The accused also owned a photo studio in the town. In the guise of taking photos, he used to take the girls aged above 16 and committed heinous crime in the studio, promising them jobs. We are investigating the case thoroughly," added DSP Sravan Kumar.

Safe pavements boost public transport use in Bengaluru

Lack of footpaths, obstacle paths discourage people from walking, encourage use of pvt vehicles; good footpaths see encroachments

BENGALURU. The call for people to move to public transport in Bengaluru will remain futile as long as footpaths are not in place. Safe and well-designed footpaths are the essential precursors to encouraging people to leave their private vehicles behind. But that is far from happening in Namma Bengaluru.

Except for a few places in the city, most of Bengaluru has either no footpaths or very poorly laid ones, which discourage people from using them. They prefer their own transport or walking on roads. And where there are proper footpaths, most are illegally encroached.

As per the Indian Road Congress (IRC) 103-2012, there are standard rules for footpath measurements. It lays down that for commercial areas, the minimum clear width of the footpath should be 2.5 metres, and if it is a high-intensity commercial area, the minimum width shall be 4 metres. If there is a shop frontage, the minimum width shall be 3.5-4.5 metres. Chetan Sodaye, programme manager, Integrated Transport and Road Safety, World Resource Institute (WRI) India, says, "In any given case, minimum width clear of obstacles should be 1.8m.



But it means that if there are trees or any utilities on the footpath, the width shall increase by 1.8m beyond the width of the obstacles. "Stressing on the crucial role of footpaths in urban mobility, Sodaye says, "Urban mobility is measured on how many people can move/travel in a given width in an hour in one direction. A Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) study on passenger travel capacity says if in a 3.5m width space we have mixed traffic (two-wheelers, autos, buses, cars, trucks etc) versus 3.5m of the footpath where people walk, in an hour

the mixed traffic can only move 1,500 to 2,000 people, whereas a clear footpath can allow mobility of 15,000 people, which is at least 5-7 times more."

If the footpath's width, quality, continuous network and maintenance are good, then cases have shown that people shift to walking, at least for shorter distances between 500 metres to 3km, he says. "On Church Street in Bengaluru, DP Road of Aundh in Pune, Pundy Bazaar in Chennai and many such places, footfalls have increased after footpaths were widened and well-maintained,"

Sodaye says. Alongside good quality footpaths laid with the right durable materials, a separate tender should be in place every two to five years based on the type of footpath and usage, which should include various types of maintenance — cleaning, repair, waste management, re-painting, re-surfacing, drainage system cleaning, desilting, etc. points out Sodaye, adding that without this, even the best designed and constructed infrastructure will fail to provide good service.

48-year-old found dead in car at Thiruvananthapuram's Kulathoor

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The body of a man was found under the backseat of a car parked near a service road near Kulathoor national highway on Wednesday. The deceased has been identified as Joseph Peter (48), a resident of Poundkadavu in Veli.

His identity was confirmed by his brother, who was called to the scene after locals alerted the police about a foul smell emanating from the vehicle in the morning. Thumba police

have initiated an investigation led by Kazhakoottam SP.

According to the Thumba police, preliminary investigations indicate that Joseph died at least three days ago. Locals reported last seeing him on Thiruvonam day (Sunday). Police traced the car's owner using the vehicle registration.

When they attempted to reach Joseph Peter by phone, they found the device switched off. Police then reached out to

Joseph Peter's brother, who arrived at the scene and identified the body. As per initial reports, Joseph Peter had a medical history of epilepsy. "We are awaiting the postmortem report and forensic test results. The investigation is ongoing," said Thumba police. Joseph is survived by wife, son and daughter. His wife and son are currently living abroad while his daughter lives with her husband.

Central forensic team in Rayagada for murder investigation

TUMAKURU. In a heart-wrenching incident, two brothers carried their deceased father's body on a motorcycle after hospital authorities denied them an ambulance, in YN Hosakote town of Pavagada taluk on Wednesday afternoon.

The brothers, Chandranna and Gopalappa, put the body between the rider and pillion and rode to the village of Dalavayihalli, about 3-4km from the hospital.

They had brought their ailing father, Gudugulla Honnurappa (80) to hospital by ambulance, but doctors at the community health centre had declared him dead. They had sought ambulance service to ferry the body

back to their village, but the authorities refused. Even after Pavagada Congress MLA HV Venkatesh intervened, the issue was not settled, sources said.

After an altercation, they decided to carry the body on their motorcycle. "Administrative Medical Officer Lokesh Reddy had tried to arrange for another ambulance from Pavagada, but the brothers had left the place with their father's body."

I will be visiting the spot to verify the incident", district health officer Dr B N Manjunath. "Since the local people feel scared to opt for the hospital's ambulance if a dead body is carried in it, the AMO has refused to offer the service", he said.

Kerala govt launches new survey to rate restrooms to ensure hygiene

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. In a significant move to address the growing concerns and complaints regarding the poor upkeep of public restrooms, the state government has launched a comprehensive survey and geospatial mapping of such facilities across the state.

The Suchitwa Mission has teamed up with WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene Institute) — a registered non-profit organisation working in the sector — to assess the status of public toilets in urban areas across the state in terms of infrastructure, service delivery, operation and maintenance, aesthetics and hygiene, and financial sustainability. The project aims to nurture a positive public toilet culture in the state.

The initiative aims at ensuring the availability of one 3-star toilet facility every five kilometres in urban areas and one 3-star toilet facility every 10km along major transport corridors in the state. A



Suchitwa Mission official told that the survey is progressing fast and has already been completed in seven districts. To assess the public toilets, WASH has developed an extensive survey tool.

The survey, in the initial phase, will cover around 1,200 public restrooms in urban areas, the official said. "Public toilets should be accessible, especially to women and children.

Poor location, inappropriate design and inadequate maintenance are the main constraints. Also, the toilets are not spread

across, and in many cities, the facilities are concentrated in some locations while restrooms are absent in many other locations.

We launched take-a-break facilities, high-quality toilets across the state but many of them have failed to serve its purpose because of various reasons. Through this initiative, we plan to improve the standard of the existing toilets," the official said.

The survey is expected to help officials come up with a comprehensive strategy to improve public toilet facilities, sanitation, operation and maintenance, promote public transit use and support tourism.

"A survey tool is being used to rate public restrooms on a scale of 1 to 5, and we have come across toilets with zero ratings. There are well-maintained ones too.

This survey will help local bodies plan such projects in such a way that public restrooms are more accessible and useful," the official added.

Kerala man attacks two-month-old puppy, leaves it with critical injuries



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. In the latest incident of rising animal cruelty in the state capital, a two-month-old puppy was brutally attacked by a person in Vattiyoorkavu. The man attacked the puppy sleeping next to its mother with a stick, leaving the animal with critical injuries, including a fractured jaw, and broken thigh and hip bones.

On Wednesday, the Vattiyoorkavu police registered a case against the man under Section 325 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and under Section 11 (1)(a) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. The incident happened around 8.45pm on Monday on the Mannarathala Balakrishnan Road in the residential area of Valiyavilla in Vattiyoorkavu. Subsequently, one of his neighbours and the People For Animals (PFA), an NGO, lodged complaints at the Vattiyoorkavu police station.

