

PUBLISHED FROM Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Himachal and Jammu

The Sikh Times National Daily

VISIT: www.thesikhtimes.in Email:sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

Vol. 16 No. 182 RNI NO. DELENG/2008/25465 New Delhi, Wednesday, 13 November 2024 sikhtimesindia@gmail.com 9654077232 12 pages ₹ 3

For 2nd day, Uddhav says his bags checked by authorities

Sanjay Kumar Latur, Nov 12: For the second consecutive day, Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray claimed that his bags were inspected by the election authorities on Tuesday after he arrived in Latur district of Maharashtra to campaign for the November 20 assembly polls.

Tuesday, the same exercise was carried out by the election officials after his chopper arrived at a helipad in Ausa of Latur ahead of his rally scheduled to be held at Kasar Shirshi village. Former MLA Dinakar Mane is contesting as the Sena (UBT) candidate from Ausa constituency. The Shiv Sena (UBT) posted a video on X, in which Thackeray is heard talking to the election staffers standing at the helipad, seeking to know their names and postings and also asking them to show their appointment letters. During his interaction, the Sena (UBT) chief is heard asking them, "How many people have you searched so far?"



Cong has double PhD in stalling projects: PM Modi

Simmi Kaur Babbar NAGPUR Nov 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) on Tuesday, labelling the opposition's coalition in Maharashtra as the "biggest players of corruption" and asserting that the people should vote for the Mahayukti candidates if they wanted to see rapid development in the state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a public meeting ahead of Maharashtra Assembly elections, at Chimur in Chandrapur district PM Modi said that if the Congress and its allies come to power in Maharashtra, the state's development projects would come to a grinding halt. "The Congress has a double PhD in stalling projects. If you want rapid development to continue, re-elect the Mahayuti candidates," PM Modi told an election meeting in Chimur in eastern Vidarbha's Chandrapur district. PM Modi also accused the Congress of dividing people, saying it had been the mentality of the Congress's 'shahi parivar' (royal family) that it was born to rule the country. "This is the reason that after Independence, the Congress never allowed Dalits,

backward classes and Adivasis to progress," Modi said. "It is a dangerous game of the Congress to break your unity. If a tribal society gets divided into castes, its identity and strength will be lost," Modi said at the rally ahead of voting on November 20. "If you do not remain united, then the Congress will snatch away your reservation," he added. The Bharatiya Janata Party leads the Mahayuti alliance, with the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), and is hoping to retain power in a high-stakes contest. The MVA, which comprises the Congress, the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) and the NCP (Sharadchandraji Pawar), is aiming to replicate its performance in the Lok Sabha elections, when it won 30 of the state's 48 seats. PM Modi described the BJP's "Sankalp Patra" poll manifesto as a commitment to Maharashtra's development. "The rapid development of Maharashtra is beyond the reach of the Aghadi. They have only mastered the art of hindering growth," he proclaimed. "Aghadi means the biggest player of corruption," Modi asserted, positioning the coalition as "masters in breaking growth." Maharashtra had seen unprecedented development in the past two-and-a-half years under the "Mahayuti" regime, despite obstacles from the Congress and the Aghadi, he said, describing Maharashtra as a favoured destination for foreign investment in the country. PM Modi also raised the resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly for the restoration of Article 370 of the Constitution, which used to grant special status to Jammu & Kashmir before it was scrapped in 2019. "Just a few weeks ago, we saw what happened in Jammu and Kashmir.



New CJI Sanjiv Khanna outlines vision to make courts approachable

Naresh Malhotra New Delhi, Nov 12: New Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna laid out his vision to make courts "approachable and user-friendly" and termed the judiciary an integral, yet distinct and independent, part of the governance, news agency ANI reported. Justice Sanjiv Khanna after he was sworn-in as the 51st Chief Justice of India during a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, Justice Sanjiv Khanna after he was sworn-in as the 51st Chief Justice of India during a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, "Judiciary is an integral, yet distinct and independent part of the governance system. The Constitution trusts upon us the role of constitutional guardian, protector of fundamental rights, and responsibility to fulfil the important task of being a service provider of justice," said the chief justice. Justice Sanjiv Khanna identified the need to tackle the case backlog and simplify complex legal procedures. He also emphasised that litigation needs to be affordable and accessible. The top judge



said he also aims to reduce the trial duration by adopting a systemic approach and aligning the justice delivery mechanism so that the legal process is "not gruelling for the citizens." The CJI said his approach will be receptive and responsive while also being self-evaluative. He also emphasised the need to reform

criminal case management. "Justice delivery framework in terms of providing equal treatment necessitates fair opportunity to succeed to all, regardless of status, wealth or power, and a just and unbiased adjudication. These mark our core principles," Justice Khanna said. "The responsibility entrusted upon us affirms our commitment as protectors of citizens' rights and as dispute resolvers. It is our constitutional duty to ensure easy access to justice to all citizens of our great nation," added the CJI. Justice Sanjiv Khanna (64) took oath as the 51st Chief Justice of India on Monday, succeeding Justice DY Chandrachud. Expected to retire on May 13, 2025, he will have a tenure of six-months. Justice Khanna has been part of several landmark judgments, including upholding the sanctity of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), declaring Electoral Bonds scheme unconstitutional. He was also part of bench that upheld the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and granted interim bail to former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Advertisement for Gomber Diabetic Care (Gomber Medicare) for World Diabetes Day on 14th November. Includes details about a walkathon and free diabetes checks.

ED raids 17 locations in Jharkhand, West Bengal over illegal Bangladeshi infiltration

ST Correspondent New Delhi, Nov 12: In a money laundering probe connected to illegal Bangladeshi infiltration, the Enforcement Directorate searched poll-bound Jharkhand on Tuesday. The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday raided multiple locations in poll-bound Jharkhand, apart from West Bengal, in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged illegal infiltration of Bangladeshi nationals. A total of 17 places are raided covered in the two neighbouring states by the Jharkhand office of the federal probe agency. The Jharkhand assembly elections are scheduled to begin on Wednesday, November 13, with the first round of voting. The following phase will take place on November 20. Byelections for six Bengal assembly



seats are also set for tomorrow. In September, the agency filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to investigate the infiltration and trafficking of certain Bangladeshi women into Jharkhand, which resulted in the production of claimed slush money. The case was filed on the complaint of a lady who reportedly sneaked into the nation from across the India-Bangladesh border with the help of touts to find work, had allegedly listed about five to six women as culprits who were apprehended during a raid at a local resort. The lady who submitted the complaint escaped a comparable institution and arrived at the police station. One of these ladies was also found to be in possession of a "fake" Aadhaar card. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other BJP leaders have accused the state government of aiding such infiltration leading to the altering of the demographic landscape of the tribal-dominated areas of Santhal Pargana and Kolhan regions during the recent poll campaign. A High Court decision to form an impartial panel to look into the flood of Bangladeshi immigrants was met with criticism from Modi for the Jharkhand government's refusal to accept the infiltration problem. The first phase of the Assembly polls is slated for 43 constituencies on Wednesday, while the second for 38 seats will be held on November 20.

Govt to reconstitute development boards under the GTA

Kolkata, Nov 12: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee said on Tuesday that the state government will reconstitute the 16 development boards under the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) within the next one-and-half-month and set up a cell to monitor their functions. "The boards will be reconstituted after seeking suggestions from various quarters within one-and-half-month. A monitoring cell to look into their functioning headed by Anit Thapa will be set up," she told reporters. Banerjee, who is in on a five-day visit to north Bengal districts, held a meeting with GTA chief executive Anit Thapa, chairpersons of the various development boards and senior government officials. The Gorkha community boards were formed by the state government after the TMC came to power in 2011. The move, to form development boards, was construed by some as an attempt to weaken the functioning of the semi-autonomous and elected GTA, then headed by Bimal Gurung. The GTA came into existence in 2012. Gopal Lama, the TMC Lok Sabha candidate in the last Lok Sabha election from Darjeeling, has been appointed chairman of the Tamang Development Board replacing Sanjay Moktan. There is speculation of changes in top positions of other boards too.

Jairam Ramesh defends Rahul Gandhi after BJP's complaint to EC

Navdeep Singh Sahni New Delhi, Nov 12: The Congress on Tuesday defended party leader and Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) approached the Election Commission over his remarks about investments in Maharashtra being transferred to Gujarat. The BJP had alleged that Rahul Gandhi was trying to create enmity between states. On Tuesday, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh told ANI that several projects and investments meant for Maharashtra have been moved to Gujarat. "What are they complaining about? What has Rahul Gandhi said? Everyone has said it. It has been printed in newspapers that several projects and investments that were scheduled to come to Maharashtra have been shifted by the PM to Gujarat. That is what we have said, that you have discriminated against Maharashtra," Ramesh told the news agency. The Congress General Secretary

in-charge for Communications and MP from Rajya Sabha also said that people who want to invest in Maharashtra shouldn't be in place. This is what Rahul Gandhi has said, and the data is also available on this," he added. Ramesh also expressed confidence of winning the upcoming assembly elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand, saying that the party and its alliance partners would get a clear mandate. "We are confident that the public will support us. The negative political campaigning of BJP, especially that of the PM, Amit Shah, UP CM and Assam CM who are busy spreading communal poison will be rejected by the public," Ramesh told the news agency. On Monday, a delegation led by Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal met the poll panel officials over remarks made by Rahul Gandhi on November 6 in Maharashtra. "Rahul Gandhi tried to lie once again for the Maharashtra Election, he attempted to pit states against each other, he waved the Constitution and lied again that the BJP is about to destroy the Constitution.

threatened to move to Gujarat because the former state already has infrastructure in place. "Those who want to invest in Maharashtra, you can't threaten them and tell them to go to Gujarat. We will welcome if Gujarat gets investments for projects, but don't stop those who want to invest in Maharashtra, which has the infrastructure



Yogi Adityanath attacks Mallikarjun Kharge

Tejinder Kaur Babbar New Delhi, Nov 12: BJP leader and Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday reacted to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's recent attack on him, saying the latter should be angry at the Hyderabad Nizam whose "Razakars burnt your village". "These days Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is unnecessarily getting angry at me. He is furious. Kharge ji, don't get angry at me, I respect your age. If you want to get angry, get angry at the Hyderabad Nizam. The Hyderabad Nizam's Razakars burned your village, brutally killed Hindus, and burnt your respected mother, sister, and your family members. Present this truth before the country that whenever they will be divided, they will be divided in the same brutal manner," he was quoted as saying by news agency ANI. On Sunday, Kharge made an indirect reference to Yogi

Adityanath, saying some people who "live in the guise of sadhus" have become politicians. The Razakars were a paramilitary force formed by the erstwhile Nawab of Hyderabad before Independence to resist its integration with India. Yogi Adityanath claimed the Congress, which was "greedy for power", agreed to the Partition of India because it was under the influence of "the Muslim gang". "There are many elections. But some elections become important. There are some elections which make the fate of the country and some which spoil the fate of the country. In 1946 also, there was an election which changed the fate of India, which turned the fate into misfortune. The unfortunate partition of India took place. Then the Congress, greedy for power, got caught in the clutches of the

Muslim gang which deceived the country-men and whatever happened after that was in front of everyone. The country was divided into parts. India, which was one from the beginning, was divided into pieces," he added. Also read: Decide between 'Batenge toh katenge' and 'Ek hain toh safe hain': Kharge challenges

BJP's credibility Adityanath, who addressed a public meeting at Achalpur in Amravati for the November 20 Maharashtra assembly polls, accused the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance of turning Maharashtra into a "base for love jihad and land jihad". "Because you were divided, this country was divided, and Hindus were killed because they were divided. That is why I have come to tell you: don't get divided," he added. In the 2024 general elections, the Congress won the Amravati constituency by defeating BJP nominee Navneet Rana by around 20,000 votes. "Don't make the mistake of Lok Sabha elections in Amravati. If you are divided again, the puja for Lord Ganesh will be attacked and lands here will be captured in the name of love and land jihad. The safety of women will be in jeopardy," he added.



News box

Ex-IAS officer appointed to probe KKRDB irregularities

KALABURAGI: The Karnataka government has appointed retired IAS officer Sudhir Kumar to relook at the recommendations made by former additional chief secretary EV Ramana Reddy on alleged irregularities in the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board and Kalyana Karnataka Manava Sampannmala, Krushi Haagu Samskrutika Sangha (Human Resource, Agriculture and Cultural Association). Sudhir Kumar will conduct a further inquiry and investigate alleged irregularities. The government issued the order on Kumar's appointment on Monday. He has to submit the report within six months. Kumar has been tasked to look into alleged irregularities in spending Rs 300 crore allocated to KKRDB between 2020-21 and 2022-23 and released to Kalyana Karnataka Manava Sampannmala, Krushi Haagu Samskrutika Sangha. Kumar should also probe allegations of misappropriation in the purchase of medicines and equipment by KKRDB during Covid. He should inquire into sanction of Rs 50,000 to private school teachers, who died during Covid, expenditure of Rs 326.40 crore to care of local cows, though it was not under KKRDB's purview, misuse of Rs 310.59 crore for planting one crore saplings in six districts of the region and spending Rs 50 lakh in addition to the sanctioned amount to celebrate Kalyana Karnataka Vimochana Dinacharane, violating the transparency Act. Ramana Reddy completed the probe and submitted the report to the government a few months ago. As no action was taken for long, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge put out a note on this issue. Based on that, the government appointed Sudhir Kumar as the inquiry officer afresh.

Odisha government warns of strict action against employees over lobbying for posts

BHUBANESWAR: Expressing serious concern over lobbying and using extraneous pressure for transfer and posting by employees, the state government on Monday warned that such practice will no longer be tolerated and stern action will be taken against those indulging in it. Official sources said the government had to issue such a warning as it was found that some employees were exerting extraneous pressure for transfer and posting. In a letter to secretary of all departments and district collectors, chief secretary Manoj Ahuja said it has come to the notice of the government that some employees are attempting to influence their transfer and posting to different posts by exerting extraneous influence. This is a clear cut violation of Rule 23 of the Odisha Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1959. Any attempt to violate the rules will be viewed seriously and attract disciplinary action, he said. The Rule 23 states, "No government servant shall bring or attempt to bring any influence whether official or non-official to bear upon any authority to further his interests in respect of matters pertaining to his appointment under government, promotion, pay and other service conditions."

Odisha government to compensate 16,500 fishermen affected by fishing ban

KENDRAPARA: The Fisheries and Animal Resources Development department will provide a compensation of Rs 15,000 to around 16,500 fishermen affected by the fishing ban imposed at Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in Kendrapara district, Rushikulya river mouth in Ganjam and Devi beach in Puri for arrival and mass nesting of Olive Ridley sea turtles. Deputy director (marine) of the department Rabi Narayan Patnaik said, in 2016, the department for the first time had provided a yearly compensation of Rs 5,000 to 2,000 fishermen of Kendrapara as they are



barred from fishing in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary. "Last year, we provided compensation of Rs 15,000 to 15,000 fishermen," he said. President of Odisha Traditional Fish Workers' Union Prasanna Behera said at least 50,000 fishermen of Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur are affected due to the ban which was imposed from November 1 and will continue till May 31 next year. "We have been demanding an alternative source of livelihood during the ban and adequate compensation for the losses incurred by the fishermen."

There exists a clause in the Central Empowerment Committee's directives, which states there should be an alternate source of income before a fishing ban is imposed on fishermen. However, the officials are not providing any alternative livelihood options to us during the seven-month-long fishing ban. The meagre amount of Rs 15,000 compensation for only 16,500 fishermen will not be of much help," he said.

Kerala tourism charts new course

KOCHI/IDUKKI: A new chapter opened in the history of the state and its tourism sector when a 17-seater seaplane took off from the Bolgatty Palace Waterdrome in Kochi on Monday. With the successful completion of the trial flight of the seaplane 'de Havilland Canada-6 Twin Otter' to the Mattupetty reservoir in Munnar, doors have been thrown open for tourists to venture out to hitherto unexplored destinations, in comfort. The development comes at a time when those in tourism industry have been repeatedly pointing out the necessity of improving connectivity and thereby reducing travel time.

The ambitious project was first envisaged during the 2011-16 Oommen Chandy government. However, it was ditched following serious objections by fisherfolk community who were against using lakes and water bodies to set up waterdromes. This time, though, with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan taking on the onus, the project has gained wings. The trial flight was flagged off by Tourism Minister P A Mohamed Riyas. The plane took less than an hour to reach Mattupetty. "The project will work towards boosting the state's tourism sector," Riyas said. He said steps will be taken to ensure the



project is people-friendly so that all can enjoy the facility. With the government having decided to turn it into a water reservoir-plane project, the vision is to begin services initially from large dam sites like Banasura Sagar in Wayanad and Mattupetty in Idukki. "However, other dams located in strategic destinations can also be used for seaplane services connecting all destinations with the four international airports in the state," Riyas said. Industries Minister P Rajeev said tourism has been a significant contributor in Kerala's rapid progress in industrial development. "Kerala has the largest number of five-star hotels in India,

and four world-class hotel chain projects will soon start in Kochi alone," Rajeev said. A tourism department official said the seaplane service is provided under UDAN, the ministry of civil aviation (MoCA)'s regional connectivity scheme (RCS). "There are variations to the seaplane, based on seating capacity.

The seaplane that arrived for the trial flight was a 17-seater, unlike the nine-seater announced earlier," the official said. The seaplane has 9, 15, 20 and 30-seater varieties too, the official said. "A Switzerland-based private company and SpiceJet jointly run the services involving de Havilland Canada seaplanes. While SpiceJet operates the services, Canadian aircraft manufacturer De Havilland offers engineering expertise and assists with technical and logistical challenges," he said. At the same time, no decision has been taken on either the date of launch or service schedule. "A committee with representatives from the tourism department, Inland Waterways Authority and other associated departments will be formed to arrive at an action plan. Once the plan is formulated, the government will come up with a policy framework. That will happen in the coming months," the official said. Permanent landing spots for the seaplane too have to be decided, the official pointed out. "The

preferred landing places are reservoirs and lakes, like Punnamada. All these will be decided by the committee," he said. As for the service provider, the official said. "This was just a trial flight.

The department will be calling for expressions of interest from other players in the sector before deciding on the operator," he said. Once the services become operational and multiple flights are chartered, CIAL can serve as the control room, he added.

The project does face some turbulence with forest department officials raising concerns that it could cause disturbances in eco-sensitive areas, like the national parks of Mannavan Shola, Anamudi Sholai, and Mathikettan Sholai, that lie in the flight path to Mattupetty. Regular flights will disturb the elephant population in the areas near the proposed landing and take-off site, the forest department pointed out.

"The proposed site is known for the presence and movement of elephants and has witnessed human-elephant conflicts. Hence, an environmental impact assessment is needed before going ahead with the project," an official said. However, Irrigation Minister Roshy Augustine said the forest department should not try to block the ambitious seaplane project. The government will proceed with the launch of the services at all reservoirs in the state, he said.

Heavy rain likely in Chennai and delta districts till November 15

CHENNAI: The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) on Monday said that heavy rain may lash Chennai, its surrounding districts and parts of delta districts till Friday. According to the RMC, under the influence of upper air cyclonic circulation over southwest Bay of Bengal, a low-pressure area has formed over the region on Monday afternoon. It is likely to move slowly westwards towards Tamil Nadu/Sri Lanka coasts. As per the forecast, heavy rain is possible in isolated places in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram and Villupuram districts, and Pudukchery and Karaikal regions till November 15. This apart, heavy rains are expected in isolated places in Ranipet, Madurai, Virudhunagar, Sivaganga and Thoothukudi districts from Wednesday to Friday. A similar forecast



has been issued for Tiruvannamalai, Kallakurichi, Theni, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli, Kanniyakumari, and Dindiu districts for Thursday and Friday.

In addition, The Nilgiris, Coimbatore, and Tirupur districts are likely to receive heavy rain on Thursday, while Vellore is expected to experience heavy rainfall on Friday. In areas for which heavy rainfall is predicted, a yellow alert has been issued and the rainfall is expected to be around 7

to 11 cm. In a separate forecast for Chennai, the RMC said that the condition is likely to be partly cloudy. Moderate to heavy rain with thunderstorms and lightning is likely to occur in some areas. Maximum temperature is likely to be 32-33°C and minimum temperature is likely to be around 25°C, it added. Meanwhile, independent weather bloggers said that northern TN districts and delta districts can expect to get good rainfall this week. They added that heaviest spell might be on Tuesday and it could rain up to 20 cm in four days. "A low-pressure area is expected to form in the next 24 hours gradually from Monday night and rains are expected to return over north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh, including Chennai. This week promises to bring good rains as the northeast monsoon gets active," said independent weather blogger K Srikanth in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

18 years on, parents get murder victim's remains

KASARGOD: A murder most foul can leave a haunting legacy. The possessions of loved ones who have departed can hold a value that raises existential questions. And, the remains of a long-lost victim of foul play can amount to more than just closure. On November 11, the skeletal remains of Safiya were handed over to her parents on the direction of the District Principal Sessions Court. These included a portion of Safiya's skull, which was used for the superimposition process to identify her, and the mandible, which had been kept as evidence. Judge Sanu S Panicker ordered the release on a petition filed by the then public prosecutor C Shukur. The daughter of Moidu and Ayesha, of Aiyangeri, in Karnataka's Kodagu district, Safiya was a teenager when her life was brutally cut short, leaving behind a tale of exploitation and injustice. And it was Ayesha's determination that brought the culprits to light. The tragic chain of events was set in motion in 2006 when 13-year-old Safiya



was hired by civil contractor K C Hamza and his wife Maimoona to work as a maid at their home in Kasargod. Following their subsequent relocation to Goa, the family took Safiya along, a decision that would ultimately seal her fate. A few months later, Hamza contacted Moidu with news that Safiya would be brought back to Kasargod. When Moidu reached Kasargod to receive his daughter with her favourite Indian gooseberries he was told that she is missing. The girl's father and Hamza proceeded to file a complaint

with Adhur police.

According to Shukur, "Moidu had to raise money from neighbours to travel to Kasargod. The police investigated the case for more than a year. During that time, an action committee was formed and Safiya's mother staged a 90-day protest in Kasargod town, demanding justice for her daughter. Crime branch took over the case after one-and-a-half years and solved the mystery." The investigation unravelled a web of lies, as Hamza's claim of Safiya's disappearance was exposed as a desperate attempt to cover up the gruesome truth. She had been brutally murdered, dismembered, and buried near a dam site in Goa after suffering severe burns. Hamza was arrested in 2008. "I am eternally grateful to the countless individuals who stood by us and played a crucial role in our quest for justice," Moidu said. In July 2015, Hamza was sentenced to death by the Kasargod Sessions Court. However, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by the Kerala High Court in 2019.

Only one teacher in 6,158 government schools in Karnataka

BENGALURU: About 6,158 government schools in the state have just one teacher each, responsible for 1.38 lakh students, while 530 schools, with zero enrollment -- no students at all -- have 358 teachers. This shows a serious flaw in the system. While some schools have only a few teachers (one in many cases), others have excess staff despite having zero enrollment. The department, however, has said that teachers from zero-enrollment schools have been transferred to wherever there is requirement. The total number of single-teacher schools in the state decreased by 202, from 6,360 in 2023-24 to 6,158 in 2024-25. However, the enrollment also dropped by 33,794, which experts link to a rise in dropout rates. Lack of subject teachers is driving students away. As in many cases, teachers are assigned only to teach Kannada or social studies and not core subjects such as mathematics and science or even English. At the same time, to maintain the "100% pass rate," schools often "push academically weaker students out", according to experts. Child rights activist and executive director of Child Rights Trust Vasudev Sharma said teachers in these schools only teach Kannada or



social studies. "Parents, understandably, want their children to attend schools where maths and science are taught. As a result, many opt for aided or private schools," he said. Moreover, by the time a student reaches the upper primary level, schools deliberately push out those who are not academically strong to maintain "the 100% pass rate" in Class 10, a figure that, he argued, does not reflect real education standards, but hides the system's failure. He said no one questions why dropout rates surge between Classes 7 and 8, and Class 10.

*Karnataka to hire 5k teachers across

state'

"There is no record of where these children go -- whether they join other schools or not. Some of these children are forced to work even as the government claims there is no child labour, while others become victims of child marriages. The departments concerned, however, insist that no child marriage takes place," Sharma said. Moreover, teachers often use their influence to get transferred to schools in cities or towns, the experts said. In many cases, even teachers do not report for work in schools in remote areas, leaving students without a teacher.

10 per cent dip in distance education enrolment, Madras University's cash cow takes a hit

CHENNAI: The Institute of Distance Education (IDE) of the University of Madras, one of the major sources of revenue for the cash-strapped state varsity, may register a 10% drop in enrolment this year as the number of admissions for the academic year 2024-25 -- which closes on November 15 -- stands at 25,421 compared to 28,209 in 2023-24. In 2022-23, the IDE had admitted 30,157 students, up from 29,811 in 2021-22. Prolonged delay in appointing a vice-chancellor to the university and lack of new courses seem to have affected the popularity of the IDE, sources said. "We are expecting the figure to go up marginally by the time the deadline closes, but it will definitely be lesser compared to last year," a university official said. Given that the IDE had generated over Rs 100 crore in course and examination fees last year, officials acknowledge the university's heavy dependence on IDE's revenue. In order to improve the income, the IDE has to attract more students by offering new, skill-oriented and emergent courses, however, the absence of a vice-chancellor has thrown a wrench into the works. As is, the IDE is struggling to run even the existing courses, university officials added. "It is difficult to start new courses without a V-C. The convener committee only manages the day-to-day affairs, they do not get into the more complex issues," said a faculty member.

More courses soon after V-C appointment

"We received NAAC A++ grade accreditation and Category I status recently. It is the right time to cash in on the opportunity as we could start new courses without UGC approval. Unfortunately, we are unable to utilise it," said another faculty member.

Another factor attributed to the downward trend in IDE's enrolment figures is that other state universities are strengthening their distance education wings. "Since then other state universities have bolstered their distance education departments. Earlier, we received students from across the state through our 64 learner support centres in various districts, but now most of them are only from in and around Chennai," said an IDE official.

S Aravindhan, director of IDE, told, "We are taking steps to increase enrolment. We have selected a few courses and they will be introduced soon after the appointment of a vice-chancellor."

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N - 31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A-4/A-14, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)

Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi

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RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

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News box

10 yrs lost, bypass project to unclog RNE gains steam now

Ghaziabad. Ten years in the works, the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) has decided to relaunch a bypass road project to unclog Rajnagar Extension, one of the city's fastest growing townships. The 6km stretch will connect Rajnagar with Hapur Road, providing relief to thousands of commuters who are stranded in snarls daily during rush hours.

Although conceived a decade ago, the bypass road project failed to take off because GDA could not acquire the 900sqm required for it for various reasons. The development authority has now resumed the process of acquisition.

"Given the daily snarls that commuters have to face, GDA decided to revisit the project and initiate land acquisition again. The stretch that will eventually be built will be 45m wide and will alleviate snarls by allowing commuters to actually skirt the Rajnagar Extension roundabout towards Hapur Road," a GDA official said. The bypass can also be used by residents of the proposed Hamandipuram township when it comes up. The need for a bypass was felt years ago as booming real estate made Rajnagar Extension its home and thousands of people began shifting to new societies that came up there.

Developed in the early 2000s, Rajnagar Extension is now home to over 1 lakh residents. But as population grew, so did traffic. Today, the area is one of the city's notorious choke points. Rajnagar Extension is connected with Loni, Mohan Nagar, Indrapuram, Delhi, and Noida. The Hindon Elevated Road offers the township a direct connectivity with trans-Hindon areas, Noida, and Delhi. GDA had, in 2018, designed a rotary to cater to traffic coming from three directions — Rajnagar Extension Road, Karhera Road, and a stretch leading to GT Road. Among measures taken to decongest the Rajnagar Extension roundabout, UP Bridge Corporation constructed a flyover in 2019, providing respite to commuters. But it was short-lived.

3 more substations to boost power infra in Vasundhara

Ghaziabad. Vasundhara is set to receive three new substations of 33/11 kV capacity each. These substations will be built in Sectors 2, 3, and 7 by Vasundhara Awas Vikas Yojna (VAVY). The Sector 7 substation is expected to be delivered by Dec this year, while the other two will be ready by mid-2025, officials said. In addition to these three, a 220 kV substation which is currently under construction in the area, will be ready by Oct 2025. The substation, which TOI previously reported on in July, is being built under the public-private partnership (PPP) model by the Jewar Transmission Limited (JTL). Together, the four new substations will help alleviate issues related to overloading, distribution networks, and power demands of over 20,000 consumers in Vasundhara and nearby Vaishali and Sahibabad. Currently, Vasundhara's power demand is being met by 400 kV substations in Indrapuram and Muradnagar.

"With the increasing electricity demand, the discom has planned to build a 33/11 kV substation in nearly every sector of Vasundhara. Under this, three new substations of 33/11 kV are being built in Sectors 2, 3, and 7," Amit Saxena, executive engineer, Ghaziabad power department, told TOI. According to Saxena, a proposal for the land and construction of the three 33/11 kV substations has been accepted by VAVY. Land has been designated for the same in sectors 2, 3, and 7. A fourth 33/11 kV substation is proposed to come up in Sector 5, for which approval is awaited. Each substation is being built at a cost of around Rs 8 crore to 10 crore.

The Sector 7 substation, which is operational and currently undergoing testing, is expected to be handed over to the discom by Dec this year. The two substations proposed to come up in sectors 2 and 3 are still awaiting budget sanction, which is expected by Dec as well. "Following the budget approval, tendering will commence in Jan, and construction is expected to start in Feb or March 2025," said Saxena, adding that it takes about 4-5 months to build a substation.

From hackathons to workshop: Edu expo sees 22k visitors on first day

Noida: UP's higher education minister Yogendra Upadhyay inaugurated the first edition of India Education Expo 2024 at India Expo Mart in Knowledge Park on Monday. The three-day expo features educational workshops, panel discussions, hackathons, counselling sessions and student exhibitions on science and technology. About 21,500 people including students, teachers and professors from 63 schools and 26 universities and colleges participated on the first day of the event.

Several colleges across the country, including Central University of Rajasthan, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University of Chhattisgarh, Mind Power University of Uttarakhand, Sharda University, GL Bajaj Institute of Management and Research, Galgotias University, Gautam Buddha University, GLA University, SRM University, as well as North Island College from Canada, participated in the event.

"The expo is a grand confluence of the education sector and is no less than a pilgrimage for students, scholars and education professionals," said Upadhyay. The minister spoke about the Higher Education Incentive Policy 2024, which was recently approved by the UP cabinet and strives to increase the participation of private universities, especially in unserved areas. The policy seeks to augment the number of institutions, courses and seats, thereby enabling a larger cohort of students to pursue their academic aspirations within the state's boundaries.

"The govt aims to establish higher educational institutions in every district of the state. The policy sets the stage for a new era of excellence, innovation and inclusivity in higher education. The expo will create a supportive ecosystem for investors in line with the policy, to expand the verticals of education," he added.

Dhirendra Pal Singh, education advisor to the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh; Prerna Singh, additional CEO of Greater Noida Authority; Sipu Giri, special secretary, higher education, Uttar Pradesh; Rohit Gupta, project director, Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog were among the dignitaries at the event.

Operation 'Eagle': How Delhi Police swooped down on gunrunners

NEW DELHI. Arjun cleaned rooms and swept floors in a five-star hotel. But beyond this mundane existence and unbeknownst to his employers, the 25-year-old also supplied illegal arms to criminals. Ajay, 23, too had a secret life. He worked at a hair-cutting salon but his real business was selling guns. The two men are among the 18 individuals arrested by Delhi Police's crime branch in a one-of-its-kind operation against gunrunners. Other accused include some labourers, a painter, salesman, security guard and a farmer, even a BA student, all driven by the hope of easy money.

According to special commissioner Devesh Shrivastava, the arrested men, many of whom have prior criminal records, were involved in a range of offences, including murder, attempted murder, dacoity, robbery, extortion, burglary, riot, theft and violations of the Arms Act. Humble workers by day, gunrunners at night.

Police recovered a substantial cache of illegal firearms and ammunition, including four semi-automatic pistols, eight country-made pistols, one rifle, 33 live cartridges and a stolen car. "The arrests mark a significant disruption to the

illegal arms supply chain in Delhi and NCR," said Shrivastava. The operation, codenamed Eagle and conducted under additional CP Sanjay Bhatia and DCP (Crime) Bisham Singh, targeted the gunrunners operating in Delhi-NCR.

Representative Image

It was initiated after a tipoff from two individuals, Arshad and Mohammed Suleman, who were planning a robbery in Noida and were in possession of illegal firearms. A police team, comprising ACP Arvind and inspectors Mangesh Tyagi and Robin Tyagi, conducted a targeted raid at the paper market in east Delhi's Ghazipur. The team intercepted a car carrying Arshad and Suleman and a tense situation arose when one of the suspects pointed a gun at the police officers. However, the two targets were overpowered and arrested.

A thorough search of the car led to the recovery of a pistol, cartridges and knives. The vehicle also proved to be a stolen one. During interrogation, police



received information that helped them identify a large network of gunrunners and suppliers. The cops followed up on the leads provided by the suspects, conducted raids and arrested individuals at various locations in Delhi and NCR. The arrested individuals were linked to various gangs, including the Madan gang, known for its involvement in illegal arms trade and criminal activities. The suspects, who belong to Delhi, Ghaziabad and Baghpat, were

engaged in various professions, though their primary motive was to earn quick money through the illegal arms trade. The syndicate's incarcerated kingpin, Madan, 33, sat at the top of the network, orchestrating the flow of arms. A resident of Ghaziabad in UP, he entered the trade in unlicensed arms and ammunition driven by the allure of easy money through extortion and murder.

"Madan has a criminal history spanning 12 cases, including murder, attempted murder, extortion and violations under the Arms Act and UP Gangsters Act," said an officer. Madan, whose gang supplied weapons to criminals in the region, was also arrested in jail after a request in court for his custody. "The operation has dealt a significant blow to the interstate arms syndicate, disrupting the supply chain of illegal weapons and potentially preventing numerous crimes," said Shrivastava.

164 condos surveyed, 90% have defunct water harvesting pits

Noida. The groundwater department conducted inspections of rainwater harvesting systems within residential societies across Noida and Greater Noida last week. The survey revealed that 140 of the 164 societies had non-functioning rainwater harvesting systems, while 10 societies lacked any such facilities. A mere 14 societies were found to have operational rainwater harvesting systems.



Officials noted that the 140 societies with non-operational systems had rainwater harvesting pits that were filled with stagnant water and accumulated debris, which was contributing to groundwater contamination. According to hydrologist Ankit Rai, from the groundwater department, rainwater harvesting systems are compulsory installations in all residential complexes and government structures. "Whilst authorities verify these systems prior to granting OC and CC certificates, subsequent maintenance often lapses after certification," she said.

This recent discovery prompted residents to question the legitimacy of OC certificates issued to these societies without proper systems in place. Discussions were held between the Noida ACEO and the groundwater department last week where society investigation reports were presented. It was decided during the meeting that

the Authority will issue notices to all societies, providing them a 15-day window for compliance.

After this period, a joint inspection team comprising Authority officials and groundwater department representatives will assess the societies. Non-compliance within the stipulated 15-day period will result in punitive measures. Additionally, societies found to have not installed the system during the investigation will also face enforcement action. "In approximately ten residential societies across Noida, functional rainwater harvesting systems are being managed by the respective Apartment Owners Association (AOA). These associations ensure timely maintenance of the systems. The AOAs demonstrate a clear understanding of rainwater harvesting's significance, contribute to the systems' continuity. It is essential for build well to acknowledge and fulfil obligations in this regard as well, said.

'Poor' air days: At 240, Noida's AQI sees a slight surge, Gz and Gzb no better

Noida: The city witnessed a slight decline in air quality on Monday with the air quality index (AQI) recorded at 240, compared to 220 the previous day. Greater Noida's AQI also surged to 285 from Sunday's 249. Neighbouring Ghaziabad remained in the 'poor' category as well with Monday's AQI recorded at 252, while it was 235 on Sunday. According to the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) bulletin, the air quality index is likely to be in the 'very poor' category for the rest of the week.

In Noida, the air quality monitoring station at Sector 62 recorded the highest AQI of 305, under the 'very poor' category. The station at Sector 116 registered a 'poor' AQI at 297. The monitoring stations at Sector 1 and Sector 125 measured 'moderate' air quality levels with AQI values of 184 and 172 respectively. Greater Noida's Knowledge Park 5 and Knowledge Park

NAME CHANGE
I, Preeti Meena D/O: Chhetar Mal Meena, W/O Kundan Singh Meena, R/O HOUSE NO-202, AMBEDKAR COLONY PAHADI, AYANAGAR, NEW DELHI-110047, have changed the name of my minor daughter Dhanyaa Kundan Singh aged 2 years and she shall hereafter be known as Dhanyaa kavat.

NAME CHANGE
I, HARENDER SINGH S/O UDAY PAL SINGH R/O HOUSE NO C-55A/2, BHARAT VIHAR, KAKROLA, KAKROLA, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110078, have changed the name of my minor son LAKSHAY aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as LAKSHAY.

NAME CHANGE
I, Ajmer Singh Kashyap S/O Rati Ram R/O A-76, Amar Colony phase 2, Sukhi Nahar, Nanjoli, Delhi-110041 have changed my name to Ajmer Singh.

NAME CHANGE
I, ABDUL RAHIM S/O MOHD IDRISH R/O VPO- MUNDHETA (182) MEWAT NUH PINGWAN HARYANA 122508, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ABDUL RAHEEM

NAME CHANGE
I, SADHANA MISHRA W/o Sh. MANISH KUMAR R/o H-218, GALI NO.5 AMAN VIHAR, P.S.M. SCHOOL, KIRARI, SULEMAN NAGAR, NORTH-WEST DELHI, 86, declare that my name inadvertently mentioned in School Record Marksheet as SADHANA PANDEY, instead of SADHANA MISHRA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as BITTU alias Birender Rastogi S/O Kishori Lal R/O F-224 old Seema pur, East Delhi, Delhi, 95, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BITTU.