"My mother witnessed the entire incident. The man attacked the puppy without any provocation. When I came out, I saw the dog in pain. It was crying and unable to close its mouth because of the broken jaw," said Aravindan S S, who filed the complaint. Immediately after the incident, the dog was taken to a veterinarian. "The attack was brutal and the injury is severe, and the dog needs a surgery. But given its poor condition, the doctor has ordered vaccination. They will be able to perform the surgery only after treating the infection," Aravindan said.

Due to its broken jaw, the puppy is unable to eat. "The dog is unable to eat and we are trying to feed liquid food to keep it alive and healthy," he said.

According to PFA, atrocities against animals are increasing in the state capital. The secretary of PFA Thiruvananthapuram, Latha Indira, said an incident of animal cruelty is being reported in the capital every other day. "Seventy-five per cent of the cruelty cases involve stray dogs. Also, dog feeders are being harassed. Often, these issues escalate, necessitating police intervention," Latha said.

A lack of awareness among the police personnel about animal rights and the existing laws that offer protection to animals is a major challenge, she pointed out. "The police often try to settle such cases through compromise and are hesitant to proceed with the case. This is leading to recurring violence against stray dogs and other hapless animals. We are forced to file our complaints along with the relevant legal sections as the police are unaware of it," Latha said.

Tigers paint Thrissur streets yellow, orange and black

THRISSUR. Seven teams, 359 artists sporting shades of yellow, orange, black and white, hundreds of spectators... The cultural capital of the state was captivated by the roaring 'tigers' rambling to the beats of 'Pulikottu' on Wednesday as the Onam celebrations of Thrissur came to a close with the traditional Pulikkali art form.

Famous for its unique pattern resembling the striped and spotted coats of tigers and leopards painted on the face and torso of artists, Pulikkali has received immense appreciation across the world for its celebration of colours and the art of body painting. In an era where certain standards are considered as beauty, Pulikkali transcended all such notions and celebrates the beauty of curves and big bellies. On Wednesday, the Pulikkali was officially flagged off by Mayor M K Varghese as Patturaickal Desam



Pulikkali team entered Swaraj Round from Shoranur Road through Naikkanal Junction.

Other teams that participated included Viyyur Desam Pulikkali Sangham, Yuvajanasangham Viyyur, Sitaram Mill Desam, Sankaramkulangara Desam, Chakkamukku Desam, and Kanattukara Desam. As the scorching sun subsided in the evening, the artists painted as tigers started dancing to the Pulikkottu, taking a round of Thekkinkadu Maidan.

"It is believed that King Sakthan Thampuran of Cochin introduced Pulikkali in its present form. For people in Thrissur, it is a celebration of coming together as the organisers are all residents of the localities surrounding Thrissur. Even those who left the city for jobs or after marriage come back for Onam to witness Pulikkali and enjoy its flavours and fervour with friends and families here. The fest also gives a boost to the economy of the city as hundreds of people gather to witness the art form," said A K Suresh, of Sitaram Mill Desam team. Last year, only four teams participated in Pulikkali as post-Covid financial issues haunted the groups. However, with Thrissur Corporation hiking the financial assistance for each registered team, the number of participants increased this year.

When separation of powers takes a hit

THE separation of powers among the executive, judicial and legislative branches of the government is indispensable to ensuring checks and balances, which in turn are essential for democratic governance. This is based on a fundamental principle of democracy — the state is accountable to the people and not the other way around. The people are accountable to the law of the land, administered according to the provisions and processes laid out by the Constitution. In India, the Constitution is not a gift of the state to the people. It is “We the people”, as stated in the Preamble, who have given themselves a Constitution whose provisions bind the state. In addition to the separation of powers among the three branches, in a federal state like India, there are also checks and balances for the Centre and the states. The Constitution spells out the jurisdiction of the Centre and the states with respect to various domains. The states prevent overreach in the exercise of power by the Centre and vice versa. The objective is to achieve a diffusion of power of the state in a manner which safeguards the exercise of the fundamental and inalienable rights of citizens without impairing efficient governance. The role of independent and empowered institutions, including those that draw authority from the Constitution, such as the Election Commission, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India or the Union Public Service Commission, is another important safeguard against the arbitrary exercise of power by the state. The political history of India since the adoption of the Constitution on January 26, 1950, has been a saga of inspiring wins for democracy, but also several setbacks. The adoption of the principle of the Basic Structure of the Constitution is an important safeguard against the denial of fundamental rights of citizens by a predatory state. According to this principle, enshrined in the Kesavananda Bharati judgment (April 24, 1973) of the Supreme Court, there are certain fundamental features of the Constitution, such as its supremacy, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, which cannot be amended or abrogated by Parliament through a constitutional amendment. This principle has been attacked in recent years, but it must be upheld. Without this principle, it is conceivable that relying on a brute majority, a government could eviscerate the very foundations of Indian democracy.

There are threats to independent institutions which must be resisted. In a brilliant address to the Asiatic Society of Mumbai in December last year, eminent jurist Rohinton Fali Nariman drew attention to the danger in the passage of a law, which laid down the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India. According to a Bill passed in December 2023, the CEC would be appointed by a committee comprising the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet minister nominated by the PM and the Leader of the Opposition (LoP). As Nariman pointed out, this provision means, in effect, that the CEC is appointed by the PM himself since the LoP will always be outvoted two to one. This would severely compromise the independence and neutrality of the CEC and undermine the credibility of the election process. The Bill has been challenged in court. The recent conduct of several Centrally appointed governors has also undermined Centre-state relations, weakened the federal structure and encouraged political horse trading and floor-crossing. Governors have sat on Bills passed by state legislators, openly obstructed the normal functioning of state governments and indulged in blatantly partisan behaviour. This not only undermines democratically elected governments but erodes the very fabric of federalism, without which a highly diverse country cannot be managed. Justice Nariman also touched upon this unhealthy development in his address. While there is the letter of the law which must be followed, there are also the more intangible dictates of constitutional morality and propriety.

Time ripe for the govt to fulfil social security promises

Rising Islamophobia, legal prohibitions and a deepening sense of insecurity have led many Muslims to seek refuge in ghettos.



Following the setback it received in the parliamentary elections, the BJP has set out to deliver in the social services sector to win back popular support. The ruling party is seeking to make good on some of the promises it had made during the election campaign.

What we have to see is if the government has the financial resources and skills to fulfil these promises. Also, perhaps more importantly, what is its record in actually delivering on similar promises it made earlier?

One promise is to make health insurance available to every citizen above 70, with few ifs and buts. This is vital, as the population is getting older. The other is to provide social security to gig workers, who currently have none. Their number is also likely to rise as online shopping increases with the spread of information technology.

The Union Cabinet has just expanded the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, touted as the world's largest public health insurance scheme, to make it applicable to all 70-plus people, irrespective of their income. It will have a cover of Rs 5 lakh per year and benefit around four crore citizens. This scheme will be available even to those who have private insurance cover. The social security plan for gig workers will cover 77 lakh people. The premium for the cover will be paid for by the aggregators who use the gig workers' services at 1-2 per cent of revenue. This will help create a social security fund, which will cover workers' health insurance and other benefits outlined in the Code on

Social Security that was passed by Parliament in 2020. It has not been implemented yet as the rules are still being finalised. Why does the government feel confident that it has the resources to go through with these large social programmes? The economy is doing well, remaining the fastest-growing among all the large economies. In the last financial year, it clocked a record 8 per cent growth and remains highly robust in the current year with prospects of over 6 per cent growth. Helping it along is the stock market that ended on a high this mid-month.

There is also no chance of overheating, with inflation remaining within the bounden lines, courtesy in part the monsoon having arrived on time. Hence, the official interest rate is set to remain steady. Under these circumstances, the government has enough financial resources to pay for the outgo of the new project.

The health premium for the elderly will cost the Centre Rs 3,437 crore for the latter half of the current financial year and the entire second year. State governments will chip in with 40 per cent of the cost. The social cover for gig workers will, of course, be paid for by the businesses running the show, interestingly called aggregators.

But much more relevant is how other such programmes have been delivering in the past. Let's make a test case of how the rural employment guarantee programme under MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) has been faring. An active monsoon and a robust kharif season have led to an

anaemic demand for these low-paid jobs as better-paid farm jobs have become available. Throughout the 2023-24 financial year, the demand for these low-paid jobs kept reducing. Hence, the agriculture sector would appear to be doing fine.

However, independent experts on the programme have a different understanding. They say that there is poor offtake for the low-paid jobs, not because better-paid jobs are available, but because the demand is kept low artificially because of the fund shortage for the programme. When wages are delayed or do not reach beneficiaries on time, they lose interest in the programme. Another allegation, which is quite serious, is that the actual demand is not being met at the panchayat level to keep budgetary outgo within limits.

Bureaucratic systems add to the problem. Technological interventions like Aadhaar card-based attendance systems and GPS tracking of work sites have discouraged workers from seeking employment under this scheme. So, how do we go from here? How can we ensure that the elderly who seek medical service and the young gig workers get benefits of some of these promises? Besides, what we have seen earlier is that financial resources are not the issue.

A good way to begin is to find out how and why health insurance services are denied and patients sometimes have to go from one hospital to another to find out which one would be willing to admit them. The common complaint on the part of hospitals is that it takes them months to get reimbursements for services delivered under the scheme.

Experts across the country also need to devise a new system that can deliver a modicum of social security to gig workers, for whom it

One way can be to look at how the UK is trying to address the ills of the National Health Service (NHS), considered the grandfather among such national services across the world. The UK Prime Minister has said that the NHS is in a critical condition and warned there will be no fresh funds without reform. Three actions that have been identified are: transition to digital functioning; moving more care from hospitals to communities; and focusing on prevention before people actually need hospitalisation. In India, too, a new health insurance system has been introduced by Narayana Health Hospitals that needs to be scrutinised by both the government and private entities. Its key features are: the insurance policy is provided by a particular hospital; the focus is on preventive care and treatment; and this works out to cheaper costs and premiums. The crux of the matter is that at the first sign of trouble, you go to the hospital and get treatment. It will benefit both the individual and the insurance firms.

Phasing out paddy

Crop diversification vital for Punjab

PUNJAB's draft Agriculture Policy has laudably recommended a ban on all long-duration paddy varieties and paddy cultivation in 15 dark blocks, where the groundwater extraction rate is well above the recharge rate. Water-guzzling paddy has become a millstone around the state's neck in recent decades. Its cultivation was imposed on Punjab at a time when the country was facing food insecurity in the 1960s. The state's gritty farmers rose to the occasion, ushering in the Green Revolution, and the food-deficient nation became food-surplus. However, this led to far-reaching repercussions — agricultural as well as environmental.

Though rice is not a staple food in Punjab, cultivators have stuck to paddy farming because of an assured procurement system. What's alarming is the enormous damage caused to the water table. According to doomsday predictions, Punjab — the fabled 'land of the five rivers' — may turn into a desert in two decades. Moreover, the rampant burning of paddy stubble aggravates air pollution in many parts of the northern



region in October-November every year. Successive governments in Punjab have tried measures such as encouraging short-duration paddy varieties and

prohibiting transplantation before the notified date, but these have only been partially successful. Unfortunately, crop diversification has been promoted in a half-hearted manner. Motivating farmers to shun paddy has to go hand in hand with encouraging them to go for alternatives that consume far less water.

In November last year, the Supreme Court had asked the Centre to seriously consider the Punjab Government's suggestion to phase out paddy cultivation and incentivise farmers to switch over to crops such as millets by offering them the minimum support price (MSP). However, the MSP regime remains confined largely to wheat and paddy. This glaring anomaly has to be removed in order to arrest Punjab's desertification. Considering the state's immense contribution to the Central foodgrain pool, the Union Government must help it turn the tide before it's too late.

Western pressure no deterrent to India-Russia ties

Need to move towards a sane society reasonably free from the virus of sexual violence

AUSTRIAN Chancellor Klemens von Metternich said two centuries ago: “When France sneezes, the rest of Europe catches a cold.” The prolonged Russia-Ukraine conflict has made the whole of Europe catch a cold. Does the West now expect even faraway neutral countries like India and other non-partisan, non-Western nations to follow suit? Else, why should the democracy-championing West betray an imperialistic impulse to forcibly draw sovereign nations into Europe's conflict? Why do these countries need to toe the line and pay obeisance to the West? The message was loud and clear in a recent Financial Times report claiming that Russia had built a covert trade channel with India. The report said: “Russia has been secretly acquiring sensitive goods in India and explored building facilities in the country to secure components for its war effort.” Elaborating on the modus operandi, the story obviously tried to show India's “wrongdoing”, thereby implying that it was damaging the ‘just cause’ of Western support to Ukraine against Russia. It was obvious that India was expected to mend its ways and do what the West wanted it to do.

The report, which implied that India and Russia had formed an ‘unholy nexus’, looked like an open threat with dire consequences for New Delhi. India is being painted as a villain for doing business with Moscow at a time when, in the eyes of the West, Russia is a pariah state. Hence, India is expected to choose between the US-led West and Russia. It is “my way or the highway”. And the West wants India to discard Moscow. This is a bizarre and childish mindset, especially if one recalls the statement made by US Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo in July,

when he wrote to three of India's top business organisations, warning them that “any foreign financial institution that does business with Russia's military industrial base risks being sanctioned itself.” Perhaps the White House fails to see the irreparable damage being inflicted on America's global interests and the implacable hatred and hostility being generated towards Washington. This reckless business of sanctions will not lead US very far. It is instantly turning even a traditional friend into a potential foe. It smacks of unacceptable duplicity, hateful hypocrisy and inherent insincerity of the US of yore; the post-World War II Washington of Bretton Woods and the Marshall Plan — the mastermind and financier for the reconstruction of Europe. How would US arms company General Dynamics (the original maker of F-16 fighter aircraft from the 1970s) and the supplier of Patton tanks have reacted if they had got an ‘open threat’ from India with regard to defence contractors doing business with military dictators of Pakistan? One wonders how the US or Europe could not be aware that over the past seven decades, the Moscow-Delhi defence partnership has flourished in the best and worst of times. Logically, therefore, if India keeps buying defence equipment from Russia, what stops Moscow from purchasing military hardware from Delhi? Is India party to the Russia-Ukraine conflict? Is Delhi instigating and playing one against another? Can India's bona fide bilateral economic, commercial and military transactions with a friendly Russia be scuttled by the US, which is also a friend of Delhi?