Lost and Found
I, Karanjeet Singh S/O Bahadur Singh, 2/130 Subash Nagar New Delhi have lost ALL ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS OF 507 SHOP NO.2 SUB-HASH NAGAR NEW DELHI. With previous chain, not found in house after search. If anybody find contact at above address and mobile number 8377878787.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, ANAK CHAND S/O RAKHA RAM, R/O H.No.-421, Pocket -1, Sector A-6, Narela, North West Delhi, Delhi-110040, declare that name of my wife has been wrongly written as SHELLY MEHRA in my minor Daughter SIMAR INSA aged 14 year in her school record. The actual name of my wife is SHAILLY MEHRA, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as SK Asik Rahaman D/O OSIYAR R/O Parliament area Padampur VTC: Padampur, PO: Sagarbhar, Sub District: Panskura- District: Purba Medinipur, State: West Bengal, 721151, Present address: Hno. 93, Kiahna Ganj market old Rohatk Road delhi 110007, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Joya Khan. I am unmarried.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, SAJJAD KHAN S/O Shamim Khan R/O H.no- S-3/181 Swam Park Munkda West Delhi-110041, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Md Shamim Khan in my 10th-class marksheet cum certificate educational documents. The actual name of my father is Shamim Khan, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, Father of ANURAG K T K Presently residing at VILL-AYANCHERI, PO- PONNEMERI, PARAMBIL, TEHVADAKARA, DIST-KOZHIKODE, KERALA-573542 have changed my name from REMESAN K T K to RAMESAN vide Affidavit on 12/11/2024 executed before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information is given to general public, at large that our client Mr. Sarjany Sharma S/O Mr. Prem Chand Sharma is the owner of Freehold Residential Entire Second Floor & Entire Third Floor with terrace rights area measuring 121.23 Sq. Mtrs. on Built-Up Property Bearing No. J-705 Out of Khazra, No. 8, Litesa, Situated in the Abadi of Lal Dora of Village Mehrauli Tehsil Hapur Khazra New Delhi-110030, by Virtue of Sale Deed dated 21.08.2024 as Doc no. 2024/1/8395 in Book No. 1 Vol No. 6944 on Page No. 129-160 SR-South Khazra, Khazra & Litesa Sale Deed, in the Chain Documents mentioned not available i.e. SMC of Late Mr. Rajeev Arora, Death Certificate & SMC of Late Mr. Om Prakash Gupta & Death Certificate & SMC of Late Mrs. Anurag Sharma now our client is declaring that that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, and Second Floor without roof rights Sold to be Ms. Lipika P. Nair and Same property is Finance by Piramnt Capital & Housing Finance Ltd. Franchi Kalkaji Delhi. If any person(s) has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice or else we will sue to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. JC-781708K Rank NB/SUB Name PARMESHWAR RAY, Unit-672 (1) TPT PLASC (TPTR) C/O-56 APO PIN-905672 presently residing at 935 SK NAGAR, RISHRA SERAMPORE, SERAMPUR, UTTPARPARA, PRABHASNAGAR, HOCHOLLY, WEST BENGAL-712249, have changed my minor son (ADITYA RAY) date of birth from 11/05/2008 to 11/09/2010 for all purposes. Vide affidavit dated 12.11.2024 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SANJAY KUMAR S/O RAM YATAN PRASAD R/O HOUSE NO 197F, GOPAL NAGAR, TILAK NAGAR, WEST DELHI, DELHI-110018, have changed the name of my minor son MAYANK aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as MAYANK KUMAR.

NAME CHANGE
I, KARWADE ASHISH SHANKAR S/O KARWADE SHANKAR presently Residing VPO-ANDHALGAON, TEH-MOHADI, DIST-BHANDARA (MAHARASHTRA)-441914, have changed my minor son name from ARNAV to ARNAV ASHISH KARWADE. Vide affidavit dated 12/11/2024 executed before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as MADHU W/O ASHWANI CHHABRA residing at A-5294, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi, Delhi-110063 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MADHU CHHABRA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as MINTU DEVI alias RINKU MISHRA, D/o Vinod JHA W/o MANGNU MISHRA residing at 72, 2 Ghoda Mohalla, Avta Nagar, South Delhi, Delhi-110047 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RINKU MISHRA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as MADHU W/O ASHWANI CHHABRA residing at A-5294, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi, Delhi-110063 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MADHU CHHABRA.

NAME CHANGE
I, DEEPAK KUMAR MEENA S/o No. GS-191498L Rank DVMRT GRADE-2 Name POORAN MAL MEENA presently residing at A-34, NAVEEN PLACE JHARODA ROAD KALI PYALI, JHARODA KALAN, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110022, have changed my name from DEEPAK KUMAR MEENA to DEEPAK for all future purposes. Vide affidavit No IN-DL4252856589455W dated 11.11.2024 before sub divisional magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, PRADNYA ASHISH KARWADE wife of KARWADE ASHISH SHANKAR presently Residing VPO-ANDHALGAON, TEH-MOHADI, DIST-BHANDARA (MAHARASHTRA)-441914, have changed my name from PRADNYA to PRADNYA ASHISH KARWADE. Vide affidavit dated 12/11/2024 executed before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BALDEW S/O KHARTI LAL, declare as under that I disowned my son DEEPAK DHALLA and his wife SUNAINA DHALLA from my all movable/immovable/Patrick properties/assets for wrong behavior. Hereafter I shall not be held responsible for any kind of acts done by transaction or money or transaction and any illegal/legitimate and property purpose in future. That he departed from entering my premises situated at H NO-110/B, RANI GARDEN, SHASTRI NAGAR, DELHI-110031

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NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as YADUNANDAN PRASAD S/O BHOLA PRASAD R/O H.No. -140C, BLOCK STREET No. -13, KHAJURI KHAS, NORTH EAST, DELHI-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JWALA PRASAD.

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NEWS BOX

Iran says world awaits Trump stop to Gaza, Lebanon wars; calls Israeli assassinations 'organised terrorism'

RIYADH. Iran on Monday said the "world is waiting" for Donald Trump's incoming US government to stop Israel's wars with Hamas and Hezbollah, as it condemned a wave of Israeli assassinations as "organised terrorism." "The American government is the main supporter of the actions of the Zionist regime (Israel)," First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref told a joint Arab League and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation summit in Riyadh. "The world is waiting for the promise of the new government of this country to immediately stop the war against the innocent people of Gaza and Lebanon." Since Hamas's October 7, 2023, attacks triggered the war. Israel has killed a number of senior opponents, including Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar and Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's long-time leader. Israel is also widely believed to have carried out the killing of former Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in the Iranian capital Tehran. The "targeted killing" (operations)...are nothing but lawlessness and organised terrorism and turn the security apparatus into a tool to kill leaders and citizens of the countries," Aref said. While Trump has promised peace in the Middle East, during the campaign he said outgoing President Joe Biden should let Israel "finish the job" against Hamas in Gaza.

'Willing To Fly To Congratulate Personally, Sir': Indonesia's Prabowo Dials Donald Trump

World Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has stated his intention to personally congratulate US President-elect Donald Trump during his upcoming state visit to the United States. Subianto, who replaced Joko Widodo, also uploaded a video on social media where he is heard telling Trump: "If possible, I would like to call you personally. Wherever you are, I am willing to fly to congratulate you personally, sir." Glad to be connected directly with President Elect @realDonaldTrump to extend my heartfelt congratulations on his election as the 47th President of the United States. I am looking forward to enhancing the collaboration between our two great nations and to more productive discussions in the future," he said in the caption accompanying the video on X. In the phone call, Trump is heard thanking Prabowo for the congratulatory phone call and at one point commends the Indonesian leader for his English. "All my training is in America, sir," Prabowo says, taking the compliment. Prabowo also said he was shocked to hear about the assassination attempt and said he was happy because he was safe. To this Trump said: "I got very lucky." "You are a very respected person, I must give you credit for that. You can call anytime you want, you have my number. Give the people of Indonesia my regards," he further added. Some netizens pointed out that Prabowo addressed Donald Trump as 'sir' several times and said it is not befitting of a president to do so.

"Why are you talking to him like he's your boss? I counted you said 'sir' at least 40 times," an X user said.

How Singles' Day in China evolved into one of the world's largest shopping event

World While the Western world is gearing up for Black Friday and Cyber Monday, China has already celebrated its biggest shopping extravaganza—Singles Day. Often overshadowing other global shopping events, Singles Day has grown from a niche celebration to a retail phenomenon, surpassing the likes of Prime Day and Black Friday. Originating as a light-hearted holiday to honour singlehood, it has evolved into a massive online shopping festival. This year, the event began on October 14 and culminated on November 11, marking the longest Singles Day sales period ever. The concept of Singles Day traces back to 1993 when it was first celebrated at China's Nanjing University, initially dubbed "Bachelor's Day."

On this day, single individuals would treat themselves to gifts, often accompanied by social gatherings. What started as a modest celebration has transformed into a retail juggernaut, attracting millions of shoppers eager to grab deals. The event's popularity soared after Alibaba, China's e-commerce giant, adopted it in 2009, turning November 11, or "11.11," into a day synonymous with discounts and deals. Over the years, other major platforms like JD.com and Pinduoduo joined the bandwagon, transforming Singles Day into a country-wide shopping spree. Last year's Singles Day saw Chinese consumers spending a staggering 1.14 trillion yuan (\$156.4 billion), according to Syntun data, reported by the news agency Reuters. This figure dwarfs the \$38 billion spent during the US's Cyber Week, which includes Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

However, despite the impressive numbers, growth has been slowing down. The sales increase last year was just 2 per cent, the slowest in its history, reflecting changing consumer behaviours and market saturation. Analysts suggest that this year's sales could reach an estimated 1.2 trillion yuan (\$167 billion), reflecting a potential 15 per cent rise. However, experts remain cautious, noting that the increase may come with caveats as many shoppers bulk-buy to hit discount thresholds, often leading to returns, which can erode profits. In recent years, Singles Day has seen a shift in consumer spending patterns. While previous years featured splurges on luxury goods and big-ticket items, last year saw a trend towards necessities like tissues, handwash, and pet food as shoppers turned frugal. This shift could be attributed to economic uncertainty and the lingering effects of China's stringent Covid-19 measures.

Trump names former Rep. Lee Zeldin to lead EPA, adviser Stephen Miller to be deputy chief of policy

WASHINGTON. President-elect Donald Trump on Monday named former New York congressman Lee Zeldin to lead the Environmental Protection Agency as he continues to build out his future administration with loyal supporters.

Zeldin, a Republican who mounted a failed bid for governor of New York in 2022, will "ensure fair and swift deregulatory decisions that will be enacted in a way to unleash the power of American businesses," Trump said in a statement. Zeldin also will maintain "the highest environmental standards, including the cleanest air and water on the planet," Trump added. Zeldin, who left Congress in January 2023, was a surprising pick for the role. His public appearances, both in his own campaigns and on behalf of Trump, often involved him discussing issues such as the military, national security, antisemitism, U.S.-Israel relations, immigration, and crime. He was among the Republicans in Congress who voted against certifying the 2020 election results. While in Congress, he did not serve on committees with oversight of

environmental policy and had a lifetime score of 14% from the League of Conservation Voters during his eight years in Congress. In the 2022 governor's race, Zeldin vowed to reverse a fracking ban imposed by Democrats. In an interview Monday on Fox News Channel, Zeldin, 44, said that he will seek to ensure that the United States can "pursue energy dominance... bring back American jobs to the auto industry and so much more." He's excited to implement Trump's economic agenda, Zeldin said, adding, "I think the American people are so hungry for it. It's one of the big reasons why they're sending him back to the White House." In 2016 Zeldin pushed to change the designation of about 150 square miles of federal waters in Long Island Sound to state jurisdiction for New York and Rhode Island. He wanted to open the area to striped bass fishing. Zeldin said at the time that he wanted to restore local control and common sense to fishery management. He later pushed to allow striped bass fishing in an amendment to a federal spending bill. Environmental groups criticized the amendment, which



they said risked overfishing in the area. Trump often pointed to Zeldin's performance in the 2022 gubernatorial race, when the Republican did far better than had been expected against Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul. While Trump didn't win New York state in last week's election, he did far better than he had during previous elections, particularly in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. New York Republican chair Ed Cox said Zeldin's surprise appointment was "a testament to President Trump's commitment to revitalizing the original mission of the EPA — an agency created... under President Richard Nixon to protect our nation's environment." Trump asks Rep. Mike

Waltz to be his national security advisor. The announcement came after Trump selected longtime adviser Stephen Miller, an immigration hard-liner, to be the deputy chief of policy in his new administration and named New York Rep. Elise Stefanik as his choice for U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Trump has also asked Florida Rep. Mike Waltz, a retired Army National Guard officer and war veteran, to be his national security adviser, according to a person familiar with the matter who spoke anonymously to discuss the matter before Trump made a formal announcement. Miller is one of Trump's longest-serving aides, dating back to his first campaign for the White House. He was a senior adviser in Trump's first term and has been a central figure in many of his policy decisions, particularly on immigration, including Trump's move to separate thousands of immigrant families as a deterrence program in 2018. Miller has also helped craft many of Trump's headline speeches and was often the public face of those policies during Trump's first term in office and during his campaigns.

Biden should resign to make Harris first woman US President, says former aide

Jamal Simmons, Kamala Harris's former communications director, argued that the move would turn the tables on Donald Trump, who defied projections to win his second term as US President.



World A former aide of Kamala Harris set the cat among the pigeons after suggesting that Joe Biden should resign and make his deputy the first woman President of the United States till Donald Trump takes charge on January 20, 2025. Jamal Simmons, Harris's former communications director, argued that the move would turn the tables on Trump, who defied projections to win his second term as US President. "Joe Biden has been a phenomenal president, he's lived up to

so many of the promises that he's made. There is one promise left that he can fulfil: being a transitional figure," Simmons said at a show on CNN.

Simmons, who was part of Harris's team from 2022 until 2023, said the move would absolve the Vice President from having to oversee the January 6 transition of her own defeat. "He (Biden) could resign the presidency in the next 30 days, making Kamala Harris the President of the United States. He could absolve her from having to oversee the transition of her

own defeat," Simmons further said. Even though Trump has won the election, it will not be until January 20, 2025, that he will take charge as the President. The US Constitution provides a four-month transition time between the election and the inauguration of the next president.

Interestingly, Kamala Harris will have a bitter pill to swallow as she would have to certify Trump's victory in the election on January 6. It is a rare occasion in which a vice president, who ran as a presidential candidate, will have to preside over the confirmation of their rival's win. Simmons said the move would be a moment for the Democrats to change the perspective of how the party operates.

"And it would make sure, it would dominate the news, at a point where Democrats have to learn drama and transparency and do things the public wants to see," he further said.

US president-elect Trump ramps up transition moves with key appointments to his administration

WASHINGTON. US President-elect Donald Trump has moved quickly to staff up his incoming administration, naming loyalists to several key posts within days of his election victory and signalling his desire to have some seats without a Senate confirmation process. The staffing picks are the subject of intense speculation and scrutiny, with Trump vowing that his second administration will oversee a radical shake-up of the federal government. The 78-year-old Republican tycoon said Sunday he would tap hardline immigration official Tom Homan as the country's "border czar," while US media reported the nod for UN ambassador as going to New York congresswoman Elise Stefanik, a vocal Trump ally. Stephen Miller, another fierce critic of illegal immigration who served in Trump's first administration, has been tapped for deputy chief of staff. The picks signal movement on a number of Trump's key campaign messages, with Homan's hardline immigration stance making him a loyal hand in carrying out the incoming president's deportation promises, while Stefanik, who has voiced strong support for Israel, will

represent the administration as the UN grapples with the ongoing wars in Gaza and Lebanon. Stefanik's nomination would need approval by the Senate, but Trump is hoping to bypass Congress by making appointments while the chamber is in recess. He has turned the issue into a loyalty test, insisting that any Republican seeking to be the leader of the Senate "must agree" to recess appointments. The three senators jockeying for the post immediately issued statements saying they supported the move or were at least open to the idea. Trump will not be inaugurated until January and had previously made one cabinet-level appointment, naming his campaign manager Susie Wiles as his White House chief of staff, a position that does not require Senate confirmation. His weekend nominations for both border czar and ambassador to the UN will help him fulfil a number of his key promises to the American electorate. Homan, a former acting director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), holds strident views on immigration, as does Miller, who served as Trump's senior adviser and speechwriter during his first term.

Curbing illegal immigration served as one of Trump's central campaign promises, as he pledged to launch the largest deportation operation of undocumented migrants in US history, beginning on day one. "I've known Tom for a long time, and there is nobody better at policing and controlling our borders," Trump said of Homan on Truth Social, adding that he will be in charge of "all deportation of illegal aliens back to their country of origin."

Stefanik, a key Trump ally now in her fifth term in office, has been a staunch defender of Israel and will head to the UN as the wars in Gaza and Lebanon dominate diplomacy. Israel welcomed the appointment Monday. "At a time when hate and lies fill the halls of the UN, your unwavering moral clarity is needed more than ever," its UN ambassador Danny Danon wrote on X, wishing her "success in standing firm for truth and justice." Here are the people Trump has picked for key positions so far

Susie Wiles, chief of staff
Wiles, 67, was a senior adviser to Trump's 2024 presidential campaign and its de facto manager.

Trump asks Mike Waltz, China hawk, to be his national security adviser

WASHINGTON. President-elect Donald Trump has asked U.S. Rep. Michael Waltz, a retired Army National Guard officer and war veteran, to be his national security adviser, a person familiar with the matter said Monday. The nod came despite simmering concerns on Capitol Hill about Trump tapping members of the House, where the final tally is still uncertain and there are worries about pulling any GOP members from the chamber because that would force a new election to fill the empty seat. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter before Trump made a formal announcement.

The move would put Waltz at the forefront of a litany of national security crises — ranging from the ongoing effort to provide weapons to Ukraine and escalating worries about the growing alliance between Russia and North Korea to the persistent attacks in the Middle East by Iran proxies and the push for a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas and Hezbollah. Waltz, a three-term GOP congressman from east-central Florida, was the first Green Beret elected to

the U.S. House and easily won reelection last week. He has been chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on readiness and a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Waltz is an ardent Trump advocate who backed efforts to overturn the 2020 election. He is considered hawkish on China, and called for a U.S. boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing due to its involvement in the origin of COVID-19 and its ongoing mistreatment of the minority Muslim Uighur population.