The Joe Biden administration must not forget the



catastrophic damage done by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger to the India-US ties in the 1970s and beyond. Let the sordid past remain buried in the annals of history. Do not reopen it. Mutual trust and respect are a must. It took several years to heal the wounds of humiliation — the American duo had used abusive language while referring to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi — and revive robust relations between two great democracies.

True, the ongoing conflict in Europe is a matter of grave concern for the world. But the primary responsibility to stop the bloodshed lies with the nations that are members of NATO and/or EU, and not with distant neutral nations. It again boils down to the fundamental folly being repeated by the West. Sanctions are proving to be the prime cause for the decimation of a globalised economy and the interlinked chain of economics assiduously built

over five decades through the ‘free trade’ theory.

The US should remember that globalisation and sanctions are contradictory and mutually self-defeating. The former is a boon, the latter a bane. It will be most damaging for the globalised dollar and the universally accepted Belgium-based bank transaction system SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication). Yet, the US treasury “routinely orders banks to freeze wire transfers that look suspicious or in breach of sanctions,” resulting in Russian President Vladimir Putin's prescient 2018 statement: “We are not aiming to ditch the dollar. The dollar is ditching us.” Thus arises the need to skirt the greenback. Either way, time will reveal the repercussions of the story that could be anything but positive for ‘the dollar that once was’. In the long term, the US is fairly and squarely creating a self-goal scenario.

Today, SWIFT handles 40 per cent of its payments in USD. Yet, it has to follow the dictates of America, thereby disrupting its business. The “business of the US threat” to India is also a bad omen. New Delhi is a friend of Washington. And Russia does not object to India's bonhomie with the US. Did Moscow express displeasure when India opted for Boeing, Lockheed or the Raytheon weapon system? Why, then, does the US employ archaic gunboat diplomacy of threats, sanctions and boycott of allies? Is America going against its own interests? Is the arm-twisting era of Kissinger back to hunt and haunt India?

Standing desks may help reduce weight in kids



Struggling to shed those extra kilos in your kids? Standing desks in schools may prove beneficial as they cut down on sedentary time in classrooms as well as help reduce body mass index (BMI) -- a key indicator of obesity -- by an average of 5.24 percentile points, new research has found. The findings showed that the students who had the stand-biased desks for two years averaged a three per cent drop in BMI, while those in traditional desks showed the two per cent increase typically associated with getting older. However, even those students who spent just one year in classrooms with stand-biased desks had lower mean BMIs than those who had traditional seated classrooms in their third and fourth grade years.



In addition, there weren't major differences between boys and girls, or between students of different races, suggesting that this intervention works across demographic groups. "These types of standing desks encourage the students to move instead of being forced to sit in poorly fitting, hard plastic chairs for six or seven hours of their day," said

Mark Benden, Associate Professor at the Texas A&M School of Public Health, US.

Moreover, these standing desks might also help students who aren't overweight maintain their BMI, while at the same time help those who are overweight or obese get to a healthier weight, said the paper published in the American Journal of Public Health.

"Research has shown that standing desks are positive for the teachers in terms of classroom management and student engagement, as well as positive for the children for their health, cognitive functioning and academic achievement," Benden added.

Previous studies have also shown that children who stand burn 15 per cent more calories, on average, than those who sit in class.

For the study, the team followed 193 students from three elementary schools in US, from their third grade to the end of fourth grade.

At each school, four classrooms were outfitted with stand-biased desks (which allow students to sit on a stool or stand at will), and four classrooms in each school acted as a control and utilised standard classroom desks.

Are you fit to work?

According to psychologist Daniel Goleman, "Emotional intelligence matters twice as much as technical and analytical skill combined for star performance... And the higher people move up in the company, the more crucial emotional intelligence becomes." Going back in time, there were jobs for everyone. However, since then the rules have changed drastically, giving no choice to employees to choose their own faith. Moreover, they have accustomed to shorter deadlines, long working hours with no promises of job security.

Recent rise in deadly health threats are mostly linked to hectic work schedule. Several organisations in India are taking steps towards better health for their employees, some have allied with wellness companies to monitor employees' health.

According to Ravi Krishnan, CEO & Co-founder, Stepathlon, "One of the biggest challenges we face is changing the mindset about fitness and embedding the gravity of the ill-effects of a sedentary lifestyle. Historically, in India, companies and employees have focused on illness, not on wellness. The rest of the developed world realised, more than two decades ago, that preventative programs benefit both individual and company from both a health and productivity perspective."

The companies should also take special interest in their employees and gain their trust by offering them options to work from home or reduce their hours of work. Recently, Cognizant Technology Solutions has asked its employees in India to work from home. Too add on "Developed countries realize this and lay a lot of emphasis on productivity and efficiency. Countries like Sweden have introduced 5-6 hour work days keeping in mind that employees are most productive in that time frame. Indian organizations must initiate employee wellness programs that enable them to live better personal and professional lives", remarks Ravi Krishnan.

However, some employees need to cut down on certain bad habits that can alter their life. For instance, cigarette breaks at work or going for drinks post work. These habits will only pile up more health issues while one is burdened with work. Time that's gone will never come back.

There are several ways to pursue healthy lifestyle. Nonetheless, it's crucial to segregate these issues into mental and physical categories. Usually, health deteriorates when one stops listening to body needs. It could be a simple thing like drinking water at regular intervals or stretching at your desk while working on computer. However, one of the most common health issues at work is stress. Stress alone can magnify issues that would lead to bigger risks. It is difficult to diagnose problems at the beginning, but it's not impossible—few good habits can do the trick!

How does one inculcate good habits? It's simple, one has to understand the knowledge, skill and desire to create a habit. For instance, an obese who wants to lose weight because it is affecting his health—is the

Fit for Work launches



knowledge. To understand what skills are required to lose weight, he

has to find out different ways that will help him achieve the goal. At last, he requires motivation to persevere with his plan to lose weight. Nonetheless, according to psychotherapist Alfred Adler, "The hardest thing for human beings to do is to know themselves and to change themselves."

In some countries, like India, employees are usually over loaded with work without sufficient breaks, which can lead to stress. And stress increases the level of hormones—the rest is history when it comes to making bad choices at work in regards to health. However, it takes two hands to clap, which means organisations should help employees to work in a stress free environment. Companies can offer recreational activities to their employees—it could be a simplest thing like a small library or provide healthy food in the canteen.

"The World Economic Forum listed health as one of the top 10 global concerns last year. India's diabetes rate has gone up by 123% in the last 25 years. We are sitting on a ticking time bomb, with an alarming 70% of our urban population in the obese or overweight bracket. An ASSOCHAM survey shows that nearly 42.5% employees in the private sector suffer from general anxiety disorders. This highlights a burning need to address employee health and wellbeing across all companies and industries", adds Ravi Krishnan.

As an employee, it's important for him to be self-aware of his surroundings to choose what suits him in long run, rather than become part of a never-ending rat race. As rightly put by psychotherapist Alfred Adler, "The power-hungry individual follows a path to his own destruction." Nonetheless, all one has to do is break the bad habits, and follow a better lifestyle that will lead to his well being.

Wearable activity trackers may not boost

Weight loss



One week of Panchakarma programme -- an Ayurvedic-based well being programme that features a vegetarian diet, meditation, yoga and massages -- can lead to measurable decreases in a set of blood-based metabolites associated with inflammation, cholesterol regulation and cardiovascular disease risk, the results of a clinical trial have shown.

"It appears that a one-week Panchakarma programme can significantly alter the metabolic profile of the person undergoing it," said senior author Deepak Chopra, Professor at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine and a noted

proponent of integrative medicine.

The findings, published in the journal Scientific Reports, represent an attempt to use metabolic biomarkers to assess the reported health benefits of integrative medicine and holistic practices.

"As part of our strategy to create a framework for whole systems biology research, our next step will be to correlate these changes with both gene expression and psychological health," Chopra said.

The research team from the University of California San Diego School of Medicine noted that alternative and integrative medicine practices, such as meditation and Ayurveda, are extremely popular, but their effects on the human microbiome, genome

and physiology are not fully understood.

"Our programme of research is dedicated to addressing these gaps in the literature," first author Christine Tara Peterson said.

"Panchakarma refers to a detoxification and rejuvenation protocol involving massage, herbal therapy and other procedures to help strengthen and rejuvenate the body," Peterson pointed out.

The study involved 119 healthy male and female participants between 30 and 80 years of age who stayed at the Chopra Center for Wellbeing in Carlsbad, California.

Slightly more than half were assigned to the Panchakarma intervention and the remainder to a control group.

Blood plasma analyses, using liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry, were taken before and after the six-day testing period.

The researchers found that in the Panchakarma group there was a measurable decrease in 12 specific cell-membrane chemicals (phosphatidylcholines) correlating with serum cholesterol and inversely related to Type-2 diabetes risk.

"These phospholipids exert broad effects on pathways related to inflammation and cholesterol metabolism," Peterson explained.

"Plasma and serum levels of the metabolites of phosphatidylcholine are highly predictive of cardiovascular disease risk," Peterson noted.



4 stretches you must do every morning

Now finally, you have a legit reason to stay in bed a tad bit longer. And no, you won't be branded lazy for it! Experts say that stretching your body gently post waking up, helps deal with the sluggish early-morning feeling, and also give relief to your aching and tight muscles. Do the following stretching exercises, before you kick-start your day.

Sit in Padmasan or with your legs crossed in the lotus position. As you stretch out your hands in front of you, slowly link and interlace fingers. Your palm should be facing outwards. Stretch your arms out as far and then slowly extend your arms up above your head. Keep your fingers interlaced all the time as you stretch. Then, slowly (from your waist) bend towards your right as far as you can, come back straight up and then bend towards your left.

Lie down on your back. Now, raise your leg and bring one knee towards your stomach and hold it with your opposite hand. Next, gently twist your spine as you pull your knee towards the floor across your body. You don't need to touch the floor with your knee. The key is to keep both your shoulders on the floor as you stretch and twist your spine. Once back to the starting position, you can do the opposite side.

Sit with your legs crossed and place both hands behind you with palms flat on the floor and fingers pointing outwards. Shift your weight to your hands as you slowly let your head fall back. Apply pressure on your palms as you lift off your body and butt off the floor, and you slowly bring

your chest and hips towards the ceiling. Pause for a few seconds, go back to the starting position and repeat.

Stand straight and inhale as you reach your arms high up over your head. Stretch your arms up as you gradually stand on your toes. Feel your entire body stretching. Exhale and return to the standing position. Now slowly bend forward and touch your toes. Feel every bone in your spine bend one after the other slowly. Avoid bending your knees. You can feel your entire torso stretch, beginning from your neck, to upper back, middle back, lower back, hamstrings, feet, shoulders and hands.



Centre To Share Information With Supreme Court On Collegium Resolutions

The submissions to this effect were made by Attorney General R Venkataramani before a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud.

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday told the Supreme Court that it will be providing some details next week concerning the collegium's recommendations on the appointment of chief justices in several high courts in the country. The submissions to this effect were made by Attorney General R Venkataramani before a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud while seeking an adjournment of the hearing on a PIL which is listed for hearing on Friday. "I will be providing some details about the collegium's recommendations. Please list the plea (which is listed on Friday) after a week," the top law officer told the bench which also comprised justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

The bench said the submissions for the adjournment can be made on Friday itself as the matter is already on board. Meanwhile, the CJI told the top law

officer that the Jharkhand government has filed a contempt petition against the Centre for not appointing the Chief Justice in the high court in the state. The Hemant Soren-led JMM government has moved the top court against the Centre for not clearing the recommendation made by the Collegium to appoint Justice M S Ramachandra Rao as the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court. "I am not aware," the top law officer said. Earlier, the attorney general on September 13 told the bench that the central government had received some "sensitive material" that had led to a delay in implementation of the apex court collegium's recommendations on appointments of chief justices to high courts. The top law officer said he received



certain inputs from the Union government which are sensitive in nature and revealing them in the public domain would neither be in the interest of the institution nor of the judges involved. "I would like to place the inputs and my suggestions in a sealed cover for perusal by the judges," Venkataramani had told the bench. The PIL filed by

advocate Harsh Vibhore Singhal was then posted for hearing on September 20. Singhal has sought a direction that a time limit be fixed for the Centre to notify the appointment of judges recommended by the apex court collegium. It has also sought a direction to plug the 'zone of twilight' of there being no time for notifying the collegium's recommendations for the appointment of judges to the higher judiciary.

The plea said that in the absence of a fixed period, "the government arbitrarily delays notifying appointments thereby trampling upon judicial independence, imperiling the constitutional and democratic order and disparaging the majesty and sagacity of the court". The plea said if any name is not objected to or the appointments are not notified by the end of

such a fixed period, then appointments of such judges must be taken as notified. The three-member collegium headed by the CJI, on July 11, recommended to the Centre the names for the appointment of chief justices for seven high courts namely Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras and Meghalaya. The recommendations are pending approval with the Centre. The Supreme Court collegium, on July 17, tweaked its July 11 resolution relating to the appointment of the chief justices for the high courts of Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Listen to the latest news, only on JioSaavn.com

There were speculations that tweaking of the collegium's July 11 resolution took place apparently after the Centre shared some crucial information with the collegium.