He has been a sharp critic of the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and has called on the U.S. to hold accountable those who bear responsibility for the deaths of the 13 U.S. service members at Abbey Gate and for "thousands of Americans and allies behind enemy lines." He has also repeated Trump's frequent complaints about a so-called "woke" military that the former president has derided as soft and too



focused on diversity and equity programs. In a statement last year, Waltz said that as head of the readiness subcommittee: "I am ready to get to work to better equip our military and turn our focus away from woke priorities and back to winning wars. Our national security depends on it." A graduate of Virginia Military Institute, Waltz was a Green Beret. He served in the active-duty Army for four years before moving to the Florida Guard. While in the Guard he did multiple combat

tours in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa and was awarded four Bronze Stars, including two with valor. He also worked in the Pentagon as a policy adviser when Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates were defense chiefs. "President-Elect Trump will begin making decisions on who will serve in his second Administration soon," said Karoline Leavitt, a spokesperson for the Trump transition. "Those decisions will be announced when they are made." Richard Goldberg, who served at the National Security Council during Trump's first term, called Waltz an impressive pick whose background as an elite U.S. service member and experience on Capitol Hill will be of great value to Trump.

"With fires raging across the world right now, Waltz is well positioned to help the President put out those fires," said Goldberg, who is now a senior adviser at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies in Washington.

News box

TNPDC orders 12L single-phase meters to meet rising demand

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation (TNPDC) has ordered 12 lakh single-phase meters from six private suppliers to address the rising demand for electricity meters. The new meters are expected to arrive in phases, with the entire batch to be delivered by December. A senior TNPDC official told TNIE, "The corporation, which serves over 2.7 crore domestic consumers and around 40 lakh commercial consumers, has a continuous demand for new meters. With such a large customer base, we need a steady supply of meters to ensure accurate billing and uninterrupted service." The official said that since there are limited suppliers in South India, TNPDC is procuring these meters from companies in the north, which has led to minor delivery delays. Currently, there are around 2 lakh single-phase meters and 1 lakh three-phase meters that are waiting to be replaced due to defects. The official pointed out that until these faulty meters are replaced, some consumers may continue to be billed based on previous average usage, potentially leading to revenue loss for TNPDC. "Once smart meters are introduced for all consumers, it will help resolve complaints related to defective meters," the official said. Another TNPDC official noted that reaching every consumer's doorstep to replace defective meters immediately is a challenge. "To ease the process, we recently advised consumers to purchase new meters from registered vendors, if needed. This is an additional option, and consumers must inform the local TNPDC office before installing the new meters," the official added.

Rs 8,945-crore budget boost to Home Department

VIJAYAWADA: In what could be a major boost to the Home Department, which had been starved of funds to meet minimum expenditure and take up capacity-building projects, the TDP-led NDA government has allocated a whopping Rs 8,945 crore to it in the State Budget for 2024-25, presented by Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav. Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha expressed her happiness over the budget allocation for the Home Department on Monday. "The budget allocation reflects the NDA government's priority to strengthen law and order in the State," she said. Hailing the budget, she noted that it gave equal importance to development and welfare, with an emphasis on Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's growth vision. "This budget will restore the State's prosperity after the destruction caused by the five-year rule of YSRC. With a whopping allocation of Rs 8,945 crore, we will revive the past glory of the Police Department," she asserted. She revealed that Rs 62 crore in funds had already been released for the modernization of the police force and infrastructure. The Home Minister also criticized former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for neglecting various crucial departments during his five-year tenure. She informed that the NDA government has emphasized the establishment of 13 fast-track NDPS courts to expedite the trial of cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

Concerns rise over household survey as residents question collection of sensitive financial, personal data in Telangana

HYDERABAD: As questions related to Aadhaar, bank account, properties, income tax details, caste and other related information are part of comprehensive household survey (Kula Ganana), the enumerators are facing opposition from the people. They are taking serious exception to giving out the sensitive data. During the process of data collection, some residents are expressing concerns over potential removal of their names from ration cards and other welfare schemes using the data. There is a reason for the residents to worry about the questions posed at the survey as they are seeking financial information of the households. The questions to which there is resistance are those related to family income. The enumerators are asking for details of the sources of income of all the family members, like the income on the land they possess, salary of the family members if they are employed and the details of income tax returns. Even though the Congress government has declared that the data will be useful in implementing welfare and development schemes, the people are worried that it may be used in rendering them ineligible for welfare schemes. At some places, the enumerators were asked why the government wanted to know such details. Some residents went to the extent of recording videos as the enumerator was seeking sensitive financial information. "Why do you want to know my caste? Why do you want to know my bank details?" are some of the questions being put to the enumerators. These questions could be heard in the videos that are flooding the social media. There is not much opposition in urban areas for such questions but in rural areas, the people are looking at the survey teams with suspicion.

Waqf land dispute escalates to wider areas

KOTTAYAM: As the Roman Catholic Church intensified its protests in the Munambam land dispute, the issue has been escalating to wider areas with Waqf Board sending notice to five families in Thavinjal grama panchayat near Mananthavadi in Wayanad. The notices were issued following a complaint received on October 10, stating 4.7 acres in 5.77 acres of Waqf land had been encroached upon by the five families. They have been asked to submit relevant documents by November 16. This apart, a video circulating in the Catholic Church's YouTube channel alleged that Waqf is now staking claim on around 250 acres of land in Taliparamba in Kannur as well as land owned by a Muslim family in Thalassery in Kannur, which is under the threat of eviction due to Waqf's claims. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church has decided to intensify its demand for the implementation of the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024. The Church is of the view that bringing specific amendments to the Waqf Act is the key to resolving the disputes related to land rights. Fr Antony Vadakkekara, public relations officer of the Syro-Malabar Church, expressed the Church's desire for an amendment in the Act to ensure equal justice for all. "Munambam is just one piece of a larger puzzle. Now the dispute at Thavinjal panchayat in Wayanad has come out. According to reports available,



Waqf land issues persist in 23 locations across Kerala with Munambam ranking 15th on the list. It is concerning to see individuals who had legally purchased and owned land for many years are now facing potential eviction due to claims made by Waqf, warranting proper amendments to ensure equal justice for all," he said. The Church has also put forth a demand to political parties to support the Waqf Amendment Bill, in view of Waqf land disputes being reported from more areas, including the latest one at Thavinjal panchayat in Wayanad district. The Church has also started a campaign through social media targeting the UDF and LDF MPs who opposed the amendments to the Bill during their speeches in Parliament. In a video, Fr. Antony Tharekadavil, priest at Thalassery diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church, argues against the claims of

UDF MPs K C Venugopal, N K Premachandran, E T Muhammed Basheer as well as CPM's lone Lok Sabha member from Kerala K Radhakrishnan, to oppose the amendments proposed by the Centre. This move seems to have major political implications amid reports of the Church tending towards BJP. By highlighting various sections in both the old and new Bills, the Church argues that many issues can be resolved with the introduction of these amendments.

Speaking to , Fr Tharekadavil said while the amendments in the Bill provide some temporary relief, a more permanent solution can only be achieved through the enactment of a clear-cut Act. "The Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 eliminates the concept of Waqf by user, that pertains to property that is used for religious or pious purposes even if there is no evidence of a normal claim. Additionally, the amendment empowers the district collector to investigate disputes regarding Waqf claims on a property and present a report to the government with a resolution," he said.

Notices issued

- The Kerala State Waqf Board has issued notices to five families in Thavinjal, Wayanad, accusing them of encroaching on 4.7 acres of a 5.77-acre Waqf property
- The notice warns that legal action will be taken under the Waqf Act to reclaim the land.

Can encroachers be given free alternative houses, Madurai Bench of Madras HC asks TN govt

MADURAI: Hearing a batch of cases filed by residents of BB Kulam area in Madurai against eviction notices issued to them by the state for encroaching the waterbody, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday sought response from the government whether the alternative accommodation, which it is planning to provide, could be offered free of cost. A special bench of Justices GR Swaminathan and B Pugalendhi orally pointed out that the government also shared part of the blame as it was the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) which sold or allotted the properties to a majority of the encroachers.

Additional advocate general Veera Kathiravan said the government is ready to provide alternative houses, each worth Rs 8.5 lakh at a subsidised cost Rs 1.5 lakh, to the encroachers at the housing area created by the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB) in Rajakoor village. But the judges opined that some of the encroachers may not be able to pay even the said amount. Some of the counsels appearing for the petitioners further objected to shifting to Rajakoor housing area and requested the court to direct the government to choose an alternative location. They also argued that the government should let them continue to reside in BB Kulam, considering it was the TNSCB which had given the properties to them. The BB Kulam Mullai Nagar Kudi Irupor Nala Sangam stated in its plea that most residents have been living in the area for more than five decades and have perfected their title by adverse possession. The judges directed the AAG to get the state's response to their suggestion and adjourned the matter to Friday for further hearing.

Crisis in Chavakkad as 200 families face threat

THRISSUR : While more than 600 families at Munambam in Ernakulam are protesting for their rights on the land in which they have been living for years, over 200 families in Chavakkad in Thrissur are facing a similar crisis as the Waqf Board has staked claim on their land. Though the residents filed a complaint with the Chief Minister's Office, they are yet to get a favourable response. Now, the residents of this coastal region have approached the High Court seeking intervention. Many residents are awaiting documents of their land from the village office. But the revenue authorities are not issuing the same as the Waqf Board has staked claim on the land.



Valiyakath Haneefa, who resides in the area, recently approached Manathala village office to secure documents related to his 6 cents of land for availing a loan to conduct his daughters' marriage. However, the

revenue authorities told Haneefa that they were unable to issue the documents as the land originally belonged to Waqf Board. The village officer told him that there is a directive not to issue ROR (Record of Rights) certificate for those who currently occupy the land. Anmol Mothi, a local BJP leader, said: "More than 200 families, mainly belonging to Muslim community, are facing similar issues. They are worried about their future as they cannot legally claim ownership of the land in which they have been residing for a long time."

It is learnt that several families living in the surroundings of Manathala mosque have been facing the same issue. Manathala

mosque and the annual Nercha festival are famous in Central Kerala. The houses in the region are situated close to each other.

"People who have been living here since their grandparents' time, people who bought land here and even those who received title deeds from the state government are also among the affected," said Anmol. He added that the issue would be brought to the attention of the Centre.

According to Sheeja Prasanth, Chavakkad municipality chairperson, "the residents are in a panic as Waqf Board has staked claim on land in various parts of the state. The residents have been living there for years. From what I came to know, they have filed a complaint with the district collector and authorities concerned."

One student in critical condition as many fall ill after food poisoning at Ashram school in Telangana

HYDERABAD: One of the three girl students from Ashram High School in Wankidi mandal in Kurumambheem Asifabad district, suffering from food poisoning, is struggling for life after having been hospitalised in NIMS for a week now. More than 50 tribal girl students had fallen ill after having dinner at the hostel on October 30, three of whom were admitted to NIMS hospital for treatment. The students, E Mahalakshmi (14), K Jyothi (13) and C Shailaja (16) had developed acute gastroenteritis, which led to dehydration and kidney issues and were admitted to NIMS for treatment.



As per the NIMS administration, Shailaja was admitted on November 5 while she was suffering from dehydration. She later developed a kidney issue (increased Serum Creatinine secondary to dehydration) and a lung infection for

which she was put on a ventilator on November 5. Subsequently, she was put on special dialysis i.e., Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy from November 5 to 9. She was off the ventilator on

November 8 and showed signs of improvement after recovering from a lung infection, she was put on an oral diet and was able to talk and move.

However, on Monday morning, she had a respiratory arrest for which she was put on a ventilator again and dialysis was being continued and her condition was said to be critical. The condition of the other two girls, who were admitted on November 3, improved. Mahalakshmi is fit to be discharged, while Jyothi is stable and under observation. Meanwhile, Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha visited NIMS hospital on Monday to enquire with the doctors about the condition of the three girl students. The minister said that all three patients were given free of cost treatment and free food was provided to the girls and their attendants, in addition to free accommodation in the private ward.

Andhra Government allocates Rs 29,909 crore for education

VIJAYAWADA: In a major boost to strengthen Andhra Pradesh's education sector, Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav has announced an allocation of Rs 29,909 crore for the School Education Department for 2024-25 fiscal. The budget also made allocations for the Super Six guarantee-Thaliki Vandanam scheme, which offers financial assistance to mothers of children studying from Class I to XII in both government and private schools. Allocation of Rs 5,387.02 crore has been made under SC, ST, BC, and Minority components, aiming to reduce dropout rates by addressing financial barriers to education. "Our government is undertaking comprehensive reforms to improve school infrastructure and enhance student learning outcomes," Kesav asserted and added that one of their administration's first priorities was the Mega DSC recruitment drive to fill 16,347 vacant teacher positions which is expected to bring new energy and expertise to the educational workforce. Additionally, the



TDP-led NDA government has reduced administrative burdens on teachers by limiting app-based requirements, enabling them to focus more on teaching. The government also announced the renaming of key educational schemes in honour of renowned figures like Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Dokka Seethamma. In the higher education sector, an additional Rs 2,326 crore has been allocated for the 2024-25 fiscal year. As part of the Swarna Andhra @ 2047 vision, the State government is committed to strengthening State universities and establishing

'knowledge cities' in Amaravati, Tirupati, and Visakhapatnam. Furthermore, the government also intends launch faculty development programmes to train 18,000 faculty over the next three years. To enhance students' employability, the government has partnered with organisations such as NASSCOM, EduSkills, Salesforce, and Microsoft to provide internships for over 2.5 lakh students, starting in December 2024. While the budget allocations have been well-received by some, concerns about funding adequacy and transparency persist.

"The previous government allocated Rs 6,500 crore for Ammavodi, and the current government's promise of Rs 15,000 per student under Thaliki Vandanam needs nearly Rs 11,000 crores, however, the State government allocated only Rs 5,387.02 crore," S Narahari, President of the Parents' Association of Andhra Pradesh, told. Sulluru Yachendra, State President of the ABVP Students' Union, also voiced reservations, urging the government to increase education sector funding as per the Kothari Commission.

Panchayats get Rs 16.7k crore for sustenance



VIJAYAWADA: The TDP-led NDA government, which believes that Gram Panchayats were given a raw deal during the previous YSRC regime, has made a budgetary allocation of Rs 16,739 crore for the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department. Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav mentioned that the government has taken initiatives to revive the past glory of the Panchayat Raj system by promoting local self-governance in its true spirit. Under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Special Gram Sabhas were conducted in all 13,326 panchayats in the state on a single day, August 23, for the approval of the MGNREGA action plan, which set a world record. The implementation of the action plan has begun with the laying of cement roads in all villages. The government has adopted a vision plan for the development of panchayats under the Swarna Panchayats programme and has released Rs 998 crore from the 15th Finance Commission funds in August, which were due to Gram Panchayats from March 2024. "Our government is implementing various convergence initiatives under MGNREGA with 16 line departments to ensure sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor and create durable assets in villages. In 2024-25, over 1.2 million households completed 100 days of wage employment. Projects such as horticulture, farm ponds, livestock shelters, and natural resource management projects, including rooftop water harvesting, percolation tanks, and check dams, have been undertaken," he highlighted. The government is committed to bringing every poor family in rural areas above the poverty line. "Our government is actively supporting the livelihood of SHG (Self-Help Group) members by aligning with various central schemes such as the PM Employment Generation Programme, PM Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises, PM SVANidhi, and PM Vishwakarma. This convergence aims to increase income levels and boost informal employment opportunities for SHG members. Additionally, by promoting Open Network Digital Commerce, our government is enabling SHG women to expand their businesses. This strategic approach will foster sustainable income growth for SHG members," he said. The Andhra Pradesh Rural Road Connectivity Project has completed 1,574 works, connecting 2,134 habitations with 2,855 km of roads, he added.

Challenge for India, US to keep defence ties on track

THE US will have Donald Trump as the new incumbent in the White House on January 20, 2025; he will be sworn in as the 47th President. He is returning to the Oval Office after four years.

Based on Trump's track record in the first term, disruptive and transactional are terms associated with the US President-elect. Allies, partners, adversaries — all the interlocutors of the US will be fastening their seat belts, and India, like other nations, would have to brace itself for the churn that may be triggered. The India-US bilateral relationship has steadily become more robust and consolidated since the 2008 breakthrough over the festering nuclear nettle. The defence vertical has acquired considerable traction, both by way of content and directivity. Will this relationship be reviewed, disruptively rearranged and adversely impacted in Trump 2.0? On current evidence, it may be averred that after 2008, there has been an essential continuity in India-US ties across the board (political, economic, defence and societal), and that this orientation will continue — notwithstanding discordant issues that surface periodically and test the resilience of the relationship. The Gupatwani Singh Pannun case, in which aspersions have been cast on Indian intelligence agencies, is illustrative.

A brief recap provides the context to this changing texture of the India-US defence/security relationship. After India's 1974 PNE (peaceful nuclear explosion), the bilateral was described as bitterly 'estranged' and India placed under severe US-led technological and related sanctions. It took three decades for a rapprochement that began after India conducted the May 1998 nuclear tests and President Bill Clinton visited India in March 2000. By 2008, a modus vivendi was reached over the nuclear issue and this was possible because of the resolve and sagacity demonstrated by President George W Bush and PM Manmohan Singh. From political estrangement and seemingly intractable dissonance over security and strategic issues, the bilateral defence relationship acquired traction in a steady manner. Following the acquisition of the landing ship USS Trenton in 2006 (it was commissioned as INS Jalashwa in January 2007), defence sales from the US to India increased. Almost \$20 billion worth of American military inventory has been contracted since 2008.

In October, India concluded a deal to acquire high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) armed drones estimated to cost \$3 billion, indicating that the US is emerging as an important arms supplier for Delhi. Most of these inventory items have been acquired under the FMS (foreign military sales) and financing framework, and it is instructive that the last such sale by the US to India was in 1965. Over the previous 15 years, India has acquired transport and maritime reconnaissance aircraft (C-130J Super Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III and P-8I Poseidon); transport, naval and attack helicopters (CH-47F Chinooks, MH-60R Seahawks and AH-64E Apaches); Harpoon anti-air missiles and M777 howitzers. With these acquisitions, India, while not being a military ally, is now the largest operator of C-17 and P-8I military aircraft outside of the US. In 2016, India was designated as a "Major Defence Partner", thereby enabling a higher degree of defence, trade and security cooperation privileges. Furthermore, in June 2023, the US and India launched a bilateral Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) to expand strategic technology and defence industrial cooperation. This framework for cooperation in strategic technology has considerable relevance for India, but as always, no nation parts with or shares such hi-tech military knowhow in a forthcoming manner. Progress in this domain will not be wrinkle-free, and how this is taken forward by both nations will be an indicator about the qualitative texture and directivity imparted to the India-US defence relationship. This issue comes into focus with the decision taken in June 2023 regarding jet engines. A major US defence company, General Electric (GE) signed a \$716-million agreement with India's public sector entity HAL to jointly produce the F414 jet engine. This was heralded as a 'breakthrough' and was announced when PM Modi visited the US.

Delay in holding Senate polls bodes ill for PU

We must remember that PU has stood the test of time for over 130 years and we must trust its form of democratic academic governance.

ON October 31, 2024, the term of the Senate, the governing body of Panjab University (PU), which has a legacy of 132 years, came to an end without much ado. The Senate is the apex body that has superintendence over the affairs, concerns and property of the university.