7 dead, 11 injured in truck-auto collision in Madhya Pradesh

New Delhi: Seven people, including a 3-year-old, were killed, and 11 others wounded when a truck collided with a three-wheeler autorickshaw in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district on Wednesday. According to the police, a heavy vehicle dragged a loading auto for approximately 100 meters before overturning and landing on a three-wheeler near Lunji village on the Sehore-Majhgawan road at around 3:30 pm, news agency PTI reported. Soon after the incident, the police arrived at the scene and sent the injured to the nearby



hospital in Sihora for treatment. The dead have been identified as Shobharam (35), son of Chotu; Usha Bai (50), wife of Kothari Adivasi; Shivakul (18), son of Rajesh Kol; Kallu Bai (30), wife of Shobharam; Ranu Kol (19), wife of Karan; Karan (20), son of Pardeshi Kol; and little Bhura Kol (3), son of Shobharam Kol. Those injured included six men and four women. All those dead and wounded were residents of Pratappur village. Expressing grief over the incident, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced financial aid of Rs 2 lakh each to the families of the victims from his discretionary grant and Rs 50,000 to the injured. "I express condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief," he stated on X. Meanwhile, the police have arrested the truck driver and started their investigation. Bystanders immediately informed the police about the accident and rushed to rescue those trapped under the truck.

Rape case against Karnataka BJP MLA arrested for issuing death threats

New Delhi: A rape case has been registered against Karnataka BJP MLA Munirathna, who is already behind bars in connection to other cases for alleged harassment, death threats and casteist abuse. The alleged incident took place at a private resort near Bengaluru. The rape case against the MLA and six others was filed on Wednesday night based on a complaint made by the rape survivor. Police officer said "the case was registered under various sections for rape by public servant, sexual harassment, criminal intimidation, criminal conspiracy, voyeurism, intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace", reports news agency PTI.

He said a probe into the incident is currently



underway. The latest development came days after Munirathna, an MLA from the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Assembly seat, was sent to police custody following his arrest for allegedly threatening a contractor and using casteist slurs against him.

The two previous cases against the MLA were filed in Bengaluru on September 13. He was arrested from Kolar. The first case involved issuing a death threat and four individuals, including Munirathna, were named in the FIR. The second case charged Munirathna with casteist abuse against the contractor. The contractor had released an audio clip during a press conference, claiming that Munirathna harassed him for a bribe.

Employee blames rats for hole in Delhi-Mumbai highway, company fires him

New Delhi: An employee who claimed to be a part of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project was fired after he stated that rats were responsible for the caving in the portion of road in Rajasthan's Dausa district. The employee, claiming to be the Maintenance Manager, was a junior staff member of KCC Buildcon. The firm clarified the situation in a letter to the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). The firm stated that the comment was made by a junior employee who had no technical understanding regarding the project and confirmed that he had been terminated from the company. "The employee is not the maintenance manager; comments made were not based on

technical understanding," the company stated in the letter. "It's likely that a rat or some small animal

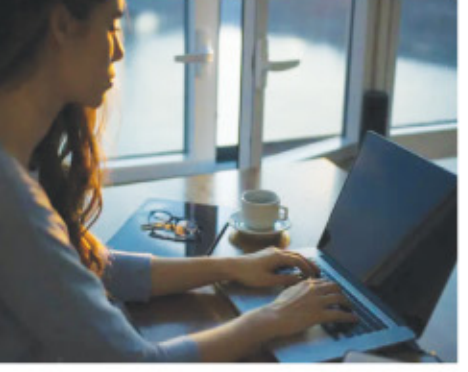


dug a hole, allowing water to seep through," the employee told India Today earlier. Meanwhile, as per the project director of the expressway in Dausa, Balveer Yadav, the road caved

in due to a water leak. As soon as the contractor got information about the matter, he immediately barricaded the area, and the pothole was repaired, Yadav said. The Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, spanning 1,386 kilometers, is the country's longest expressway, designed to cut travel time between the two cities from 24 hours to just 12-13 hours. The expressway traverses multiple states, including Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. As of July 31, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari informed the Rajya Sabha that 80 percent of the project is complete, with at least one more year required for its full completion.

Woman Says Daughter Died Of "Overwork" At EY India, Company Responds

New Delhi: Facing criticism over the viral letter of a woman who alleged that her 26-year-old daughter had died of "overwork" just four months after joining Ernst & Young, the consulting firm promised to make efforts to make the work environment healthier. "We are deeply saddened by Anna Sebastian's tragic and untimely passing in July 2024, and our deepest condolences go to the bereaved family," Ernst & Young, which is among the Big 4 consulting firms, said in a statement Wednesday. The company said they are providing all the assistance to the family and would find ways to improve and provide a healthy workplace to its employees. While no measure can compensate for the loss experienced by the family, we have provided all the assistance as we



always do in such times of distress and will continue to do so". "We are taking the family's correspondence with the utmost seriousness and humility. We place the highest importance on the well-being of all employees and will continue to find ways to improve and provide a healthy workplace for our 100,000

people across EY member firms in India", the firm added. A letter written by the woman's mother to EY India Chairman Rajiv Memani was in wide circulation on social media on Wednesday. In the letter, she claimed that her daughter died of "overwork" just four months after joining the company and no one from the organisation attended her funeral. She also described how her daughter was thrilled to be part of EY as it was her first job. "She was full of life, dreams, and excitement for the future. EY was her first job, and she was thrilled to be part of such a prestigious company. But four months later, on July 20th, 2024, my world collapsed when I received the devastating news that Anna had passed away. She was just 26 years old," she wrote.

Coast Guard ship Sujay reaches Bali, to take part in various maritime activities

Additionally, 10 National Cadet Corps (NCC) members aboard ICGS Sujay will participate in an environmental protection walkathon towards sensitising the community on the ill-effects of 'marine pollution' in collaboration with local youth organisations.

New Delhi: Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Offshore Patrol Vessel Sujay, with an integral helicopter, made a port call at Bali, Indonesia on September 18, 2024, for a three-day visit, as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to East Asia. During its stay in Bali, the crew of ICGS Sujay will engage in professional interactions with Badan Keamanan Laut Republik Indonesia (the Indonesian Maritime



Security Agency), focusing on operational turn around, marine pollution response, maritime search and rescue and maritime law enforcement. The coast guards of both countries will also engage in activities like cross-deck training, joint yoga sessions and friendly sports events. Additionally, 10 National Cadet Corps (NCC) members aboard ICGS Sujay will participate in an environmental protection walkathon towards sensitising the community on the ill-effects of 'marine pollution' in collaboration with local youth organisations. ICG, on July 06, 2020, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BAKAMLA to enhance maritime cooperation and institutionalised its cooperative engagements. Prior to the visit, ICGS Sujay had made port calls to Jakarta, Indonesia and Incheon, South Korea, demonstrating a seamless continuation of diplomatic maritime engagements in the region. The ship's deployment to East Asia reflects India's commitment to fostering warm relations with Indo-Pacific countries, promoting friendly relations through maritime cooperation.

Villages relocated for Jewar airport construction flooded after rain

After local MLA Dharendra Singh intervened and spoke with the authorities, the drainage of water and unclogging of drains started in the villages.



New Delhi: The villages that are being relocated for the construction of an international airport in Jewar near Delhi have been inundated for the last five days due to incessant rains. After local MLA Dharendra Singh intervened and spoke with the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority, Public Works

Department (PWD) and irrigation department officials over the phone, the administration constituted a five-member committee to get rid of the problem. "The response of officers concerned over the complaints of villages being inundated with storm water is being really lethargic. This is not the way to treat the farmers who have

given their land for the construction of an international airport in the area. If the area is facing waterlogging, all officers concerned should deal with it immediately. They cannot leave the villagers on their own fate", said Jewar MLA Dharendra Singh. After the intervention from the higher officials, the drainage of water and unclogging of

drains started in the villages. "We received information about continuous waterlogging due to heavy rains in some villages in Jewar. We found that the drainage system was blocked at many points. We have started rectifying the problems and the water has started receding from the area. In a couple of days, all the water will be drained out of the villages", Gautam Budh Nagar District Magistrate Manish Verma said. This came a week after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath conducted a site inspection of the airport and sought to address issues related to land acquisition for the mega project. He also directed officials to ensure that "no outsiders mislead the villagers" about the land acquisition process. Once all four phases are completed, the Jewar airport will have a capacity to handle 70 million passengers per year. The concession period for the airport, which commenced on October 1, 2021, will run for 40 years.

Crunches serve as one of the basic exercises to tone and define your core, specifically the muscles of the rectus abdominus and transverse abdominus. With the festivities just round the corner, this simple, equipment-free exercise will help you flaunt the perfect abs in a saree. Instead of going in for the usual crunches which have been there for a while, we suggest a few interesting ones that will aid you tone your abs.

C-curve hold with pulses

This exercise works on your entire rectus abdominus and strengthens your core.

How to do it: Sit with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Lower your elbows and tuck your tailbone by pressing your lower bone firmly on the floor. Breathe in so that you can feel your stomach going in. Lift your elbows and put your hands forward while slowly placing them on the sides of your thighs. Pulse your upper body up an inch and then down an inch. Continue this thrice, each with a 45-second interval. If you wish to go a bit harder on yourself, you can release your hands from the side of your thighs while you are pulsing.

Side lying swivel crunch

This exercise will involve your whole core and will help improve balance and posture.

How to do it: Lie down on one side with the forearm of that side on the floor, with hips and feet stacked. Extend the other arm overhead and squeeze your glutes, while drawing your navel inwards. Contract your abs and lift your legs, three inches above the floor. Now, roll the glute on which side you are lying down, and lift the leg to about a 45-degree angle. Now, change sides and repeat the exercise for three sets in

Ways to upgrade Your basic crunches

about 45-60 seconds per interval.

Bird dog crunch

This workout will improve your flexibility and will strengthen your abs and lower back.

How to do it: Bend down on all fours with your wrists under the shoulders and knees under your hips. Look down towards the floor and keep your head and neck in a neutral position. Breathe in and hold your breath. Maintain a flat back and extend your left arm and right leg straight out. Now, bring your left elbow to your right knee and hold position for about 2 seconds, then return to position. Change sides and repeat this exercise 12-15 reps per side.

Standing oblique crunch

This helps improve your oblique and strengthens your sides.

How to do it: Stand with your feet wide; hip width apart. Extend your right leg out to the side and tuck your tailbone, engage your glutes and breathe in, so that your navel goes inside. Tilt to the left side while your right hand reaches overhead towards your left shoulder. Exhale while crunching to your right, while bringing your right elbow and right knee together. Inhale and then repeat exercise.

Tones your lower abdomen

How to do it: Start in plank position with your toes pressing into a towel. Breathe in and hold your navel and tuck your hips slightly higher than your shoulder level. Exhale and slowly pull your knees in until they are about 2 inches in front of your hips. Inhale and then reverse back to start position. Repeat the exercise.

Focus on your diet as well...

Apart from exercising, one must also remember that the best way to get well-toned abs is by following a strict and a well-formed diet. Eat lots of green vegetables along with soups and salads. Avoid eating carbs post 7 pm. Also, remember to drink at least 2-3 litres of water everyday. This will help flush the toxins from your body, thereby giving a glow on your skin.



Let's workout in between work!

"What is this life if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare;" so missing daily exercises and looking after your health is inevitable. So Ashishh Gupta, fitness expert and director at Gold's Gym in Gurgaon, has come up with some tips where one can work-out, while at work. "You may never know, you might end up motivating people around you and many more may join you for same," he said.

To start with, take stairs instead of lift and try to stand as much as possible and start to move around as much as possible. According to Ashishh apart from this, these sets of exercises for 15 minutes daily might work for you.

First, use your desk for workout, which you may term as desk push-up. This will strengthen your arms and shoulders. Stand up facing your desk, place your hands shoulder width apart, and slowly lower your torso toward the desk;

then slowly push back up, and repeat several times. Challenge yourself by adding to the number of reps you complete each day.

Secondly, glutes are of real help. Believe it or not, some exercises can be kept under wraps, and this isometric glutes exercise is one of them. To start toning, simply squeeze your buttocks hold for five to 10 seconds, and release. Repeat until the agenda wraps up or the glutes tire. The results will be uplifting in more ways than one.

Thirdly, try leg curl. While seated, straighten one or both legs and hold in place for five or more seconds. Then lower the leg back to the ground without letting the feet touch the floor. Repeat (alternating legs if raising them separately) for 15 reps.

Fourthly, go for tricep dips. Stand at the edge of the desk, facing backwards. Place your hands on the desk, shoulder width apart. Now push your legs a bit in front and with the help of your body weight, go up and down in 90 degrees.

Fifthly, do shrugs. Stand against a wall with your back straight. Push your shoulders up and freeze for five seconds. You shall feel the shoulder trap muscle working.

Repeat these eight to ten times in three sets and get into the groove.



Panchakarma Treatment

for a week may reduce heart disease risk

One week of Panchakarma programme -- an Ayurvedic-based well being programme that features a vegetarian diet, meditation, yoga and massages -- can lead to measurable decreases in a set of blood-based metabolites associated with inflammation, cholesterol regulation and cardiovascular disease



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Ananya Panday's

Call Me Bae Gets Renewed For Season 2, Actress Says 'Here We Come'

Ananya Panday recently made her OTT debut with Prime Video's Call Me Bae. The actress received immense love for playing Bella, who loses her fortune and has to build a new life for herself. The series also features Gurfateh Pirzada, Varun Sood, Niharika Lyra Dutt, Vihaan Samat, Muskan Jaferi, Lisa Mishra and Vir Das in key roles. Call Me Bae has now been renewed for a second season. Ananya Panday dropped the announcement video on Instagram recently. The caption read, "Our day couldn't get any bae-tter Bella is coming to swoon us over again with a new season #CallMeBaeOnPrime, S2 in development." Check out the video here:

Call Me Bae caught everyone's attention for its Bollywood references. Ahead of Ananya Panday's Call Me Bae, Karan Johar called her character 'Poo's daughter' and called her a Gen Z version of the character. However,



Ananya claims that she did not try to touch Poo due to her legacy. Ananya Panday told Instant Bollywood, "I don't think we are trying at all to touch or even come close to what Bebo (Kareena Kapoor) did because she is the literal icon and the queen. What she did was just a legacy. What she did was extraordinary. This is our homage to her. If Bae can be even one per cent as lovable as Poo, then I think we all will be happy." For the unversed, Karan Johar called Bae a "glorious Gen Z 2.0 derivative" of Poo. He said, "If Rohan and Pooja now would have had to have had a baby girl, she would be Bae. I'm just talking because she really is a glorious Gen Z 2.0 derivative of Poo. It's like where Poo ends, Bae takes off."