At present, the university is running sans any governance framework, without a Syndicate — the executive arm of the Senate — and there are no deans. It seems that nobody — the stakeholders, former university fellows, faculty, students and public — has any inkling about the fate of this unique and inclusive governance structure, which has been a matter of pride for the region's informed citizenry. A delay in the election process has been witnessed only once earlier: in 2020. The compelling constraint of the pandemic was a good enough reason for that delay. Then, the constitution of the Senate was completed by October 2021 and it ran for its shrunk tenure of three years: from 2021 to 2024. A plea to extend the tenure by one year and not to count it from the point of time when it didn't exist (2020) was made in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, but no interim relief was granted.

This year, though, the normal process of declaring the polls 240 days before the election day (of the graduate constituency), i.e. in February 2024, was given the go-by. The period has been allowed to elapse without giving any valid reason or putting in place any alternative. Notably, no hullabaloo was raised for this unreasonable departure from practice and if it is being done now, it is too little, too late.

The PU Senate has 91 members, including 36 fellows nominated by the Chancellor (Vice-President of India), two from the Punjab Assembly and six ex-officio members. The remaining 46 members are elected from 10 sections of the university and its vast flotilla of 200 affiliated colleges. Thus, representation is given to different groups of principals and faculty from colleges and registered graduates. Only four positions are earmarked for university teachers. This is a strange arrangement as decisions about the university, faculty recruitment and promotions, impacting the core functioning of its academic departments, are taken by the majority of the college faculty and non-teaching members.

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representation is given to different groups of principals and faculty from colleges and registered graduates. Only four positions are earmarked for university teachers. This is a strange arrangement as decisions about the university, faculty recruitment and promotions, impacting the core functioning of its academic departments, are taken by the majority of the college faculty and non-teaching members. The constituency of registered graduates is the largest one. Voting for it is conducted at hundreds of polling booths set up across Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. The idea of its large size can be gauged from the fact that it includes every person who has, over the years, graduated from PU or its affiliated colleges.

In 2021, there were 3.61 lakh eligible voters. A budget of Rs 2.10 crore was allocated for the Senate elections. There is no system of deletion of deceased voters' names and no revision of voter lists is done; only an addition of new members is made. One lakh voters were registered in Ludhiana alone, where 48 polling booths were established. However, the voter turnout was a mere 14.57 per cent. This fact, makes this election an easy-to-win number game. Voters of denominational institutes and organisations, such as banks, traders' bodies and other unions, are easy to

capture for en bloc voting. Historically, the representation of women, people with disabilities, minorities, reserved categories or other marginalised groups in the Senate has been dismal. The trope of dynastic politics is quite visible.

The Panjab University Senate election is a significant event in north-west India as the university has been the prime institute of higher learning in the region since the pre-Partition times. With almost 100 departments on the campus and 200 colleges spread across Punjab, it has been touching the lives of a substantial cross-section of people. The Senate holds immense powers over the management of PU affairs. Its fellows enjoy huge clout over the students, parents, faculty, staff and societal stakeholders. Thus, the elections are taken seriously, with people spending a lot of time, effort and money in their bid to get into the board. For some members, retaining their seats for decades is a prestige issue.

Peculiar calendar rules ensure that a senator can go on to become the Dean of Faculties. Despite the senators having no experience of research or academics and belonging to entirely different professions, they could grace this position. The world over, this post is reserved for the highest ranking academicians responsible for shaping the academics of the disciplines. Though voices for reform of the PU Senate's functioning have been raised, they have been resisted by the senators. The public perception of a PU senator is one of a power-hungry, arrogant person, as in recent years, some have been in the news for the wrong reasons. However, we need to remind ourselves of the fact that this institution has stood the test of time for more than 130 years and we must trust this form of democratic academic governance. This system took the university to the pinnacle of higher education institution rankings. PU is a NAAC A++ university, 46 of its faculty members figure among the top two per cent scientists of the world and its illustrious alumni are scattered around the globe. The democratic structure of the Senate — with the number of elected members being more than the nominated ones and representatives from varied sections — makes it difficult for external forces with ulterior agendas to destabilise the university or intervene in decisions that are taken after brainstorming by its members.

Research studies in academic administration indicate that large executive bodies are a deterrent to sound decision-making.

'Sc's divided verdict

Australia for ban on social media access

THE Supreme Court's decision to revisit Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) minority status marks a pivotal moment in the discourse on minority rights within India's education system. By a narrow 4-3 majority, the court on Friday overturned the 1967 S Azeez Basha vs Union of India ruling, which had denied AMU's minority status on the grounds of its establishment by statute. The majority, led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, argued that the focus should be on AMU's origins rather than its formal incorporation. Dissenting Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and SC Sharma, however, countered that genuine minority institutions should retain administrative control.

Established by the Muslim community in 1875 and later formalised under British-era legislation in 1920, AMU's founding intent is central to this re-evaluation. Under this interpretation, AMU's identity is tied to its origins, even if it is now subject to government oversight. This perspective also asserts



that minority institutions need not be exclusively controlled by members of their founding community, nor

must they solely serve that community to retain their minority status.

The SC ruling has deferred the final decision on AMU's status to a three-judge Bench. This rekindles the possibility for AMU to reserve seats for Muslim students, which could strengthen its mission to serve the community. The decision assumes significance as it comes amid broader conversations about minority rights, autonomy and the balancing act between government regulation and community-led education. The court's nuanced stance recognises that education rights for minorities are essential for fostering diversity within India's academic landscape. A favourable verdict may set a precedent, not only for AMU but also for other institutions seeking minority status, potentially reshaping the country's approach to minority rights in education.

Hurting towards a climate apocalypse

Gospel of capitalism continues to seduce us to buy more, use more and thereby cause more pollution

THESE days, I often congratulate myself for having resisted the temptation of buying a car. In fact, I love to walk, and it makes me feel good that there is no carbon emission from this simple act, and I am playing at least a minimal role in combating the threat of climate emergency. However, a pedestrian like me is being perceived as an obstacle or a hindrance. After all, our highways, lanes/bylanes, it seems, exist only for cars, motorbikes and other vehicles.

No wonder it is becoming increasingly difficult to walk peacefully or cross the road without anxiety. See the paradox: if you seek to play a role — even a minimal one — for reducing carbon emissions, you are not wanted! Even though scientists and environmentalists are repeatedly reminding us that because of the ceaseless burning of fossil fuels, the world is in a state of climate emergency, we are never tired of cutting trees, constructing mega expressways, glorifying speed and mobility, buying cars — more and more bigger ones — and designing towns/cities in a way that walking or cycling becomes almost impossible. The Delhi Statistical Handbook 2023 is frightening. The total number of vehicles registered in the national capital stood at 1.2 crore, of which 33.8 lakh were private ones. The game goes on, even though vehicular emissions account for about 38 per cent of Delhi's pollution. The entire thing is self-defeating. Imagine, for instance, the fate of Bengaluru — the transformation of a peaceful city into a noisy zone known for its notorious traffic congestion. Yes, with more than 23 lakh private cars, as a report says, commuters spend an average 30 minutes to cover merely 10 km! We seem to be caught in a vicious cycle: more cars, more traffic congestion, more flyovers, more expressways, more pollution. Yet, the lobby of techno-capitalists, contractors and politicians has begun to glorify yet

another expressway to be inaugurated soon. Yes, this 264-km Delhi-Dehradun Expressway will enable you to travel between these two cities in just 2.5 hours! And as usual, we will be tempted to buy the latest model of a fancy car, drive along this sleek expressway and feel the thrill of what our hyper-modern times worship — speed and more speed. And we can safely forget that because of this expressway, as statistics provided by the National Highways Authorities of India suggest, 7,555 trees have already been felled! Who bothers about the pain of trees and the resultant human tragedy? Likewise, the speed/mobility inherent in the modernist project of development has led to a tremendous growth of the domestic air passenger traffic in India; it is expected to cross 150 million passengers in 2024. Amid these tales of 'progress', do we bother to contemplate and understand that air travel is the most carbon-intensive activity an individual can undertake? It seems we are willing to pay the price. We inhale polluted air in our metro cities, quarrel with our neighbours over parking space and live with hypertension and diabetes because of constant exposure to speed and noise. And I feel like resisting this obsession with speed and mobility that our expressways and airports symbolise. I cherish the rhythm of 'slowness'.

There is yet another consequence of our fascination with speed — the cult of consumerism. "Buy one, get



one free" — the market-driven mantra tempts us to buy and consume more, be it latest electronic goods, a fancy garment, a packet of potato chips or detergent powder, or, for that matter, a new smartphone. This normalisation of consumption further pollutes the environment. For these products, massive amounts of energy are required to power manufacturing facilities and transportation. This leads to carbon emissions. Likewise, textile production generates millions of tonnes of waste each year, and very few fabrics ever get recycled. Moreover, as e-commerce has increased our reliance on packed items, millions of packages wrapped in plastic create humongous amounts of waste. We should not forget that plastic

exposes living beings to harmful chemicals which might cause cancer and other health problems. Likewise, electronics contain rare metals that often end up in landfills. Moreover, plastic waste is likely to land in the ocean, causing severe damage to marine species. Yet, the gospel of capitalism continues to seduce us to buy more, consume more and thereby cause harm to the earth's ecosystem. As you visit a shopping mall, receive messages of special 'offers and discounts' and regard shopping and buying as mass entertainment, you realise that consumerism is the most cherished religion of our times. Yet, I seek to become a 'minimalist'. I know that my 'slow living' or 'minimalism' is no answer to what is happening around us — the visible presence of a climate emergency with all its devastating consequences: the constant emission of greenhouse gases causing the rise of the average world temperature by 1.1-1.2°C, melting of glaciers, more and more heatwaves, frequent and intense floods, cyclones, wildfires and the loss of human lives. We need to strive for a massive structural transformation for which world leaders, policymakers and corporate elites have to take the historic Paris Agreement seriously and rethink development and economic growth to substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. But then, no big revolution is possible unless you and I also try to alter our life projects for reducing carbon emissions, exert pressure on the government and initiate a movement for saving our earth from a catastrophe.

5 Hobby ideas for a Smarter kid



Is your child showing sluggish behaviour and lacks concentration when studying? If that is the case, you will have to look at the type of hobbies he/she might be pursuing. Along with reducing the gadget time for children, the overall development of the child's mind is necessary to make them alert, sharp and creative. Just like studying and playing, a structured approach to introducing hobbies will help you in making your child smarter. Try these to get their developing minds into action.

1. Buy them educative games
Kids need mental exercise too and what best then getting them to do puzzles, crosswords and word games. Get them into the habit of solving the same in activity books right from an young age. When they are little older, they will turn to

solving sudoku or learn to play chess. These brainteasers help challenge your child when it comes to problem solving.

2. Get them to learn a new language
Studies have maintained that learning a second language after the age of 10 improves cognitive functions, making kids smarter. Children who are adept in multiple language, can focus better when under pressure and can source relevant information.

3. Make a collection of coins and postal stamps
A child's mind is ever-inquisitive and when they start collecting coins and postal stamps from the world over, they get to know about different countries and places. Their curiosity makes them learn more about these places like areas of interest, currencies and geographical attributes.

4. Learn music
You may not enjoy it much when your child has just started his lessons to play any musical instrument, but it is beneficial to them in the long run since it can help prevent the decline in the ability to recognize words and comprehend speech in later years. Music lessons have shown to benefit children's IQ and academic performance.

5. Encourage fitness and sports activities
While free play helps kids grow up into happy, healthy adults, participation in organized sports builds their confidence, teaches teamwork and leadership skills. So encourage your child to pick up a ball or take them with you for a jog even as you talk to them about getting into school sports.



Your dog remembers more than you think

Just like humans, dogs have the remarkable ability to remember and recall events from the past even when the canines do not expect to be rewarded, a new study has found. "The results of our study can be considered as a further step to break down artificially erected barriers between non-human animals and humans," said Claudia Fugazza of MTA-ELTE Comparative Ethology Research Group in Hungary. "Dogs are among the few species that people consider 'clever,' and yet we are still surprised whenever a study reveals that dogs and their owners may share some mental abilities despite our distant evolutionary relationship," Fugazza said.

In the new study, the researchers took advantage of a trick called 'Do as I Do'. Dogs trained to 'Do as I Do' can watch a person perform an action and then do the action themselves. For example, if their owner jumps in the air and then gives the "Do it!" command, the dog would jump in the air too. The fact that dogs can be trained in this way alone was not enough to prove episodic memory. That is because it needed to be shown that dogs remember what they just saw a person do even when they were not expecting to be asked or rewarded. To get around this problem, the researchers first trained 17 dogs to imitate human actions with the 'Do as I Do' training method. Next, they did another round of training in which dogs were trained to lie down after watching the human action, no matter what it was. After the dogs had learned to lie down reliably, the researchers surprised them by saying "Do It" and the dogs did. The dogs recalled what they had seen the person do even though they had no particular reason to think they would need to remember. They showed episodic-like memory.



Don't give away all to your children Doctor advises parents



Make a will to protect your children but keep enough for yourself so you don't have to depend on them in your old age. Take an active part in their day-to-day routine but never interfere in your children's issues unless asked for. These are some of the solutions in geriatric expert Dr VS Natarajan's new book 'Generation Gap' that was released on Wednesday.

The two-part English book, by Natarajan and Hema Narasimhan, delves deep into the issue of elder abuse and its various forms rampant in Indian society. The senior geriatrician, who says he drew inspiration from his many of his patients opening up to him about their children, includes several real stories. One of them is about a rich elderly woman in Purasaiwalkam, Natarajan's patient for many years. She sought his advice after her only son threatened to poison her if she did not transfer properties to

his name. "The reasons could be that children look at their personal happiness above the welfare of their parents. With real estate boom, children want to sell off their parents' properties and make money. These are only my hypothesis," he said. Dr Natarajan, the author of 30 medical books, had penned a book with the same title in 2015, analysing the abuse of elderly at home. Natarajan advises senior citizens to lead independent lives and be aware of laws protecting them from mistreatment, while urging at the same time children to spend quality time with their parents. "It not just food and shelter that old people need. They need love and care too," he said. "They have to remember that what they do to their parents will be repeated in their old age," he added.

Delhi Transport Commission employees plan strike from November 13

NEW DELHI: Public bus service in the capital is expected to be hit severely from November 13 as workers of Delhi Transport Commission (DTC) will begin an indefinite strike to press their demands, including regularisation of contractual staff, timely salary and specified duty hours among others. The members of DTC Employees Unity Union are reaching out to everyone appealing for cooperation. They are contacting all the bus drivers and conductors of Delhi to join the protest at the DTC headquarters this week. Employees of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and Transport Department have been fighting for a long time for their various demands. Now, the employees of DTC and Transport Department are preparing for a big strike on November 13 in Delhi. According to Lalit Chaudhary, president of DTC Employees Unity Union, thousands of employees demonstrated last month at the DTC headquarters pressing similar demands but no heed was paid to their demands by the authority. "A memorandum was also given to the senior officials of the Transport Department regarding their demands. On



October 29 as well, the problems were explained to the officials by giving a memorandum again, but till now there has been no meeting on these problems. Now, our union has decided to hold a massive protest on November 13," he said. After the metro, buses are considered the second lifeline in the capital operating currently with a fleet of 7,400 buses. About 41 lakh people commute daily with these buses. The strike is set to cause massive inconvenience to the passengers. According to the DTC union, the conductors working

on contracts for a long time should be regularised and their services should be made permanent. "The union has also demanded to have 60% permanent and 40% contract employees in the DTC department as per the rule under the Company Act, but at present 100% conductors are working on contract," the memorandum of demands read. "DTC contract employees should be given travel allowance (TA) and 15 days of Class IV Leave (CL) as is given in DIMTS Company. Also, employees should be paid for

government holidays," it added. **Govt launches new bus routes** In a move to enhance public transport options in outer areas, the city government has inaugurated a new bus route, 972E, from Auchandi Border to Uttam Nagar Terminal and extended the route 990C to Auchandi Border. Route 972E will be served by five low-floor electric buses operated by the Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS), covering a distance of 36.6 km in about 2 hours and 39 minutes. The extended service on Route 990C, which previously operated between Rithala Metro Station and Bawana, will now reach Auchandi Border. Route 990C will also see five low-floor, air-conditioned electric buses managed by the DTC on its 20 km stretch. The new Route 972E will benefit residents of Auchandi Border, Dariyapur Kalan, Bawana, Pooth Khurd Village, Barwala Village, Prahladpur and nearby areas, providing direct connectivity to key locations such as Aditi College, Maharishi Valmiki Hospital, Brahma Shakti Hospital, and the Janakpuri District Centre.

Anti-Terror Agency Conducts Searches To Probe Al-Qaida's Terror Activities

The crackdown at nine locations, linked with individuals suspected of supporting and funding the activities of the proscribed terrorist organisation Al-Qaida, started early in the morning in Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, West Bengal, Bihar, Tripura and Assam, it said.

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday conducted extensive searches at multiple locations across the country in connection with the activities promoted by some Bangladeshi nationals as part of terror group Al-Qaida's conspiracy to destabilise India, according to an official statement. The crackdown at nine locations, linked with individuals suspected of supporting and funding the activities of the proscribed terrorist organisation Al-Qaida, started early in the morning in Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, West Bengal, Bihar, Tripura and Assam, it said. The searches led to the



recovery of incriminating documents showing detailed banking transactions, digital devices including mobile phones, and other evidence related to terror funding activities, the statement issued by the NIA said. As per NIA investigations, the suspects whose premises were raided are sympathisers of a Bangladesh-based Al-Qaida network. The searches were part of NIA's ongoing investigations into a 2023 case pertaining to a conspiracy orchestrated by Bangladesh-based Al-Qaida operatives in collaboration with the arrested individuals, it said. The conspiracy was aimed at propagating Al-Qaida's terrorist activities and radicalising gullible youths in India, the probe agency said. In November last year, NIA had filed a charge sheet against five accused, including four Bangladeshi nationals -- Mohd Sojibmiyan, Munna Khalid Ansari alias Munna Khan, Azarul Islam alias Jahangir or Akash Khan, Abdul Latif alias Mominul Ansari, it added. The fifth accused, Farid, is an Indian national. NIA investigations into their antecedents had revealed that the accused had procured forged documents to carry out their activities covertly. They were actively involved in radicalising and motivating vulnerable Muslim youth in India, spreading Al-Qaida's violent ideology, collecting funds, and transferring these funds to Al-Qaida, the statement said.

Dense smog in Delhi, many stations record AQI close to 350

NEW DELHI: Delhi's air quality worsened early Monday, as the city was blanketed in dense smog and the air quality index (AQI) dropped to 347, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data at 7 am. This placed the city in the "very poor" category, with the AQI reading 334 on Sunday at 4 pm. Around a dozen monitoring stations recorded AQI levels close to 350, also within the "very poor" range. In the ITI Jahangirpuri area, the AQI rose to 377, which is classified as "severe" under CPCB guidelines. Monday saw Delhi's maximum temperature reach 31 degrees Celsius, slightly above the seasonal average, following a weekend high of 32.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature was 23 degrees Celsius, which is three degrees above normal, according to CPCB data. Various locations in the city, such as India Gate, Akshardham, and Bhikaiji Cama Place, also showed very poor air quality. Out of 39 monitoring stations in Delhi, two—Bawana and Jahangirpuri—reported "severe" air quality, with AQIs of 401 and 412, respectively. Other areas like Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and Akshardham had AQIs of 316 and 378, which are also considered very poor. To combat pollution, the Delhi government has rolled out initiatives like the "EV as a Service" programme, which was launched on Sunday with Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar leading the event.