That's the best way that I can describe her because even when you saw the character of Poo, it started with all the fun and games and then, she contributes to the emotional gravitas of the ongoings in Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham," Karan Johar had said at the show's trailer launch. Call Me Bae follows Ananya as a South Delhi girl who, after losing everything, relocates to Mumbai and starts anew as a journalist. The series chronicles her journey through the journalism world while maintaining her distinct style. The cast includes Vihaan Samat, Varun Sood, Gurfateh Pirzada, Muskan Jaferi, and Niharika Dutt. Produced by Karan Johar's Dharmatic Entertainment, the show offers a fresh narrative while paying respect to past cinematic icons.



Kareena Kapoor

Reveals She Controls Screen Time for Taimur, Jeh: 'They Ask Us Why We're On Phone...'

Kareena Kapoor has reached a milestone of 25 years in Bollywood. Her latest film, The Buckingham Murders, is out now. To celebrate, PVR Cinemas is holding a film festival in her honour. At the Special Event and Announcement for the same, Kareena Kapoor spoke at length about her films. I always wanted to play a detective and now I have done that. I have to think of what else I have to do. So, I've never really thought of this is a particular genre. I look at characters as something that I would enjoy playing. Because, you have to spend, you know, 50, 60, 70 days with that character in you. So, you have to really enjoy doing it. That's the most important thing, I think, for an actor. To enjoy playing that part. Otherwise, how will you be able to spend so much time being that particular person?

When reminded that Kareena Kapoor had once spoken to News18 about how her older son Taimur had really enjoyed watching Bhoole Bhoole Hai with his dad Saif Ali Khan, Kareena put up a big smile. On being asked if there is any film of hers that Taimur has watched, she said, "I guess maybe I should get them to watch something at the festival, I think. Because it's playing."

On being asked if she regulates screen timings for Taimur and Jeh, Kareena said she has to do it — there's no option. "Monday to Friday, screen time is, like, no! But then he's always like, 'But then why are you watching TV?' 'Why are you on your phone?' These days, the parents also have to do what they want their kids to do. So, when we are wanting to put them to bed, then we are also reading and not watching TV till they go to sleep. Because I guess they learn from example — there's no other way. They're going to see us on the phone or on the screen. They'll want to do that." Meanwhile, Kareena is currently seen in The Buckingham Murders. With a lot of love and appreciation from both the audience and critics alike, the film continues to prove its strong presence, and raked in ₹8.82 Cr. NBOC, which is indeed a good number for a genre like mystery thriller.



Rakhi Sawant Recalls Selling Her House For Pardesiya Music Video And Receiving Praise From SRK



From her humble beginnings to being one of the leading entertainers, Rakhi Sawant overcame a number of difficulties and established herself in the industry. While she started with a couple of music videos, Rakhi eventually made her way into Bollywood, working in films like Agnichakra, Kurukshetra, Joru Ka Ghulam, Jis Desh Mein Ganga Rehta Hain, Main Hoon Na, Shootout at Lokhandwala, Dil Bole Hadippa, and many others. Talking about her music videos, the actress' Pardesiya song remains a top choice among fans. However, not many know that Rakhi Sawant had to sell her house to fund the video. Rakhi's former director and longtime friend, Farah Khan, recently visited the actor's Dubai home, where the duo made several interesting revelations. During their conversation, Farah also recalled when Rakhi sold her house for the music video.

As the duo got themselves into cooking a daal recipe, Farah said, "Rakhi, do you remember when you told me about making a music video by selling your own house?" further stating that she had advised against it. "Maine bola tha, tu pagal hai kya, tu apne paise kyu laga rahi hai? (I called you mad for investing your own money in the project.) But look at the conviction of this girl, she sold her home and made Pardesiya, the music video that became a super hit." Rakhi also spoke about receiving praise from Shah Rukh Khan for her video and said, "Shah Rukh Ji also said that I released a very good music video," to which Farah quipped, "And after that, Rakhi Sawant became Rakhi Sawant." For those unaware, the song Pardesiya came out in 2004, marking the actress's debut music video. It became a big hit, turning into an overnight sensation and a party favourite. Besides working in music videos and films, Rakhi Sawant also became a prominent figure on television and took part in several shows like Bigg Boss and Nach Baliye.

Diljit Dosanjh, Neeru Bajwa's Jatt & Juliet 3 Releases On OTT: Here's When And Where To Watch Film



Diljit Dosanjh and Neeru Bajwa reunited for yet another Jatt & Juliet film, Jatt & Juliet 3. The new Jatt & Juliet film came out earlier this year, 12 years after Jatt & Juliet 2 was released. The film brought back Diljit and Neeru as Punjab's beloved police officers, and this time around, Jasmin Bajwa was in the mix. A few months after its theatrical release, the film will not be out on OTT. Jatt & Juliet 3 is about a police officer named Fateh Singh from Punjab who lands in Canada and falls in love with Pooja, who is also a police officer there. The film revolves around a series of hilarious unfortunate events which eventually result in Fateh and Pooja falling in love. The film will be available to stream on Chaupal from tomorrow, September 19.

Jatt & Juliet 3 was written and directed by Jagdeep Sidhu. At the press conference for the film's trailer launch in Mumbai earlier this year, Diljit revealed he almost rejected the film. "When Jatt & Juliet 1 was being made, Darshan Singh Grewal — the producer of Jatt & Juliet. We had problems with each other. So when the movie offer came to me, I wanted to go and reject the film in person. I had gone to his office to refuse the offer because of our history. When I reached his office, he signed a blank cheque in filmy style and told me, 'Paaji, fill the amount, I want to do a film with you.' I didn't foresee this," Diljit Dosanjh confessed. Meanwhile, Diljit Dosanjh has received a legal notice from a fan, who was left disheartened after she failed to get a ticket for the singer's upcoming India tour. As reported by Free Press Journal, the fan identifies herself as Riddhima Kapoor and is a law student based in Delhi. Reportedly, in her legal notice, she alleged malpractices in the ticket sales process and accused the organisers of the Dil-Luminati Tour of violating consumer rights. Besides Diljit, the legal notice has also been sent to Zomato, HDFC Bank and Saregama Pvt Ltd. However, they are yet to respond to the notice. Diljit Dosanjh's Dil-Luminati Tour will be an epic 10-city celebration. It will kick off at the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi on October 26, 2024. Following Delhi, the tour will make its way to Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Pune, Kolkata, Bangalore, Indore, Chandigarh, and Guwahati.