Delhi HC approves counting of votes in DUSU polls with rider

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Monday gave the green light for counting of votes for the 2024 Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections, conditional on satisfactory cleanup efforts across the campus. A bench, comprising Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, had previously halted the process after observing defacement of university and public property due to election campaigning. The bench directed the university to resume counting on or before November 26, provided that all remaining campaign material and



graffiti are cleared from the vicinity. "The matter is closed with a direction to DU to undertake the counting process... if it is satisfied that the [remaining] sites... are cleaned," the bench said, emphasising that the intent behind the proceedings was corrective rather than punitive. The counsel representing the candidates assured the court of their commitment to removing any lingering campaign materials from affected areas. Most colleges and faculties in the North and South campuses were cleaned, but images submitted to the court revealed campaign-related posters and graffiti still lingering on properties near the campus. The court proceedings were initiated by advocate Prashant Manchanda, who filed a plea seeking accountability from candidates and student organisations for allegedly defacing public spaces.

Students, teachers back Dr BR Ambedkar University professors

NEW DELHI: Days after the Dr BR Ambedkar University (AUD) sacked two senior professors, the teaching faculty and students' organisations from across the city came forward to protest against the varsity's move and express solidarity with the professors. According to the teachers union, the two senior colleagues, Professor Salil Misra and Professor Asmita Kabra, have been made scapegoats for acting in their administrative capacities (as Pro VC and acting Registrar respectively), in helping implement a policy decision duly approved in 2018 by the Board of Management (BOM) of AUD for one-time absorption of contractual non-teaching staff. Students' Federation of India (SFI) highlighted how the vicious attack by the AUD is in line with the national crackdown on students everywhere. While in the past the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi Faculty Association (AUDFA) has protested against the lack of a functional Internal Complaints Committee to fight against gender and caste harassment of the teachers, the university is today conveniently

wielding the institutional tools to paint Prof. Kabra and Prof. Misra for misconduct which has no grounds, it stated. Meanwhile, AUDFA also condemned the decision of the BOM and University administration to remove the two professors. "These two senior colleagues have been made scapegoats for acting in their administrative capacities, in helping implement a policy decision duly approved in 2018 by the BOM of AUD for one-time absorption of contractual non-teaching staff," read the statement. AUDFA's statement further read, "Both Prof. Salil Misra and Asmita Kabra are globally reputed academics. However, they have been targeted unfairly since 2019 through repeated inquiries. The pendency of inquiries was used to deny them important opportunities for career progression. They have suffered immense trauma, mental harassment, and the financial burden of litigation and legal defence for five years." **AAP is a proof that govts can run schools well: Kejriwal** The AAP dispensation in Delhi has proved that governments can not only manage schools but elevate them to a

world-class level, says the party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal. He said that the country's first education minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had dreamt of quality education for every child, and today, Delhi's government schools are making that dream come true. On the occasion of National Education Day, the former chief minister paid tributes to Azad. He recalled the Maulana's vision of providing the best possible education to every child in the country. Kejriwal stated that this dream is being fulfilled by the AAP government in Delhi, which has demonstrated that the government can not only run government schools but also make them exceptional. In a post on X, Kejriwal remarked that children from economically weaker backgrounds in Delhi are now passing competitive exams like IIT-JEE, and NEET and pursuing careers as doctors, engineers, and officers. What's more, even the affluent are now choosing government schools over private institutions, he noted. The AAP chief stressed that education is the top priority of his government.

Supreme Court extends Kerala actor Siddique's interim bail in rape case

The actor, through his counsel, informed the Supreme Court that the police repeatedly demanded his phone and laptop from the time of the alleged crime. Justice Satish Chandra Sharma questioned how someone could be expected to provide a phone used in 2016.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday extended the interim anticipatory bail of Malayalam actor Siddique in a rape case filed by a fellow actor, following the release of the Justice Hema Committee report, which highlighted incidents of sexual harassment in the Malayalam film industry. The 62-year-old actor had previously been granted interim bail, and the bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma extended the bail further by a week. A case was filed against Siddique in August this year based on a complaint by a young actor, who accused him of raping her in a hotel in 2016 after inviting her for a preview of his movie. The complaint also alleges that he had attempted to sexually assault her at a theatre earlier that same year, prior to the rape incident. The actor, through his counsel Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, submitted before the top court on Tuesday that the police kept asking for his phone and laptop used in 2016, questioning, "How will I give it?" Senior Advocate Ranjit Kumar,



appearing for the state, told the court that though the actor was appearing before the probe team, he was not cooperating with the investigation and was giving evasive responses. Justice Satish Chandra Sharma questioned how a person can be asked to hand over a phone used in 2016. The bench also included Justice Bela M Trivedi. "Material and question are two different things. He is saying you want the 2016 iPhone. As per my personal experience, I bought an iPhone 16, giving my iPhone 15 back in the shop," Justice Sharma said. "I quite see that. I am not joining issue on that,"

Advocate Ranjit Kumar. The Supreme Court adjourned the case until next week due to the ill health of the petitioner's counsel, Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi. Following the complaint filed on August 19, which coincided with the release of the Hema Committee report that shook the Malayalam film industry, Siddique resigned as general secretary of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA), the largest actors' body in Mollywood. Siddique has been charged with rape (Section 376) and criminal intimidation (Section 506). However, he denied all allegations. In the wake of revelations made in the Hema Committee report, multiple FIRs have been registered against several high-profile Malayalam film personalities over sexual harassment claims. The state government subsequently formed a high-level probe team to investigate these allegations and proceed according to the law.

Ensuring Easy Access To Justice To All Our Constitutional Duty: Justice Sanjiv Khanna

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India Justice Sanjiv Khanna on Monday said that ensuring easy access to justice and equal treatment to citizens regardless of their status is the constitutional duty of the judiciary. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who was sworn in as the 51st CJI by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, expressed deep honour in leading the judiciary, the third pillar of democracy, and outlined a citizen-centric agenda for judicial reforms. "Judiciary is an integral, yet distinct and independent part of the governance system. The Constitution trusts upon us the role of constitutional guardian, protector of Fundamental Rights, and responsibility to fulfil the important task of being a service provider of justice," the CJI said in his first statement. He said, "The justice delivery framework in terms of providing equal treatment



necessitates fair opportunity to succeed to all, regardless of status, wealth or power, and a just and unbiased adjudication. These mark our core principles." "The responsibility entrusted upon us affirms our commitment as protectors of citizens' rights and as dispute resolvers. It is our constitutional duty to ensure easy access to justice to all citizens of our great nation," he said. Chief Justice Khanna

identified pressing challenges facing the judiciary, including the need to reduce case backlogs, make litigation affordable, and simplify complex legal processes. Recognizing that the justice system must cater to all citizens, he outlined a vision to make courts more approachable and user-friendly. The CJI aimed to adopt a self-evaluative approach which is receptive and responsive to feedback in its working, the apex court said in a statement. "Making judgments comprehensible to the citizens and promoting mediation will be a priority," it said. With a focus on criminal case management, the CJI pledged to prioritise reducing trial durations, adopting a systematic approach, and ensuring that legal procedures are not gruelling for citizens. He also highlighted the importance of promoting mediation to resolve disputes efficiently and provide timely justice. As Chief Justice Khanna steps into his new

role, he brings a vision of a judiciary that is not only a protector of rights but also a service-oriented institution committed to enhancing accessibility and ease of justice for all citizens. Earlier in the day, Justice Khanna heard 45 cases on his first day as the CJI and thanked lawyers and bar leaders for wishing him well. He received a rousing welcome by the bar leaders, lawyers including former attorney general and senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi. CJI Khanna took the oath in English "in the name of God". Born on May 14, 1960, CJI Khanna will serve on the post for a little over six months and demit office on May 13, 2025 up on attaining the age of 65. He succeeded Justice D Y Chandrachud who demitted office on Sunday. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and former CJIs Chandrachud and J S Khehar were among those present on the occasion.

11 ways to have a rocking Married life

With divorces throwing many a marriage apart, there are those who feel that this institution is in urgent need of an overhaul if it is to remain relevant and not become the sham modern marriages are increasingly ending up as.



While many lament that monogamy is all but dead, we feel that it's still too early to write off the institution, or even reinvent it. It's worked in the past, and there's no reason why it shouldn't now. What we might need to do instead is to find ways to make our marriage work, rather than wait for it to flounder and then take recourse in the excuse that it wasn't meant to work anyway. If you think marriage is for keeps, here're 10 plus One ways to keep your marriage strong and rocking.

1. Know that the romance and passion of the early days will sooner or later fizzle out. Instead of moping for that lost passion, recall the early days of your dating/courtship/wooing/chasing. This will instantly re-establish the connect that brought you both together, and you'll fondly look back at those days and moments. You may not be able to summon that kind of passion, but you can still steal time for just the two of you.... Remember when passion subsides, companionship takes over. Revel in the comfort of becoming good

companions.

2. True, you are now man and wife, but you don't need to merge your individual identities. If before marriage you were fond of wearing skirts, or playing a game of cricket with the boys, you don't need to give that up just because you're now married. As long as it doesn't hurt anyone, of course, like it would if you were a Casanova before marriage and insist on being allowed to remain so! It's worth preserving your own identity in a marriage because then you wouldn't be forced to cramp your signature/individual style or lose your personality. This will mean that there will be little scope for frustration and bitterness as your relationship gets older.

3. Have a lot of US time, but don't forget to have plenty of ME time either... you not only stay away from each other's hair, but also give no room for breeding contempt that too much familiarity and being together invariably bring.

4. While giving space to each other is vital, make sure that communication never ceases. Any lull in communication can be potentially dangerous. So, have periods of silences but fill each other in when you catch up. If there's anything that's bugging you about the other, or if there's something at work that's troubling you, nothing works better than using each other as



involved and responsive sounding boards. Bounce ideas, plans, off each other.

5. Fights between couples are normal, but so is making up. Scream, holler, have it all out, but once you're over and done with remember to not let the sun go down on your fight. Make up before the day's out.

6. Many couples fight over finances. Joint accounts and holding investments together are all very fine, but there's no need to give up your fiscal independence or opt out of holding individual bank accounts.

7. Infidelity- Now that's a deal breaker, but don't suspect your spouse of infidelity if he or she is appreciative of someone of the opposite sex, or is a recipient of admiring glances from them. Also you don't need to jump into some absurd conclusion just because you stumbled upon some innocuous SMSes or mails, or the last number dialed happened to belong to a colleague of the opposite sex. Unless you've caught him or her red-handed or have enough incriminating evidence to nail him or her, like, say, lipstick on his collar (of a shade not in your lipstick collection) or some strong masculine perfume on her person (a fragrance that's certainly not part of your vanity collection), there's no need to go ballistic or melodramatic. Even in cases where the telltale signs are rather strong, it would be better if you can bring it up instead of losing your

sleep, peace and equanimity of mind over it.

8. Parenting- now that's a tricky territory many couples fight over. Best would be to find a healthy middle ground. If one of you is too strict and the perfect disciplinarian, and the other way too indulgent, striking a balanced middle ground helps where parenting is concerned and less hair-splitting or accusations over kids and their upbringing, often an area of discord and bad blood between couples.

9. Take holidays together. Building your nest egg, or working doubly hard to see your way through that mountain of EMIs is smart, but don't forget to take a break and breather. Also, though our daily existence moves in a, more or less, set pattern, it is always nice to make room for some unscheduled and off the beaten track moments.

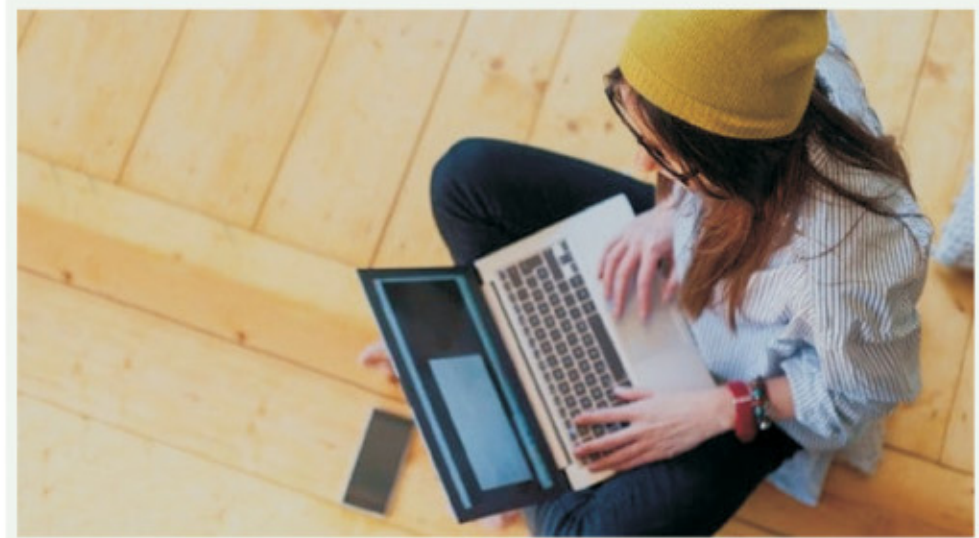
10. Respect each other's weaknesses and sensitive points. If he can't bear to hear any criticism about his mother, and she can't stand her unsuccessful attempts at losing weight being made fun of, know how to steer clear of those. Ribbing each other good-humouredly is healthy, provided you know where to get off. And finally: 11. Marriage is another word for monotony and routine, but nothing like action between the sheets to rev it up and keep it exciting. You don't need to keep your scores but remember that sleeping together isn't just a bedroom arrangement; it's a marriage binder too!

Post a comment



Your parents on Facebook. Like?

Youngsters share an awkward relationship with their parents on social networking sites



Shreya Raman is currently fighting off a major wave of embarrassment on her Facebook account. She logs in to find out that on her status update that went "Awesum party last nite!!!" her mother had zealously commented "You better nt hav been drinking?! who was with u? were u driving?"; and to add insult to injury, a friend comments: "ouch Shreya! u've been busted!" Shreya's not the only one. Many young adults share a rather uncomfortable relationship with their parents on popular social networking sites. Everybody thinks twice before accepting a friend request from their parents or relatives and more often than not, end up editing their privacy settings so that they don't reveal much about what they're up to. "It's because I'll get hell from my mother every time I use a curse word, or talk about drinking with friends," says Naveen Raj, a final-year college student. Naveen feels that most youngsters feel conscious about their activities on the public domain when they know that their parents can view it too. "Takes the fun out of the social network when you have to lead a guarded existence online," he says.

Young adults have a number of things they'd want to keep away from their parents including relationship statuses and moments of inebriation that could have been caught on camera. "There are two extreme reasons behind why youngsters like to keep their parents from seeing what they post online. One, parents who use the medium to spy on their child's activities and clamp down on them, and parents who are too eager to be part of their child's social life," explains Sujatha Ratnam, a school counselor who has had to handle many incidents where parents get too involved. With cyber bullying taking prominence of late, a lot of parents feel that it's best that they are part of the

whole social network movement. "Online or not, I look after my boy. Simple," says one parent while another defends her joining the website saying it has nothing to do with her daughter. "Just because I'm older does not mean that I don't have a life," she says. I have friends too and I have pictures and conversations to share. What's the whole issue with that?" she says.

But when it comes to letting out information online, it seems that the tables have turned these days. A recent study revealed that parents often reveal more information on their online accounts than what their kids do. Fourteen or forty, the whole idea of joining the social network has to do with a greater desire for a sense of belonging -- for some parents, with their children while for the young adults, with their peer group.

Rupesh Gaekwad, a high-school student, loves that his father's among his friends on the site. "I was in a boarding school the last two years and the site was the only way my father and I could share our interests. We got to bond despite the distance," he says.

Krithika Rau, a freelance writer feels that it's healthy having your parents on your friends' list, and people should really stop making a huge deal out of it. "If you're posting stuff on the site that you don't want your parents to see, then you shouldn't be posting it for the rest of the world to see in the first place," she feels. But Krithika too has a funny yet embarrassing anecdote to share: "It's cool that I have my dad on my friend's list, but it's quite embarrassing when I get random poll requests on my wall asking me whether I think my dad's sexy or not! Now that I don't Like," she laughs.

Innovative ways to make Family time count

Take classes together Join yoga or aerobics classes offered for parents and kids together. If your little one is too young to participate, look for classes that help you burn calories with your baby by incorporating him into your yoga moves or just take them along with you for an evening walk, or jump into the pool for a swim and bond.

Holiday time

Getting away from the city, automatically, helps you switch off from the daily grind. Family holidays are great occasion for each member of the family to get relaxed. Only a peaceful environment can help them to forget the tensions and rejuvenate the mind and body to lead life actively and happily.

Happy eaters

Get the kids to accompany you to the market and let them pick their own fruits and vegetables. Involve them in the food preparation. This way, they are more likely to enjoy their meals and try new things. This would prevent you from stressing on what the little one's eating habits. Likewise, what toddlers munch on during snack time will have a lasting effect on their health down the road. The period from birth to two years is a critical window for the promotion of optimal growth.

No desserts as rewards The easiest way for parents to get their little ones to eat fruits and veggies is by bribing them with a candy post meal. However, this bribe can cost their health in the long run because it builds a greater aversion to foods like peas, bitter gourd and



Here are ways to ensure that you bond better with your folks

long gourd. Often, parents offer a food once, and if the child doesn't eat it, they never reintroduce it. The key is to introduce (children) to new foods.

Family dinners

A 2000 survey found that the nine to 14-year-olds who ate dinner with their families frequently consumed more fruits and vegetables and less cola and fried foods. Their diets also had higher amounts of many nutrients, like calcium, iron, and fibre. While on the table, serve your child small portions. A study has also found that when children served themselves food, the portions were

appropriate for their age, whereas when adults served them double portions, the children ate 25 per cent more. Kids who frequently eat with their families are less likely to get depressed or develop an eating disorder.

Be there fully

It doesn't help if you are just there physically at home, and mentally still occupied with your job. So, set aside a specific time when you check your mails and return calls, instead of doing so throughout the day. Once home from work, also tape a note to the telephone that says 'No!' to remind you not to spread yourself too thin.

Revive date plans

Happy parents make happy kids. So, it won't hurt to revive the dating game. Catch a film or head out for a cup of coffee, while your kids are asleep. Working out together is also a fun way of spending time with your partner.

Redo your room

Too often, family rooms are the centre of laziness in a home. Change things around. Get the room painted in brighter colours or replace the comfy sofa with a bean bag. Clear up the clutter to breathe in new energy into the room.

Make chores fun

Instead of assigning each family member a chore to do alone, turn chores into a game you can do together. Race to see how fast you can get the house cleaned, and then try to beat your old time the next week. Play music while you are doing laundry and enlist the kids to sing and dance while helping to fold and put clothes away.

Gold, silver price Precious metals record hike on MCX

New Delhi. Both gold and silver prices recorded a hike on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Tuesday, November 12, 2024. Gold futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, stood at Rs 75,420 per 10 grams on the MCX, after recording a jump of Rs 69 or 0.09 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 75,351. Meanwhile, silver futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, witnessed a marginal hike of Rs 22 or 0.02 per cent and were retailing at Rs 89,204 per kg on the MCX against the previous close of Rs 89,182. The gold and silver prices in India depend on several factors, including the value of the rupee against the dollar. Global demand also plays a key role in determining the trends observed in the rate of precious metals.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Gold ticked up on Tuesday but hovered near a one-month low, while investors awaited U.S. economic data and comments from Federal Reserve officials for further clarity on the interest rate trajectory, news agency Reuters reported.

According to the latest metal report, spot gold gained 0.2 per cent at \$2,624.17 per ounce by 0155 GMT, while, U.S. gold futures rose 0.5 per cent to \$2,630.10. Among other precious metals, spot silver stood almost unchanged at \$30.70 per ounce.

RBI, Sebi issue framework for reclassifying FPI investments as FDI

MUMBAI. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board (Sebi) have directed foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to obtain necessary approvals from the government and concurrence from the investee companies in cases of acquisition of equity holdings beyond the prescribed limits. The direction better aligns with the Fema rules, the regulators said in separate notifications Monday and helps lift the current 10 per cent cap on such investments, with prior government nod.

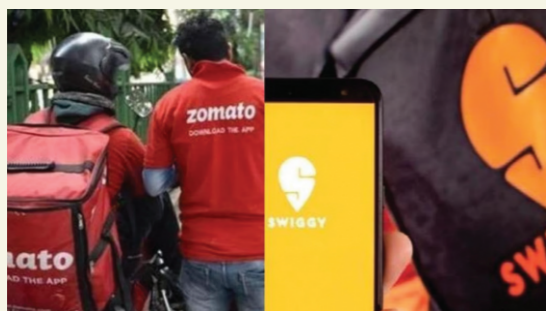
The regulators have issued an operational framework for the reclassification of overseas investments by FPIs to foreign direct investments (FDI), outlining the process to be followed in case of breach of the thresholds. The Foreign Exchange Management Act (Fema) norms prescribe 10 per cent threshold for investments made by FPIs in the total paid-up equity capital of a company. Any FPI breaching this limit has the option to divest its holdings or reclassify them as FDI, subject to several conditions. The rules provide a window of five days from the settlement of trades to do the same.

The notifications further say that investors have to obtain prior government approval before making the additional investments. Further, FPIs have to explain the intention to reclassify the investment as FDI, too. However, the facility for reclassification from FPI to FDI is not permitted in certain prohibited sectors.

"Necessary approvals from the government, as applicable, including approvals required in the case of investment from land-bordering countries, must ensure that the acquisition beyond the prescribed limit is made in accordance with the provisions applicable for FDI. This means that the investment should adhere to the entry route, sectoral caps, investment limits, pricing guidelines, and other attendant conditions for FDI under schedule 1 to the rules," said the circulars.

Following reclassification, the entire investment of an FPI in a company can be considered an FDI and will continue to be classified as such even if it falls below 10 per cent. The regulators have also separately shared the process to be followed for reporting such breaches and reclassification by the FPIs and custodians. "After ensuring that the reporting for reclassification is complete in all aspects, the custodian shall unfreeze the equity instruments and process the request. The date of the investment causing the breach in such cases shall be considered the date of reclassification," said the circular.

Zomato, Swiggy say complying with CCI rules



MUMBAI: Amid a CCI investigation into anti-competitive practices, Zomato has emphasised its adherence to competition laws, while competitor Swiggy has affirmed its dedication to following local regulations.

Both Zomato and Swiggy called reports about the Competition Commission of India's (CCI) probe "misleading". They pointed out that the CCI has not yet made final decision on claims of unfair business practices like giving special treatment to restaurant partners. In a regulatory announcement, Zomato said the CCI had issued a preliminary order on April 4, 2022. This order instructed the Office of the Director General of the Commission to look into breaches of the Competition Act. "Since the intimation of April 5, 2022, the CCI, on merits, has not passed any order. The aforementioned news article is misleading," the company said. "We will continue to work with the CCI to explain why our practices are in compliance with the Competition Act and they don't have any adverse effect," Zomato added. As per Swiggy, media reports of CCI's probe into Swiggy confuse investigative process with final outcome and are misleading. "Based on order of the CCI dated April 5, 2022, the Director General probed certain aspects of the conduct of our business and its inquiry and report of March 2024 is a preliminary step in an ongoing probe by .

Bitcoin price nears \$90,000. What's behind the rally and will it continue

The recent rally in Bitcoin, now nearing \$90,000, comes on the back of Donald Trump's pro-crypto stance following his recent election victory in the US.

New Delhi. Bitcoin has pushed to a new record, reaching an all-time high of over \$89,000 on Tuesday, as optimism around favourable regulatory changes and growing institutional interest fuel the surge. The recent rally in Bitcoin, now nearing \$90,000, comes on the back of Donald Trump's pro-crypto stance following his recent election victory in the US. Trump has vowed to make the US "the crypto capital of the planet," promising supportive policies, including

the establishment of a national Bitcoin reserve. These pledges have boosted investor confidence, with analysts eyeing Bitcoin's next major target of \$100,000. Market analysts attribute this surge to a mix of macroeconomic trends and recent policy developments. The U.S. Federal Reserve's 25 basis points rate cut in November has directed investor sentiment toward alternative assets like Bitcoin. "If history is any guide, Bitcoin could easily finish the year around \$100,000," noted Kyle Rodda, a senior financial analyst at Capital.com. The rate cut signals an accommodative approach, easing inflation concerns and making Bitcoin more attractive as a hedge. Bitcoin ETFs have also contributed significantly to its recent gains. Approval of these ETFs earlier this year has allowed institutional investors easier, regulated access to Bitcoin, expanding demand. Edul Patel, CEO of Mudrex,



Gupta, co-founder of CoinDCX, pointed to Bitcoin's \$81,000 milestone and \$1.5 trillion market cap as indicators of rising optimism. He highlighted growing interest from institutions and the role of Bitcoin ETFs in marking the end of the "crypto winter." (Disclaimer: The views, opinions, recommendations, and suggestions expressed by experts/brokerages in this article are their own and do not reflect the views of the India Today Group. It is advisable to consult a qualified broker or financial advisor before making any actual investment or trading choices.)

The BTC fear-greed index, now showing "Extreme Greed," reflects strong investor sentiment, with \$2.8 billion in Bitcoin futures betting on the cryptocurrency crossing \$90,000. This rally has also lifted other digital assets like Ethereum, which hit \$3,200, underscoring Bitcoin's impact across the broader cryptocurrency market.

called the ETF approval a "game-changer," adding that rate cuts in major economies have also increased cash flow into alternatives like Bitcoin. Himanshu Maradiya, Founder of CIFDAQ, said the Fed's rate cut has catalyzed this shift in sentiment, as investors seek out Bitcoin's unique qualities of scarcity and decentralization. Meanwhile, Sumit

Sensex, Nifty rise ahead of inflation data; Hindalco gains after Q2 results

NEW DELHI. Benchmark stock market opened the trading session on a positive note as investors wait for the release of retail inflation data later in the day. The S&P BSE Sensex was up 148.85 points to 79,645 at 10:26 am, while the NSE Nifty was up 46.75 points to 24,188.05. The other broader market indices were trading in positive territory as volatility dipped during the session. Nifty Realty jumped 2% and was the top gainer among sectoral indices. High-weightage sectors such as Nifty IT, Nifty Bank and Nifty Financial Services also gained.

Trent, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Sun Pharma, and Tata Steel were the top five gainers on the Nifty50. On the other hand, the top losers were Britannia, HDFC Bank, Asian Paints,



BEL and Bajaj Auto. Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said, "Two strong factors have been at play in this consolidating market. One, the relentless selling by FIIs has been favouring the bears and pulling the market down. Two, the sustained buying by DIIs has been supporting the

market preventing a crash in the coming days will depend on the relative strength of these two factors. In this context, it is important to note that the intensity of FII selling is coming down (yesterday FII selling was Rs 2026 crores) and the inflows into mutual funds is steadily increasing which will enable DIIs to continue buying," he explained. He also highlighted that monthly flows into equity mutual funds have touched an all-time high of Rs 41,887 crore in October, clocking a 22% month-on-month increase. "This can provide resilience to the market and fundamentally strong fairly valued stocks like the leading banking names will outperform."

Will Trump's win force India to rejig corp tax critical illness insurance

NEW DELHI. As discussions around potential cuts in the US corporate tax rate gain momentum post-Donald Trump's presidential victory, India may find itself at a critical juncture, needing to reassess its own corporate tax framework to remain competitive in attracting foreign investment.

However, experts are of the view that the dynamics of tax rates are complex and influenced by various factors beyond mere comparison with US rates. The government announced a significant cut to the corporate tax rate for domestic companies from 30% to 22% in 2019, and for new manufacturing companies, the rate was set at 15%. Despite these reductions, India's corporate tax rates remain relatively high compared to some ASEAN and OECD economies. Akhilesh Ranjan, Advisor with PwC and Former Member of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), points out that while India has already reduced its corporate tax rates in recent years to foster economic growth, the global investment landscape is dynamic. "A competitive corporate tax regime is crucial, but it must be complemented by improvements in infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and labour

market conditions," Ranjan said. He says that India does not need to reconsider its approach to tax policy as the current strategy to stabilise the tax regime aims to provide predictability for investors. Suraj Kumar Shetty, Partner at JSA Advocates and



Solicitors, notes that the difference between India's corporate tax rate of 22% and the US rate of 21% is not that significant. After accounting for surcharges and cess, India's tax rate touches 25%. He emphasized that India offers numerous benefits that can lower the effective tax rate for foreign companies. Riaz Thingna, partner at Grant Thornton Bharat, emphasizes that investments are primarily guided by business opportunities and returns, with tax acting as a sweetener. While the United States' potential move

toward lower corporate tax rates will require a rethink at India's corporate tax policy, Thingna highlights that India's ambitious capital outlay on infrastructure and fiscal prudence will limit its ability to reduce tax rates easily. To continue attracting FDI, India may consider moderate and gradual tax rate reductions while ensuring stable and predictable tax policies, faster dispute resolution, and reduced tax administration complexities will play an even greater role in attracting investment, he said. Aashish Kasad, Tax Partner, EY India, concurs with Thingana. She says to safeguard its position as a premier investment destination, India might need to recalibrate its corporate tax rates, striking a delicate balance between attracting foreign investment and fostering a sustainable revenue system. Meanwhile amid fears that the minimum tax under Pillar 2 is in peril under the Trump regime, Ranjan said, "India currently does not appear to be in a hurry to implement the minimum tax under Pillar 2, as the likely revenue gains may not justify the high costs associated with its administration. Therefore if Trump remains unsupportive of Pillar 2 taxation,

Vistara ends nine-year journey; operates last flight before merger with Air India

NEW DELHI: Vistara, the Tata Group and Singapore International Airline (SIA) joint venture carrier, flew for the last time on Monday, thus marking an end to its glorious nine-year journey. Vistara is now getting merged with Air India, which has ambitions to establish itself as India's premier full-service airline.

Vistara's last domestic voyage was a Mumbai-Delhi flight. UK986, an Airbus A321, flew from Mumbai airport at 10.50 pm on November 11, 2024. The airline's last foreign journey was New Delhi-Singapore flight. UK 115, an Airbus A321 Neo, departed from Delhi at 11.45 pm on Monday. "Thank you to our 75 million passengers for your support, patronage and touching testimonials. Humbled and honoured to have been part of this team. Onwards and upwards towards our new chapter. The new feeling has a new home," said Vinod Kannan, CEO at Vistara-TATA SIA Airlines in a LinkedIn post. Many passengers and former employees associated with Vistara shared their delightful experiences with the airline. "As the sun sets on one of the most loved brands in the



country, I wear this Uniform one last time, with a mix of pride and emotions in my heart. In the words of our CEO, "We made a DAMN GOOD AIRLINE"!!! Goodbye Vistara! You shall be missed dearly...." wrote Nehal, a pilot with Vistara on X. Vistara was launched in January 2015. Tata Sons owns a 51% stake with SIA holding the remaining 49%. Vistara's inaugural flight took off on January 9, 2015, from Delhi to Mumbai. After establishing a strong presence on key metro routes, Vistara expanded to tier-2 and tier-3 cities. In

August 2019, Vistara launched its first international flight from Delhi to Singapore. Vistara's Premium Economy, a rare feature on Indian flights, became popular with corporate travellers. The airline's focus on premium services, curated meals, personalized entertainment, and spacious seating distinguished it from other carriers. Due to its strong financial backing, Vistara survived and thrived in the challenging Indian aviation market even as competing airlines such as Jet Airways Go First collapsed.

Hindalco shares gain 2% after beating estimates in Q2 report: Should you buy

NEW DELHI. Shares of Hindalco rose by 2.6% on Tuesday, reaching a high of Rs 672.20 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), following strong financial results for Q2 FY25. The aluminium and copper manufacturing giant reported a 123% year-on-year (YoY) rise in standalone net profit, amounting to Rs 1,891 crore. This figure is an increase from the Rs 847 crore posted in the same quarter last year and exceeded the market estimate of Rs 1,294 crore. Hindalco's revenue from operations also saw an 8% YoY increase, reaching Rs 22,262 crore for the reporting period. The profit surge was largely driven by strong operational performance in Hindalco's India business, favourable market conditions, and effective cost control measures. Analysts said that Hindalco's overall performance reflected resilience in the face of challenging market factors, particularly within its overseas operations. Hindalco's Novelis unit, the world's largest producer of flat-rolled aluminium products and a major contributor to Hindalco's international business, saw some mixed results in the quarter. Novelis reported revenue of \$4.3 billion, marking a 5% YoY increase, mainly due to higher average aluminium prices. However, adjusted EBITDA for Novelis dropped by 5%, standing at \$462 million. This decline was attributed to less favourable metal benefits, an unfavourable product mix, and a \$25 million impact from a flood at the company's Sierre facility in Switzerland. Excluding the flood impact, Novelis' shipments rose by 4%, with EBITDA per tonne at \$502. Although the flood event in Sierre presented a temporary challenge, the segment maintained growth, indicating a stable base for Novelis despite regional disruptions.

SHOULD YOU BUY, SELL, OR HOLD?

Several brokerages have shared their perspectives on Hindalco's performance and provided recommendations for investors considering the stock.

JPMORGAN

JP Morgan has retained an 'Overweight' rating for Hindalco, with a target price set at Rs 735. The brokerage highlighted the strong Q2 performance across Hindalco's India operations and noted the absence of any significant negatives in the quarterly report. JP Morgan expects a slight upward revision in the FY25 consensus estimates following this strong quarterly showing, signalling confidence in Hindalco's ability to sustain its growth trajectory.

INVESTEC

Investec has maintained a 'Buy' rating on Hindalco, with a target price of Rs 860. The brokerage pointed out the operational strength shown in Q2 while also noting that further clarity is needed on capital expenditure plans for future growth. Additionally,

Net equity fund inflows surge to Rs 41,000 crore in October

MUMBAI. Record inflows into open-ended equity mutual funds, which surged 21.7% on a month-on-month in October at Rs 41,887 crore, made it the 44th month of positive inflows. It helped overall industry assets rise marginally, yet hit a record at Rs 67.25 lakh crore in October, up from Rs 67.09 lakh crore in September. This is despite the fact the market was at its monthly worst in year, losing over 6% from September peak.

As per the Association of Mutual Funds (Amfi) data, fund inflows into open-ended equity funds stayed in positive zone for the 44th month in a row, taking total assets under management of mutual funds to Rs 67.25 lakh crore in October, marginally up from Rs 67.09 lakh crore in September, making it an all-time high. Despite massive inflows, the bleeding market has ensured that all equity mutual fund categories had negative returns in the reporting month, with the automotive sector suffering the most significant decline. Meanwhile, mutual fund folios rose to an all-time high of 21,65,02,804 in the month. Of this, retail folios also rose to an all-time high at 17,23,52,296. Of the Rs 67.25 lakh crore, total AUM, retail fell to Rs 39,18,611 crore as against Rs 40,44,098 crore in September. Number of new SIPs registered stood at 63,69,919 and their AUM is stood at Rs 13,30,429.83 crore. SIP contribution stood at an all-time high of Rs 25,322.74 crore as against Rs 24,508.73 crore in the previous month. Inflows to others categories, including index funds and ETFs, surged 620% to Rs 23,428 crore, while inflows to hybrid funds reached Rs 16,863.3 crore and inflows to exchange-traded funds (ETFs) reached Rs 13,441.8 crore.

NEWS BOX

Dhruv Jurel looks class: Tim Paine backs India youngster to impress in Australia

New Delhi. Former Australian Test captain Tim Paine has tipped Dhruv Jurel as a standout prospect for India in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy series. Jurel's impressive performance in the second unofficial Test match between Australia A and India A at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) caught Paine's attention, particularly due to the young Indian's ability to handle the pace and bounce that Australian pitches notoriously present. Jurel showcased his skills with scores of 80 and 68 across his two innings in the four-day clash at the MCG. His assured batting under challenging conditions has fueled Paine's belief that Jurel could be a surprise package in the highly anticipated Test series against Australia. Speaking to SEN Tassie, Paine said, "There's a guy who has wicket-kept in a few Test matches for India. He averages 63 across the three Tests he's played, and his name is Dhruv Jurel. Watching him bat, it was evident he has the temperament and skill for the longer format. Even though he's



primarily a wicketkeeper, I'd be surprised if he doesn't feature in the series in some capacity." Jurel, who has already made three Test appearances against England earlier this year, scored 46, 90, 39 not out, and 15 in those outings, averaging 63 with the bat. His technique and poise in Melbourne, facing the Australian bowling lineup on a notoriously bouncy surface, impressed the former Aussie skipper, who also coached Australia A in the match. "He's 23, and he looked a class above all his teammates on this tour," Paine noted. "A lot of players from the subcontinent find it difficult to adjust to our conditions, but Jurel looked right at home. He's someone who handled the pace and bounce extremely well, which is unusual for an Indian batter at the MCG."

Paine's high praise comes as India gears up to face Australia's formidable fast-bowling trio of Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, and Josh Hazlewood. Though Rishabh Pant is expected to don the gloves for the visitors, Paine believes Jurel's potential with the bat may warrant a role as a specialist batsman if he doesn't keep wickets. Paine added, "Keep an eye out for him this summer. I think he's going to impress a lot of Australian fans."

Australian cricketer recreates Yusuf Dikec's iconic Olympic pose after run out

New Delhi. Australian cricketer Ben Manenti recreated the iconic pose of the Turkish shooter Yusuf Dikec after inflicting a run out during the One Day Cup tournament on Tuesday, November 12 in Adelaide. The incident took place in the 36th over of the match between New South Wales (NSW) and South Australia (SA) as NSW captain Jack Edwards called Chris Green for a quick single on the last ball of the over bowled by Liam Scott. However, seeing the ball going straight to the fielder Ben Manenti, Edwards sent back Green. But it was all too late as Manenti had a direct hit which found Green short of his crease and he had to return to the pavilion after a good brief knock of 32



(33). Following the dismissal, Manenti was seen celebrating the run out by recreating Yusuf Dikec's iconic pose from the Paris Olympics 2024.

Notably, Dikec won the silver medal in the Mixed 10m air pistol event at the Paris Olympics 2024. The 51-year-old became a social media sensation during the Olympics for his effortless shooting at the Games. Dikec's casual approach in his sport as he shot without any specialized lenses helped him garner a massive fan following on social media.

New South Wales bundled out for 197 in first innings. The Turkish shooter became an overnight sensation as the entire internet began recreating his shooting pose from the Games. India shooter Sarabjot Singh, who also won a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol mixed event along with Manu Bhaker, has also revealed his admiration for Yusuf multiple times.

It's TN versus UP in men's Hockey Championship Qfs

↳ In the first quarter final, **Hockey Punjab will take on Manipur Hockey, followed by Hockey Haryana facing Hockey Maharashtra.**



CHENNAI: Day 8 of the 14th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium in Chennai featured victories for Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu Hockey, Hockey Haryana, Telangana Hockey, Goans Hockey, and Manipur Hockey. The day's action marked the end of the league phase of the competition. In the first quarter final, Hockey Punjab will take on Manipur Hockey, followed by Hockey Haryana facing Hockey Maharashtra. The third quarter final will see Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu clash with Uttar Pradesh Hockey, while the fourth quarter final will feature Hockey Association of Odisha going up against Hockey Karnataka, on November 13.

Earlier, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu defeated Chhattisgarh, 3-1, in a Pool A

fixture. Aman Sharma (2') gave Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu the early breakthrough, followed by goals from Mohd Sadiq (28') and Arvind Yadav (59'). Roshanjeet Minz (15') was the sole scorer for Chhattisgarh.

In a Pool B match, Haryana defeated Mizoram 8-0. Rohit (31', 34', 47', 58') was in stellar form for Haryana as he registered four goals. Pardeep Singh Mor (4'), Joginder Singh (41'), Amit Chahal (52') and Rajinder Singh (57') also helped Haryana's efforts. In another Pool B encounter, Telangana defeated Himachal,

5-4. Venkatesh Telugu (2', 38') and Captain Sandeep Subedar (3', 18') both scored braces for Telangana along with a goal from Ravi Teja Cheekati (52'). For Himachal, Ayush (11'), Harsh (37') Abhishek (52') and Kumar Vishal (55') were the goal scorers. In Pool G, Goa defeated Gujarat, 6-0 and in Pool H, Manipur defeated Assam, 10-0. Laishram Dipu Singh (14', 27', 36') scored thrice while Moirangthem Dhananjay Meetei (52', 54') scored two goals. Additionally, Ganendrajit Ningombam (3'), Thounaojam Ingalemba Luwang (10'), Captain Chinglensana Singh Kangujam (13), Bhakar Ningombam (45'), and Ningombam Jenjen Singh (46') netted goals for Manipur as well.

2025 Champions Trophy: PCB to write to ICC seeking clarity on India's participation

CHENNAI. Given the recent developments with regard to the 2025 Champions Trophy, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is going to write to the International Cricket Board (ICC) seeking clarity over the situation. Considering that the ICC is the event authority, the PCB wants the world body to come out clear on its future plans. "First the ICC has to announce its future action as it is

the event authority," a PCB source told The New Indian Express. "We will also write to the ICC, seeking clarifications, this week," added the source. Notably, the ICC has informed the PCB about India's decision not to travel to Pakistan for the tournament scheduled to be held in February next year. However, the PCB wants more clarifications from the ICC on the issue.

Bayern Munich extend CEO Jan-Christian Dreesen's contract till 2027

Munich. Bayern Munich has announced a two-year extension of CEO Jan-Christian Dreesen's contract, securing his leadership role at the club through June 2027. The decision was unanimously approved by the club's supervisory board, emphasizing Bayern's commitment to stability and continuity at the top. Dreesen, 57, has been instrumental in guiding the club through challenging times since taking over as CEO last year, following the dismissal of former CEO Oliver Kahn and sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic on the same day Bayern secured its 11th consecutive Bundesliga title. Dreesen, who had been with Bayern since 2013, initially joined from the banking sector before rising to vice-chairman of the supervisory board in 2014 and then assuming the CEO role in 2023. In a statement, Bayern Munich president Herbert Hainer expressed confidence in Dreesen's leadership, saying, "Dreesen took over the chairmanship of the board during a difficult phase and quickly led FC Bayern Munich AG back into calmer waters. We want to



continue on this path together. We're certain he is the right person to tackle the challenges ahead." Dreesen's tenure has seen some challenges, including Bayern's failure to win the Bundesliga last season, ending a decade-long dominance as Bayer Leverkusen claimed the title. However, under his guidance, the club has shown early promise this season, sitting five points clear at the top of the league after 10 rounds under new coach Vincent Kompany.

The extension of Dreesen's contract also comes amid further changes at Bayern,

↳ **Bayern Munich has extended Jan-Christian Dreesen's contract as chief executive by two years through June 2027. Bayern said 57-year-old Dreesen's contract extension was unanimously agreed by the supervisory board.**

including the appointment of Christopher Freund as sporting director and Max Eberl as the board member for sport. Additionally, Michael Diederich remains the club's CFO. Looking ahead, Bayern Munich is poised to announce another year of record revenues at its annual general meeting on December 8, 2024. The club's leadership remains confident in Dreesen's ability to navigate the challenges that lie ahead, as it looks to maintain its dominance both domestically and in European football.

How Australia's debutant McSweeney is planning for 'unique' Bumrah challenge

↳ **Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Australia's uncapped opener Nathan McSweeney has admitted that facing Jasprit Bumrah will be "quite the challenge" as he prepares for his Test debut against India in Perth.**



New Delhi. Australia's uncapped opener Nathan McSweeney is already deep into his preparation for the formidable challenge in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy: facing India's premier fast bowler, Jasprit Bumrah. The series opener, set in Perth, marks McSweeney's anticipated debut, and the young right-hander is meticulously planning how to handle the pace attack led by Bumrah, whose unconventional action and pinpoint accuracy have earned him a stellar Test bowling average of 20.57, placing him amongst cricket's all-time greats. Acknowledging the difficulty of replicating Bumrah's distinctive action,

McSweeney said, "He's one of the best bowlers in the world, so it's going to be hard to mimic that, that's for sure. But I'm just looking forward to all of that and I can't wait." With a recent standout showing in the Sheffield Shield, where he ranks fifth among leading scorers, McSweeney earned his Test call-up by making a significant impact in Australia A's series against India A. His domestic success follows years of persistence and development, tracing back to his early potential displayed at the 2018 ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup. Now, the upcoming series offers him the chance to

cement his place in Australia's top order.

Reflecting on his current form, McSweeney feels he's at his best. "In the last month or so I really feel like I'm batting the best I ever have," he shared. "I think I'm the best I've ever been prepared to take this opportunity."

Aware of the challenges of Test cricket and the unique demands of opening in such high-stakes conditions, McSweeney is aiming to keep his game plan straightforward:

"Decision-making is the most important thing for my game. Being an opening batter, it's making sure I'm leaving the ball well and making the bowlers bowl to me."

McSweeney's preparation also included a tempered expectation of matching the high-scoring rates of his predecessor, David Warner. Instead, he is focusing on spending time at the crease, taking the match session by session. If he can implement his strategy effectively, he hopes to translate it into a solid start for Australia against one of the most challenging bowling attacks in world



made a great comeback was leading 5-2 in the second one. However, the world number three dropped a serve to bring the score line to 5-3 giving a sniff to Ruud. The Norwegian happily accepted the opportunity and went on to win five games in a row to hand a shocking defeat to the four-time grand slam winner.

If I could just be better. I could play better: Alcaraz

Following his defeat, Alcaraz hailed Ruud for his clinical win and revealed he was under the weather and hence couldn't perform at his best. "I think he did a really good job today. But I talk about myself, I could just be better. I could play better. Obviously I could feel better on court," Alcaraz was quoted as saying by Reuters. Alcaraz will next take on Rublev in his second group stage fixture on Wednesday, November 13 in the eight-man event being contested in the round-robin format.

ICC awaits Pakistan board's decision on Champions Trophy after India decline to travel

↳ **The ICC has asked the PCB for a response about hosting the Champions Trophy in a hybrid model after India refused to travel to Pakistan. The PCB confirmed on Sunday that it received an email from the ICC about India's decision.**

Karachi. The International Cricket Council has sought a response from the Pakistan Cricket Board on hosting the Champions Trophy in a hybrid model following India's refusal to travel to the country for the tournament. The PCB on Sunday had confirmed that it received an email from the ICC that India declined to travel to the

neighbouring country.

"Unless the PCB decides to pull out of hosting the Champions Trophy the current plan is to hold India's matches in UAE and the final in Dubai," a source told PTI on Monday. "The Indian Cricket Board has told the ICC that a Hybrid Model is acceptable to them only if the final is held in Dubai and not in Pakistan," the source added. The PCB on Monday remained silent without giving any reaction to the BCCI informing the ICC it will not send its team to play in Pakistan in the Champions Trophy. But according to sources, the ICC has asked the PCB to confirm if a Hybrid Model -- where India's matches and the final would be held in Dubai -- is acceptable to them.

The ICC has assured the PCB that, under this arrangement, they would receive full hosting fees and a majority of the matches. "The ICC has told the PCB that if it decides to go ahead with the hosting of the mega event on a Hybrid Model it would get its full hosting fees and majority of the matches," the source



said. However, if the PCB decides to pull out of hosting the tournament due to India's refusal, the ICC could consider moving the entire event to South Africa, the source added. Earlier, a PCB source had said there was "no talk" of a Hybrid Model as of now and they

would seek further clarity from the ICC.

"There is no talk about having the Champions Trophy on a Hybrid Model system as of now," a reliable PCB source told PTI.

"An email is to be sent to the ICC with the advice of its legal department in which the Board wanted clarifications from the ICC on the Indian decision," the source said. "As of now the entire situation is being gauged by the PCB. No decision has been taken on the next step. Yes the PCB is in touch with the government for consultation and directives if required," the source added.

Meanwhile, Pakistani media speculated on potential responses, including the Pakistan government advising the PCB to avoid playing India altogether or the PCB pursuing legal action against the ICC and BCCI at the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Geneva. India have not travelled to Pakistan since the 2008 Mumbai terror strikes. The two teams compete against each other only in ICC tournaments.

Yami Gautam

Reacts As Her And Ayushmann Khurrana Starrer Bala Completes 5 Years

Bala starring Ayushmann Khurrana, Bhumi Pednekar, and Yami Gautam has completed 5 years today. The film, which dealt with social stigma, was loved by the audience. Well, on this special milestone, Maddock Films has shared a special video to which actress Yami Gautam has reacted. Taking to her Instagram stories, Yami shared the video and dropped heart emojis. Earlier, Ayushmann Khurrana also shared a heartwarming video comprising some clips from the film on his Instagram handle and expressed gratitude. He wrote, "Thank you for all the laughs, love, and embracing Bala just as he is. This journey was about so much more than just hair, about finding joy in who we are. So here's to all of you, who proved Bala true — Badalna kyu hai?"

Giving fans a glimpse of the camaraderie and laughter during the making of the film, the official X (formerly Twitter) handle of Maddock Films also dropped a behind-the-scenes (BTS) video to celebrate the occasion. With the BTS video, they tweeted, "It's been 5 years since #Bala brought us laughs, lessons, and love! Here's a sneak peek at some fun moments from behind the scenes." Yami Gautam and Aditya Dhar have been over the moon ever since they embraced parenthood 5 months ago. The couple welcomed a son, Vedavid, in May this year, on the auspicious day of Akshay Tritiya.

Last month, the 'Aricle 370' actress shared a picture that appeared to have been clicked in her hometown in Himachal Pradesh. It marked her first post-birth picture on Instagram. "Lately life has been about colourful burp-cloths, some sunshine & trees," she wrote. The actress was all smiles, and she donned comfy clothes and a colourful shawl.

In May, Yami Gautam and Aditya Dhar announced the arrival of their baby boy Vedavid, on Instagram. They shared a photo of Lord Krishna holding a little boy in his arms.

In their joint statement, the couple wrote, "We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the exceptionally dedicated and wonderful medical professionals at Surya Hospital, especially Dr.

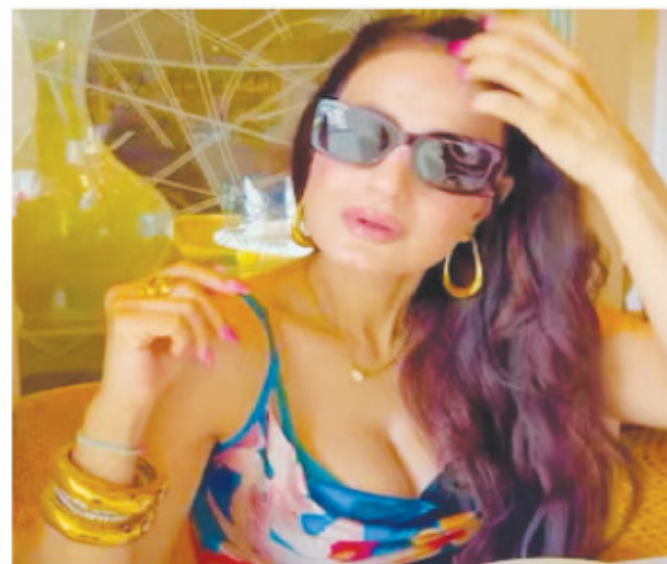


Ameesha Patel's glamorous look in this 'Sunday' video leaves fans awestruck

Ameesha Patel impressed audiences with films like Kaho Na Pyaar Hai and Gadar: Ek Prem Katha, proving her acting prowess. Even at the age of 49, she can give a tough competition to any new actress in the glamour world. Recently, she shared a video on Instagram, which has caught the attention of her fans. Captioned 'Sunday in Mumbai', the video showcases her glamour and flawless style statement. While many fans praised her look in the video shared on Instagram, a few had a major concern.

One user commented, "Ma'am, please get married." Another asked, "When will you get married?" "You're still so beautiful," reacted a user. In the video, Ameesha is seen posing in a car, wearing a one-piece outfit with black sunglasses that suit her well. Ameesha gained immense popularity with her role as Sakina in Gadar: Ek Prem Katha and Gadar 2, where her innocence charmed viewers. In real life, however, the actress is quite glamorous. Gadar 2 turned out to be the fifth highest-grossing film of 2023. In this sequel, Sunny Deol reprised his iconic role as Tara Singh, with Utkarsh Sharma portraying their son. Released in 2001, Gadar: Ek Prem Katha is a love story set during India's partition in 1947, where a truck driver named Tara Singh falls in love with a Pakistani girl named Sakina. The sequel, set in the backdrop of the 1971 India-Pakistan war, shows Tara Singh returning to Pakistan to rescue his son Jeete, who has been captured by Pakistani authorities.

Ameesha found herself back in the spotlight with the release of Gadar 2. Although she hadn't delivered a major box office success in many years, Gadar 2 proved to be a comeback, earning an impressive Rs 625 crore at the domestic box office. Despite receiving mixed reviews, the film brought Ameesha renewed recognition. The actress was last seen in comic drama Tauba Tera Jalwa, which was released in January 2024.



Prabhas Signs Three-Film Deal With Hombale Films, Salaar 2 To Kick Off The Partnership



With the success of Baahubali, Prabhas has cemented his position as a pan-Indian superstar. His latest film, Kalki 2898 AD, broke records at the box office upon its release. As the director gears up for his next projects, he has signed a three-movie deal with Hombale Films. The production house has backed superhit movies like the KGF franchise, Kantara, and Salaar. In a post shared by Hombale Films on X (formerly known as Twitter), the production house announced that they have signed a three-movie deal with Prabhas. They wrote, "Made in India and Built to Last! #PrabhasXHombale3Films We are proud to unite with the Rebel Star, #Prabhas, in a groundbreaking three-film partnership that celebrates the essence of Indian cinema and aims to take it to the world. This is a declaration of our commitment to creating cinematic experiences that will be unforgettable. The stage is set and the path ahead is limitless. Get ready, as the journey begins with #Salaar2...@VKiragandur@HombaleFilms."

The three-movie deal with Hombale Films begins with the sequel of Salaar — Salaar 2. The other two films are set to release in 2027 and 2028 respectively. The production house is currently working on the prequel of Kantara — Kantara: Chapter 1, Prithviraj's Tyson, and other projects. Reports mention that the other two films of Prabhas with Hombale Films might be directed by Leo's Lokesh Kanagaraj and Hanuman's Prashanth Varma.

On the work front, Prabhas was last seen in Nag Ashwin's Kalki 2898 AD where he starred alongside Amitabh Bachchan, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan, and Disha Patani. He will be next seen in a cameo appearance in Vishnu Manchu's Kannappa. He will also be seen in Maruthi's The Raja Saab, Hanu Raghavapudi's Fauji, and Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit.

Is Katrina Kaif 'A Bigger Superstar' Than Vicky Kaushal? Latter Says 'I Will...'



Vicky Kaushal often speaks openly about his relationship with his wife, Katrina Kaif, and recently reflected on their deep connection, graciously acknowledging Katrina as the "bigger superstar." In an interview with BBC Asia Network, Vicky's heartfelt praise for Katrina earned him admiration from fans. When asked about maintaining their relationship in the public eye, where it's often commodified, Vicky responded, "When two people come together and connect at such a deep core level, all these are too surface level things. But you know why and how you connect with each other. That's what's precious to you, the positives and negatives of the other person, you embrace it all. Katrina is a person who is my reality check. She is always there to tell me, 'This could be better, that could be better.' It is nice to have that person who is just going to be honest with you and not let you fly around. She has really made her way through her grit, talent and performances. So, I learn a lot from her." Vicky also spoke about lifting Katrina up, not just as a superstar but for her incredible character. "I will always lift her up not because she is a superstar; she has got a heart of a superstar. That's what I am in love with. I feel that I have found a person who fills the gaps that I had. That makes me a better version of myself. I truly feel great about it, that I have Katrina as my life companion."

Fans were quick to shower Vicky with praise for his humility and love. One fan commented, "I love how he humbly accepted that yes, Katrina was and is the bigger superstar when they got married. She's been an absolute queen since the 2000's. I love him for her and her for him!!" Another wrote, "This guy is pure gem!!!" while a third added, "Man written by women—he is absolutely a talented gem in Bollywood." Many others left heart emojis to express their admiration. On the work front, Vicky Kaushal is set to appear in Laxman Utekar's action-drama Chhaava, featuring Rashmika Mandanna, Akshaye Khanna, Ashutosh Rana, Divya Dutta, Neil Bhoopalam, Pradeep Rawat, and others. He is also currently working on Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Love and War, co-starring Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt.