

Aaditya Thackeray for Belagavi as Union Territory, Siddaramaiah says childish

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah slammed Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray's demand for Belagavi to be declared as a Union Territory, calling it a "childish statement".

- Aaditya Thackeray alleges Marathi-speaking people facing injustice in Belagavi
Siddaramaiah questions why Belagavi should be declared Union Territory
Belagavi dispute stems from 1957 reorganisation of states on linguistic lines



Belagavi, but the Karnataka government reportedly prohibited the gathering and banned leaders from Maharashtra from entering the state.

WHAT IS THE BELAGAVI DISPUTE?

The Belagavi border issue dates back to 1957 when states were reorganised on linguistic lines. Maharashtra laid claim to Belagavi, which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency, as it has a sizeable Marathi-speaking population, and over 800 Marathi-speaking border villages that are currently a part of Karnataka.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray demanded that Belagavi, a city in Karnataka bordering Maharashtra, should be declared a Union Territory, drawing a jibe from Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah who called Thackeray's statement "childish".

Siddaramaiah told reporters on Monday. Thackeray on Monday alleged that injustice was being meted out to Marathi-speaking people in Belagavi and demanded that the region be declared a Union Territory. He said while celebrations were on over the formation of the Mahayuti government in Maharashtra, the situation was "deteriorating" in Belagavi.

As the winter session of the Karnataka Assembly began on Monday, members of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti were opposing it. The outfit organised a congregation in as it has a sizeable Marathi-speaking population, and over 800 Marathi-speaking border villages that are currently a part of Karnataka.

Kiren Rijiju jabs Rahul Gandhi over 'PM-Adani' interview: Enjoys creating tamasha

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju said while Rahul Gandhi enjoys creating a tamasha and abusing PM Modi, other MPs have responsibilities towards the people who have elected them.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju lashed out at Rahul Gandhi over his mock interview on the Gautam Adani bribery case in Parliament complex, saying the Leader of the Opposition "enjoys creating a tamasha" and abusing the Prime Minister.

the INDIA bloc over Congress's insistence on raising the Adani bribery case in Parliament to the exclusion of other issues. "The Samajwadi Party, TMC, all Congress MPs in Rajya Sabha, some Congress MPs in Lok Sabha and many party MPs are really interested in participating in the Parliament debate and discussion. Rahul Gandhi has nothing to lose because he can't feel people's pain and problems, but



"Rahul Gandhi enjoys creating a tamasha and abusing the Prime Minister, but other MPs have responsibilities towards the people who have elected them. All he has to do is create a tamasha here and then go abroad to enjoy his holidays," the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs tweeted.

On Monday, Rahul Gandhi, who has alleged a nexus between Modi and Adani, conducted a mock interview with Congress leaders wearing masks of the Prime Minister and the businessman. The development came amid relentless Congress protests in Parliament over a New York court indicting Adani for paying bribes to Indian government officials to secure solar power contracts.

other MPs do," the Union Minister said. The Samajwadi Party and TMC have disassociated themselves from the Adani protests, and have said they want the House floor to be used to raise issues such as the Sambhal mosque violence and the targeting of minorities in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, Parliament proceedings witnessed another washout on Monday.

INDIA bloc rift widens: Lalu Yadav latest to back Mamata Banerjee for top role

Ever since Mamata Banerjee set off a churn by evincing interest in leading the INDIA bloc last week, several non-Congress leaders have closed ranks behind her, with Lalu Prasad Yadav being the latest addition.

New Delhi. The rift in the opposition camp widened as RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav became the latest leader to back West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to lead the INDIA bloc. The leadership tussle in the dispirited opposition camp comes at a time when Congress has been left licking its wounds following the debacle in Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly polls after an impressive Lok Sabha show.



Sena (Uddhav Balasahaeb Thackeray) leaders were quick to endorse her pitch. Lalu Prasad Yadav also lent his weight to Mamata Banerjee's demand, further queering the pitch for Congress. "We will support Mamta Banerjee. She should be allowed to head the INDIA bloc," the former Bihar Chief Minister said. Asked about the Congress's

"reservation" to Mamata Banerjee's demand, Lalu Yadav said the party's objection doesn't matter. "The Congress's opposition will not make any difference," he said.

Earlier, Lalu Yadav's son and senior RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav also said he had "no objection" to Banerjee leading the coalition, but stressed that the decision must be reached through consensus.

JAGAN REDDY'S PARTY ALSO SUPPORTS MAMATA BANERJEE

Interestingly, the YSRCP, which was perceived to be close to the BJP till it was routed by the NDA in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly polls, also joined the growing chorus to hand over the INDIA bloc leadership to Mamata Banerjee.

TECOM payment for SmartCity exit share buyback, not compensation: Pinarayi Vijayan

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan addresses controversy over TECOM's exit from SmartCity Kochi, rejecting Opposition claims of compensation and affirming government control over future IT development projects.

Thiruvananthapuram. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday addressed concerns over the government's decision to repay Dubai-based TECOM for its exit from the SmartCity project in Kochi, clarifying that the payment is not compensation but the cost of TECOM's shares in the venture.

Speaking to the media, Vijayan said the transaction represents a rightful settlement of TECOM's investment, as determined by an independent evaluator, and not a payout for losses. "There is a common misconception that the payment to TECOM is a compensation amount," he said. "In reality, it is the value of the Dubai firm's 84 percent stake in SmartCity." Under the framework agreement governing the project, the government must repay the lease premium of Rs 91.52 crore and infrastructure expenses in the event of lease cancellation. Clause 7.2.2 of the agreement mandates the appointment of an independent evaluator to estimate the share price, a process currently underway.

The Chief Minister also assured that the SmartCity Kochi project would remain under full government control moving forward, dismissing allegations of a hidden real estate agenda. "Rumours that the government will abandon SmartCity are baseless. Our focus is on advancing Kerala's future IT development," he said.

The controversy arose after Leader of the Opposition VD Satheesan accused the government of intending to hand over 246 acres of prime land, initially leased for the project, to select individuals. He alleged that the decision lacked transparency and was driven by ulterior motives. He questioned the rationale behind compensating TECOM, a company he labeled a "non-performer".

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Lalu Prasad takes vulgar jibe at Nitish Kumar's women's rally: Only to letch

RJD chief Lalu Yadav sparked controversy on Tuesday with a sexist comment about Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Mahila Samwad Yatra, suggesting it was intended to "letch at women".

New Delhi. RJD chief Lalu Yadav stirred controversy on Tuesday with a sexist remark directed at Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Mahila Samwad Yatra, saying that they are going to "letch at women."



This remark came as Nitish Kumar announced plans to launch the Mahila Samwad Yatra, a state initiative aimed at directly engaging with women. Rajiv Ranjan, a senior leader of the Janata Dal (United), strongly criticised Lalu Yadav's comments on Nitish Kumar's women rally. Ranjan said, "Lalu must not know how the people of Bihar tolerated him in the past. These are people with a deplorable mindset. Their true character has now been revealed."

Samrat Chaudhary, Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister, also condemned Lalu Yadav's remarks. Describing them as "unfortunate", Chaudhary said that the use of such language raises concern. "Lalu Yadav should consider going to a hospital,"

Chaudhary said, suggesting that the former leader's mental state had deteriorated. "Laluji is on the last stage... he is unable to understand things and say anything," said Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha. Priyanka Chaturvedi, Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena MP, also criticised Lalu Yadav's remarks about Nitish Kumar's women's rally, labelling them as "sexist." Chaturvedi said, "This is a sexist

comment. Even Lalu's own family members might advise him to refrain from making such statements. "Kumar's Mahila Samwad Yatra," set to begin on December 15, aims to review the progress of the government's 7-Resolves programme while engaging with women across the state to gauge their concerns and strengthen their participation in governance.

'WILL SUPPORT MAMATA BANERJEE'

On the INDIA bloc's leadership, Yadav said that Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee should be given the position. "Congress's objection means nothing. We will support Mamata... Mamata Banerjee should be given the leadership (of the INDIA bloc)," Yadav told news agency. JMM MP Mahua Majhi said her party had not issued any formal response on the matter. "There is no official statement from our party yet. I cannot say anything about it. Every party has their opinion.

Priyanka Gandhi carries PM-Adani bag to Parliament, Rahul Gandhi calls it cute

The bag had a striking design with a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industrialist Gautam Adani on one side and the slogan "Modi Adani Bhai Bhai" printed on the other.

New Delhi. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadhwa carried a quirky bag to Parliament on Tuesday (December 10). The bag had a striking design with a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and billionaire



industrialist Gautam Adani on one side and the slogan "Modi Adani Bhai Bhai" printed on the other. Rahul Gandhi, amused by the bag, held it up during a conversation and said, "This is quite cute." Initially, he checked the front design

featuring the Modi-Adani image and then turned it around to read the slogan on the back. Upon seeing the slogan, Rahul said with a smile, "Look how cute this is!"

Rahul also asked Priyanka about the designer of the bag, which made her laugh.

Priyanka Gandhi's dig at the Central government is the latest in a series of attacks by the Opposition, accusing it of avoiding discussions on the bribery charges against Adani in the US. Since the session began on November 20, both Houses have experienced constant disruptions over the issue. On Monday (December 9), Congress MPs Manickam Tagore and Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka wore face masks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani as Opposition leaders again protested in Parliament, demanding a probe into the bribery case in the US involving

- Priyanka Gandhi carried a quirky bag to Parliament
Bag featured Modi-Adani image and 'Modi Adani Bhai Bhai' slogan
Rahul Gandhi found the bag amusing and called it cute

the billionaire industrialist. Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, was seen clicking pictures of Tagore and Ulaka and also asked to describe their "relationship".

In response, they mockingly said, "Hum dono milke sab kareng (we will do everything together). We have had a relationship for years". Opposition MPs from the INDIA bloc, except from Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party and the Aam Aadmi Party, join the protests on Monday, seeking a joint parliamentary probe into the case. The protesters stood outside the Makar Dwar of

Parliament and raised slogans like "Modi, Adani ek hain" and "we want justice". On December 6, Rahul Gandhi took a potshot at PM Modi and asked the latter not to be afraid of the Adani probe and attend the Winter Session. Last month, US prosecutors charged Adani, his nephew Sagar and other defendants for paying over \$250 million in bribes between 2020 and 2024 to Indian government officials to win solar energy contracts on terms that could potentially bring in more than \$2 billion in profit. The Adani Group has dismissed the charges as "baseless".

News box

BIMS deaths: Private hospitals inflate prices

BALLARI. Allegedly taking advantage of the five maternal deaths reported in a span of a month at Ballari Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS), some private hospitals have started exploiting patients by jacking up charges for admitting pregnant women.

The five deaths had allegedly taken place after banned IV fluid was administered to the patients by BIMS doctors and staff. Following these incidents, many patients who were admitted in BIMS and other government hospitals, have been shifting to private hospitals from the last 15 days. Parents and relatives of pregnant women are demanding that the district administration should take immediate action against private hospitals to be charging more and ensure that they don't fleece patients.

Nagashekar Reddy (name changed), a resident of Kampli, said, "After the five deaths were reported, I decided to shift my daughter, who was also admitted in BIMS Hospital, to a private hospital. Earlier, one of my relatives who had undergone delivery in that private hospital was charged about Rs 30,000. But when I admitted my daughter in the same private hospital, they demanded Rs 50,000. All her reports are normal but the hospital is saying that there are no vacant beds available as many pregnant women have got themselves admitted in the hospital."

Lokayukta police conduct raids against nine officials in Karnataka

BENGALURU. The Karnataka Lokayukta police on Tuesday conducted raids on nine state government officials for allegedly possessing disproportionate assets (DA) relative to their known sources of income. According to an official statement, the accused officials are Lokesh Babu, Superintendent Engineer (Electrical), Bengaluru East Circle, Bescom; Suresh Babu, Revenue Inspector, Ward No. 197, Bommanahalli Range of BBMP; Krishnappa, Tax Inspector, Yelahanka Zone, BBMP; M. C. Sunil Kumar, District Health Officer, Health Department, Bengaluru Rural; Nanjundiah, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Armed), Police Training School, Channarayana; Laxman, Second Division Assistant, Executive Engineer's office, Gadag; Ramappa, Superintendent Engineer (Development), Mahanagara Palike, Kalaburagi; Ramesh, Excise Inspector, Excise Department, Koppal taluk; and Suresh, Assistant Conservator of Forest, Hiriyur Sub Division. Sources stated that teams of officials simultaneously raided the offices and residences of the accused early Tuesday morning. During the searches, they seized valuables, including cash and documents related to the properties owned by the accused. The exact amount of DA possessed by each official will be determined later in the day after the conclusion of the searches.

483 tonnes of PDS rice seized at Vizag Port in raid

VISAKHAPATNAM. In a continued crackdown on smuggling of Public Distribution System (PDS) rice, 483 metric tonnes of rice was seized at the container freight station near the Vizag Port. This happened during the surprise inspection of Minister for Civil Supplies Nandendra Manohar on Monday.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as SUMANTRA W/O PARMESH KUMAR residing at 301/C, Gali No. 1, Dharampura, Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi - 110031 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as GEETA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as PRIYANKA ANAND W/O RISHAB ANAND R/O A-31, 2nd FLOOR, NEAR GRACE HOSPITAL, DWARKA SECTOR-8, BAGDOLA, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110077 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PRIYANKA KUMARI.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as WASIM KHAN S/O BUNDU KHAN R/O 157F, POKHET A-3, MAYUR VIHAR PHASE-3, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110096 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MATLOOB AHMED.

NAME CHANGE
I, Heera Kati Mother of NO. 4593238L Rank SEP Sarvesh Kumar residing at Village - Gursoli Post & Tehsil Baheri, District Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh 243201 have changed my name from Heera Kati to Hirakali vide affidavit no. IN-DL98498547581375W dated 07.12.2024, NCT of Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, JAI KISHAN SHARMA S/O RAM HARI SHARMA, R/O H. No. D-14, Gali No. 2, Surya Vihar, Sadatpur, Karawal Nagar, North East Delhi, Delhi - 110094 declare that name of my Father has been wrongly written as HARI PRASAD SHARMA in my Voter ID No. XCN0529180. The actual name of my Father is RAM HARI SHARMA, which may be amended accordingly.

NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice	
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)	
NIT No.	274889
Name of work and its location	Tender for "Transportation of Railway material from any Location to any location."
Approx. Cost of Work	Rs. 1,62,08,615/- including GST. (Rs. One Crore Sixty Two Lakh Eight Thousand Six Hundred Fifteen only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 2,31,100/-
Completion Period of Work	12 Months of date of execution of work
Cost of Tender document on cash/by post	NIL
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs on 31.12.2024 Opening of Tender at 15:00 hrs.
Website particulars, notice board location, complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender available on complete details of tender can be seen IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No.: 274889	Dated: 10.12.2024 3789/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

Munambam land is waqf property: IUML

KOZHIKODE. Pushed by its own leaders, including national organising secretary E T Muhammad Basheer, state secretary K M Shaji and MLA M K Muneer, the IUML has finally stated that the disputed land at Munambam is indeed waqf property. Until now, the party leadership, including state president Panakkad Syed Sadiq Ali Shihab Thangal and national general secretary P K Kunhalikutty, had been playing hide-and-seek, without clearly coming out on the exact nature of the land. They didn't contradict Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan's repeated assertion that the land is not waqf property. The leadership had remained silent when some legal personalities close to the IUML hinted that the Munambam land was given to the Farook College management under a gift deed and therefore it cannot be considered as waqf. But close on the heels of Shaji stating that IUML does not share Satheesan's view on Munambam land, Basheer told reporters in New Delhi that Munambam is indeed waqf land. "At no point had the party said it was not waqf property. All documents prove this fact," he said. Though Basheer said he doesn't want to contradict Satheesan's claim, it was very clear that all in the party are not happy with the leader of Opposition's stand. IUML had placed Sadiq Ali Thangal at the centre of the fire-fighting mission to douse the communal flare-up between communities over the land. Thangal had met the Latin Catholic bishops as part of his mission, but many in the IUML



believed that the peace mission should not be taken up by concealing the facts about the land and by compromising the waqf claim. Also, the suggestion of the Muslim Coordination Committee that met under the leadership of Thangal in Kozhikode last month was to find a lasting solution without forsaking the waqf claim.

No more remarks on Munambam, says Thangal

But an impression has been created that Muslim organisations have no problem in giving up the land unilaterally. The mood of the community was to go for a compromise without forfeiting the claim. Sadiq Ali Thangal and Kunhalikutty were hoping that they could sweep the discussion on waqf under the carpet and work towards a rapprochement, which

was sabotaged by their own party leaders. Driven to the wall, Kunhalikutty on Monday clarified that the party never said the land is not waqf property. He said none who raised different voices in the party wanted to evict the people currently residing at Munambam. He blamed the government for inordinately delaying a solution to the issue. Sensing the danger of the emergence of differing voices within the UDF, Thangal asked the party leaders not to carry the discussions on the issue forward. Addressing a press conference in Malappuram, Thangal said there will not be any further remarks from the party leaders on the issue. "Everyone admits that Babri Masjid stood at waqf land. Organisations like Muslim Personal Law Board said that it is for the Supreme Court to take a decision.

Women volunteers of Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam scheme seek job permanency, higher pay

Despite their critical role, the WHVs alleged that they are burdened with excessive tasks beyond their job description and are being paid a meagre Rs 5,500 as salary, inclusive of travel allowances.

TIRUNELVELI. Women Health Volunteers (WHV) of the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam scheme submitted a petition with District Collector Dr KP Karthikeyan, demanding job permanency, increase in salary, and reduction in workload, during the grievance redressal meeting held here on Monday. The petition submitted by nearly 100 WHVs from across the district highlighted that around 200 WHVs have been serving under the scheme, since the Covid-19 pandemic, to identify non-communicable diseases such as hypertension and diabetes among rural populations. Despite their critical role, the WHVs alleged that they are burdened with excessive tasks beyond their job description and are being paid a meagre Rs 5,500 as salary, inclusive of travel allowances. The volunteers stated that they often use personal two-wheelers to transport



medical supplies to remote villages as public transport is inadequate, resulting in significant out-of-pocket expenses for fuel. They added that they were recently assigned additional responsibilities, including identifying infectious

Group clash erupts at Cuttack college over smoking ganja

CUTTACK. Tension prevailed at the Netaji Subhas Memorial City College in Rajabaghicha here on Monday after a clash broke out on campus between two groups of students allegedly over smoking ganja. At least three students sustained injuries in the incident. While one group involved some Plus III and former students, the other comprised mostly Plus II. Police sources said some Plus III students accompanied by a few outsiders allegedly forced the others to smoke ganja. However as they refused, an argument broke out between both the parties which escalated into a clash. As per sources, some former and Plus III students of the college besides outsiders run a WhatsApp group in the name of "Black Brothers". The group members allegedly engage in various antisocial activities including eve-teasing and creating nuisance on the campus.

On the day, members of "Black Brothers" allegedly called some Plus II students near the cycle stand of the college and forced them to smoke ganja besides urging them to join their group. However, when they refused, a war of words ensued between the two parties which soon took the form of a clash with each assaulting the other. Some other students present at the spot filmed the entire incident and posted it on social media.

On being informed, Badambadi police reached the spot and sent the injured to hospital for treatment. ACP Swastik Panda said as per preliminary investigation, the scuffle occurred as one group forced the other into smoking ganja. "We have taken suo motu cognisance of the matter and started interrogating students involved in the incident. The college authorities are also being questioned and the video footage is being examined. Action will be taken accordingly," he added.

diseases and collecting biological specimens, such as sputum samples for tuberculosis diagnosis.

Emphasising that their families are struggling with financial hardships, they urged the state government to absorb them as permanent staff and provide adequate remuneration, and requested immediate intervention to ensure fair compensation and job security. Further, Kamarajar Samooga Nala Peravai members submitted a petition with the collector urging the state government to allow the victims, who were cheated through the investment scheme of the PACL, to register the land of the company in their name. Meanwhile, based on the complaints of the district administration, the Tirunelveli city police registered four cases against some petitioners who allegedly disturbed other petitioners with the unpermitted protests in front of the collectorate.

Polavaram diaphragm wall works to begin in January

VIJAYAWADA. Once Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu releases the work schedule for the Diaphragm Wall of the prestigious Polavaram Irrigation Project on December 16, the construction of the D-Wall will commence in the first week of January. According to highly placed sources, the construction of the 1,400-metre-long D-Wall will be taken up in a phased manner as per the recommendation of the committee of experts. The new D-Wall designs were approved by the Central Water Commission (CWC) in the last week of November. The new D-Wall, which is estimated to cost around Rs 900 crore, will be constructed by MEIL, in collaboration with Bauer Group of Germany, and it is expected to be completed by March 2026, if not by December 2025.

Incorporating the suggestions of the international committee of experts, the



new D-Wall will be constructed some 6 metres upstream of the existing D-Wall, which was damaged during floods in 2019 and 2020.

According to experts, the D-Wall will be a sub-surface construction going to 2 metres in depth beneath the rock strata below the river bed. Rock strata is found at varying depths in the river bed of

Godavari at the location of the proposed D-Wall. The depth varies from 40 to 90 metres. The proposed D-Wall is a single structure to be constructed parallel to the old one. The executing agencies are at present busy with the construction of platforms to take up the excavation for the D-Wall construction using specialised machinery -- cutter and crab machines -- which will be brought by Bauer from Germany. To ensure uninterrupted work, the platforms are being constructed at a height of +20 metres. The international experts' team, which studied the scoured portions of the project, and other aspects, is likely to examine, and submit its recommendations to the CWC by February for its approval of the Earth Cum Rock Fill (ECRF) Dam. Works of the ECRF Dam Gap 1 are likely to be taken up in March next year, and Gap 2 in November.

SIKH Times Classified

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as TANUJA MARWAH W/O JITENDER MARWAH residing at JF-20-3F, Block - JF, Khirki Extension, Delhi - 110017 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as TANUJA.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, Lekshendra Gupta S/O: Hariom, R/O House No-B-202, Near IDBI Bank, Inner Enclave Part-2, Kirari Suleman Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Rinku Gupta in my minor daughter Nayasha Gupta aged 13 years in her school record. The actual name of mine is Lekshendra Gupta, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, Farid Ahmad S/O RAIS AHMAD, R/O J-342-B, First Floor, Khirki Extension, Malviya Nagar, South West Delhi, Delhi-110017, declare that name of my minor son and my wife has been wrongly written as ADEEB and SUFIYA in my minor son ADEEB AHMAD aged 10 years in his school record. The actual name of my minor son and my wife are ADEEB AHMAD and SUFIYA KHANAM respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, ANUBHAV DUTTA S/O DEEPAK DUTTA, R/O House No.237, Ward No.10, Babra Mohalla, Rohtak-124001, Haryana, declare that mine and my Mother name has been wrongly written as ANUBHAV and RITU in my 10th and 12th Educational Documents. The actual name of mine and my mother are ANUBHAV DUTTA and RITU ATTRI respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information is given to general public at large that our client Mr. Anur Khurana S/O Late Mr. Chaman Lal is the co-owner of Freehold Residential Plot Bearing No. 3, area measuring 100 sq. yards, out of Kharsa no. 788 & 789, Situated at Village Nawada, Delhi, known as Om Vihar, Phase-I, A, New Delhi. By virtue of Notarized Will dated 19.04.2020, in the chain documents below mentioned documents not available i.e. Probate Order of Will dated 19.04.2020 now our client is declaring that that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, and same property sold to be Mr. Sushil Rawat & Mrs. Ramesh Rawat and same has been finance by SDFG India Home Finance Company Limited Branch: SUBHASH NAGAR, Delhi. If any person is having objection right of claim against the said property, contact to undersigned along with supporting documents within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA Advocate
1/566-A, Ground Floor, Sector-1, Vaidh, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, (Contact at 09858871432)

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, Shiv Dayal Verma S/O Ram Chand Verma, R/O 262, GROUND FLOOR, SANT NAGAR, EAST OF KAILASH, South Delhi, Delhi-110065, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Shiv Dayal in my PPO NO-3720692013. The actual name of mine is SHIV DAYAL VERMA, which may be amended accordingly.

सार्वजनिक सूचना
मैं प्रदीप कुमार पिता का नाम खानम सिंह मन्सूर नं. 109 गान्धी दरियापुर खुर्द न्यू दिल्ली 110073 अपने लक्के आने उसकी पत्नी सनी को अपनी चाल अचल संपत्ति सहित, सभी संबंधों से वेदखर करवा दे हूँ यहाँ से मेरी सही पहचान का कोई भी संबंध उपरोक्त से नहीं होगा, दोनों जवाबदेह होने किन्ती भी मेरे के लिए।

PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public is hereby informed that Mrs. Rakhi Singhal, wife of Mr. Videsh Singhal, is the owner of the First Floor, with Roof Rights, on land measuring 120 Sq. Yards, built on House No. 11/433, situated at Mohalla Upper Bazar, Modi Nagar, Pargana Jalalabad, Tehsil Modli Nagar, District Ghaziabad, U.P. Mrs. Rakhi Singhal acquired the said property through four separate Sale Deeds dated 21.05.2015, 30.05.2015, 30.09.2015, and 18.09.2015. Please note that the chain of documents, including the description of the property, is not clearly mentioned in the chain documents. The property is financed by Shivalik Small Finance Bank, Branch Noida, Uttar Pradesh. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid property and any objection, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 15 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

ASHWANI KUMAR ADVOCATE
Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Mohd Javed S/O Mohd Zahid, R/O H NO- E- 26, MADIPUR, JY COLONY, MADIPUR, West Delhi, Delhi-110063, have changed the name of my minor son Mohd Jeyan aged 10 years and he shall hereafter be known as Mohd Zaarib.

NAME CHANGE
I, LAXMI DEVI Mother of No. 4084290K Rank-HAV Name-KULDEEP SINGH residing at VILL-JATI BHAKOTI, PO-KOT KANDARA, TEHSIL-KARAN-PRAYAG, DISTT-CHAMOLI, UTTARAKHAND-246449 have changed my name from LAXMI DEVI to LAKSHMI DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SOBHAN SINGH Father of No. 4084290K Rank-HAV Name-KULDEEP SINGH residing at VILL-JATI BHAKOTI, PO-KOT KANDARA, TEHSIL-KARAN-PRAYAG, DISTT-CHAMOLI, UTTARAKHAND-246449 have changed my name from SOBHAN SINGH to SOBAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUGANYA KANAGARAJU Wife of No-16114452L Rank-NK Name-KANAGARAJU Presently residing at 31, KOL-LAMPUTHUR, VTC-BALAKRISHNAPURAM, PO- BALAKRISHNAPURAM-PUDUR, DISTRICT-DINDIGUL, TAMIL NADU-624005 have changed my name from SUGANYA KANAGARAJU to SUGANYA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-15443329X Rank-NK Name-RAJU MOLLAH Father of RISHABH MOLLAH R/O VPO-BITHARI, TEHSIL-BASIRHAT, DIST-NORTH 24 PGS, WEST BENGAL-743286 have changed my minor son's name from RISHABH MOLLAH to RISHABH MOLLAH for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, Kamala Devi Mother of JC-471920P, Rank-SUB Name-SHREE RAM MAHARIA Presently residing at VILL-NORANGPURA, PO-SERFRAGUWAR, TEH-KHETRI, DIST-JHUNHUNU, RAJASTHAN-332716, have changed my name from KAMALA DEVI to KAMLI DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, DIPANSHU S/O BIJENDER SINGH, R/O Near Panchoyt Ghar, Boliara, Rohtak, Haryana-124401 declare that name of my father and my mother has been wrongly written as BUAENDER and SARITA in my 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my father and my mother are BIJENDER SINGH and SARITA DEVI, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, KAMALA DEVI Mother of JC-471920P, Rank-SUB Name-SHREE RAM MAHARIA Presently residing at VILL-NORANGPURA, PO-SERFRAGUWAR, TEH-KHETRI, DIST-JHUNHUNU, RAJASTHAN-332716, have changed my name from KAMALA DEVI to KAMLI DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 10/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, DIPANSHU S/O BIJENDER SINGH, R/O Near Panchoyt Ghar, Boliara, Rohtak, Haryana-124401 declare that name of my father and my mother has been wrongly written as BUAENDER and SARITA in my 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my father and my mother are BIJENDER SINGH and SARITA DEVI, which may be amended accordingly.

PRADEEP BARI ADVOCATES
OFFICE AT: 161/A1, NANGLI VIHAR PART-1, NAJAFGARH-NEW DELHI-110043
MOBILE: 7503084553

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as PRIYAM alias SPANDAN SAXENA S/O SHWETANSHU KUMAR SAXENA residing at Homes No. D - 463, Govindpuram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201013 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SPANDAN SAXENA.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, NEETU SHARMA W/O BHARAT BHUSHAN, R/O House No. 38 A, Kitiokari Village South Delhi, Delhi - 110014, declared that the name of my minor Daughter has been wrongly written as TAMANNA in my minor daughter namely TAMANNA SHARMA aged 14 years in her School Records. The actual name of my minor Daughter is TAMANNA SHARMA, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as SOURABH KASHYAP alias SOURABH KASHYAP S/O RAMAN KUMAR R/O B-102/4, INDRA GANDHI PARK, NARAINA INDUSTRIAL AREA PHASE-1, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110028, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SAURAV KUMAR KASHYAP.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, FARID AHMAD S/O RAIS AHMAD, R/O J-342-B, First Floor, Khirki Extension, Malviya Nagar, South West Delhi, Delhi-110017, declare that name of my minor son and my wife has been wrongly written as ADEEB and SUFIYA in my minor son ADEEB AHMAD aged 10 years in his school record. The actual name of my minor son and my wife are ADEEB AHMAD and SUFIYA KHANAM respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

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News box

Tribunal orders Rs19L damages for cyclist who lost leg in crash

Gurgaon. A rider whose leg had to be amputated after a truck hit his cycle and ran over him in Manesar in April 2021 was awarded compensation of Rs 18.9 lakh by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Gurgaon, earlier this month. Compensation will have to be paid by the insurance company. Judge Tarun Singal, in the Dec 5 order, said that Jitesh Kumar Jha was 21 years old at the time of the accident and was the only earning member of his family. "His condition is not likely to improve in the future. His happiness is lost forever. He will have to be continuously dependent upon others in all walks of life..." the judge said, awarding compensation. On April 1, 2021, Jitesh — who worked as a record keeper with a private company in Manesar — was heading back to his rented accommodation in Rampura village. He had reached Minda Company Chowk when a truck rammed his bicycle. As he fell to the ground, his right leg was crushed under the wheel of the truck. He was rushed to ESIC Hospital in Manesar's Sector 3 for treatment, but his leg had to be amputated. Jitesh in 2022 filed a plea before the tribunal, seeking compensation of Rs 60 lakh. He argued that he used to earn monthly salary of Rs 16,000, and after becoming a victim of rash and negligent driving, he was left differently abled for life. Police investigation found that the truck belonged to Balaji Cargo Moving Transport, and the driver was Amin Khan. The driver and owner of the truck told the tribunal they were falsely implicated in the case, but did not produce any evidence to support the claim. The tribunal noted that they had not filed any complaint before the authorities for false implication and the petitioner had no motive to do so. Awarding compensation of Rs 18.9 lakh, the tribunal said that Jitesh's injuries will reduce his life expectancy and standard, other than causing hardship to his family.

Thank brisk winds & showers, Gurgaon's air turns 'moderate' again after 1 'poor' day

Gurgaon: The city experienced improved air quality on Monday, shifting from "poor" to "moderate" category, with a 24-hour AQI reading of 156, down from Sunday's 232. The enhancement was attributed to strong winds and scattered rainfall across NCR late Sunday evening. Monitoring stations across the city showed AQI levels within the "moderate" range on Monday. The readings were — Gwalpahari 126, Teri Gram 136, Vikas Sadan 114, and 199 at Sector 51. SAFAR forecasts a decline in air quality to "poor" level. Its report indicates northwest winds below 8 kmph during morning hours, with smog and moderate fog. Wind speeds may increase to 12 kmph by Tuesday afternoon. The ventilation index below 6000 m²/s and average wind speeds under 10 kmph create unfavourable conditions for pollutant dispersion. Wind speeds increased to 7 kmph on Monday from 3 kmph on Sunday, facilitating pollutant dispersal.

According to Sachin Panwar, an independent air quality expert, light rain across NCR on Sunday night helped clear the airshed. However, he warns that cooling temperatures and thermal inversion could trap particulates near ground level, potentially increasing pollution during mornings and evenings. Weather specialists anticipated a decrease in temperature in coming days, potentially leading to pollutant build-up. People with respiratory conditions have been advised to exercise caution during early mornings and evenings when pollution peaks due to lower temperatures and weak wind speed. Despite "moderate" overall AQI, PM_{2.5} levels remained concerning. Sector 51 station recorded 345 µg/m³, exceeding WHO's limit of 15 µg/m³ by 23 times. Teri Gram showed 303 µg/m³, Gwalpahari 290 µg/m³, and Vikas Sadan 162 µg/m³.

Meanwhile, widespread rain in northwest India, accompanied by strong winds, on Sunday night cleaned Delhi's air. The city recorded the fourth 'moderate' day in Dec as the Air Quality Index (AQI) improved to 186 on Monday. This month has recorded the highest number of 'moderate' days in Dec ever.

A320 lands & takes off from Noida airport in passenger flight trial

Noida. An Airbus 320 — operated by IndiGo — was the first flight to touch down and take off from the runway of Noida International Airport on Monday, successfully conducting a trial in the runup to commercial operations by April next year.

The flight — with officials from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Airports Authority of India (AAI) as passengers on board — landed in Noida at 1.25pm to a water cannon salute, accompanied by claps and cheers from airport staff and hundreds of workers who toiled on the project over the past couple of years. Before it landed, the Airbus circled above the airport for an hour and a half to assess operational readiness and air traffic protocols. It took off again around 2.45pm. As the flight landed on the newly built runway, Union civil aviation minister KR Naidu, along with senior officials from UP gov't, marked the occasion by breaking coconuts and greeting the pilots and crew. The minister and officials declared the validation flight a success, saying this would pave the way for the airport's concessionaire to apply for an aerodrome licence. So, what did the validation exercise include? Officials said the trial included a test of the required navigation performance (RNP) and lighting systems. RNP allows aircraft to follow highly precise flight paths, ensuring optimal safety and efficiency. "Today's aircraft had specialised equipment to perform critical manoeuvres, such as landing, take-off, and taxiing along the runway. These tests evaluated the runway's performance, including surface conditions, length, and lighting systems. The navigational aids, such as instrument landing system (ILS) and precision approach path indicator (PAPI), were tested for accuracy. Communication protocols with air traffic control were assessed as well. Emergency simulations, including scenarios like engine failure and adverse weather conditions, were conducted," an official said.

Another tower unsafe, all of Chintels Paradiso in Gurgaon now faces demolition

Gurgaon. The last of Chintels Paradiso's towers to be assessed for structural defects was declared unsafe for habitation on Monday, closing a 34-month loop that has seen all nine residential towers of the condominium where flats sold for a range of Rs 75 lakh to Rs 1 crore when it went to the market in 2012. In its latest report, Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) has found that Tower B has severe structural flaws, including widespread cracks, corroded reinforcement bars and substandard concrete, findings similar to those in the other towers. What this means is that Tower B will also have to be evacuated and Paradiso will become perhaps the first modern condominium in the country — Paradiso was completed in 2011 — that will be brought to the ground, another dubious first for NCR, which has already seen the razing of the Supertech twin towers in Noida. The structural assessments of Paradiso's towers began after a vertical collapse of living rooms of flats across five floors in Tower D on Feb 10, 2022 led to the death of two residents, which was followed by days of protests

on the compound, with residents accusing the developer of not reacting on time to concerns like sagging balconies that they had raised. Tower D was evacuated immediately after the cave-in. The other towers followed over the months, a process that was slow but had an air of inevitability about it as tower after tower was found to have the same defects. "Corrosion in reinforcement bars, poor concrete quality, and significant structural deterioration were identified as critical safety risks. Experts also noted visible puffing of tiles, bulging floors and damaged balconies, with many elements showing signs of advanced corrosion. The building is beyond repair and recommended demolition is the only feasible solution," the CBRI report says of Tower B. Read the report on any of the other towers (A-J, the condominium has no Tower I) and the inference is similar — poor concrete and corrosion. The condominium, where possession of flats began from 2014-15, has a total 532 flats. Developer Chintels India, which wants to rebuild the condominium, has now written to the district administration,



urging it to expedite evacuation of Tower B and towers A and C, where families continue to live. In its letter, Chintels highlighted the urgent need for demolition to prevent potential disasters. The letter also noted that the administration had previously applied the National Disaster Management Act to six towers — D, E, F, G, H, and J — and ordered their demolition in April 2024 after they were declared unsafe. Chintels has announced a one-time shifting allowance of ₹40,000 for each flat owner in towers A, B and C. Edifice Engineering, the company that brought the twin towers down, has been engaged to demolish Paradiso and Chintels has revised its contract to include Tower B. The company,

which has given a buyout option to residents who sought a refund, said owners of flats in Tower B would be entitled to the same, based on current market value of their flats and interior costs at rates determined in collaboration with the administration. In Feb 2022, the administration had called IIT-Delhi to assess the structural safety of the towers. Subsequently, towers E and F were declared unsafe in March 2023, G in June 2023, H in July 2023, J in Jan 2024, C in Aug 2024 (done by CBRI), A in Oct 2024 (CBRI), and finally B (also CBRI). Towers D, E, F, G, H and J have been fully vacated. A total of 56 residents remain in flats in tower A, 54 in B, and around 30 in C. So far, the district administration has officially declared towers D, E, F, G, H and J as unsafe and ordered demolition. The administration has assured residents demolition will be carried out in a phased manner to minimise disruption. Mukesh Singhal, a resident of tower B, said, "I am a retired person with no pension or any other source of income. We are being asked to vacate the flat for no fault of ours."

27.6k fined Rs4.4cr for seat belt, phone violations till Nov in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. Around 24,000 commuters in the city were fined Rs 2.4 crore for not wearing seat belts, and 3,664 were issued challans worth Rs 2 crore for using mobile phones while driving between Jan and Nov this year.

Police said not wearing a seat belt is among the most common traffic violations in the city. On average, 400 people die in road accidents in Gurgaon every year. Though the number of challans for flouting traffic norms has gone up over the years, little has changed on the ground.

DCP (traffic) Virender Vij on Monday urged commuters to wear seat belts.

"In many accidents, airbags fail to deploy because the driver was not wearing a seat belt, leading to fatalities. Using a seat belt can significantly enhance driver safety in case of accidents," the DCP said.



Vij said traffic police will continue to keep up surveillance and checks. "This will ensure safe, smooth and orderly traffic management, and this special campaign will continue in the future," he said. TOI had reported last week that challans issued for wrong-side driving till Nov this year were almost three times more than fines issued for

the offence in 2019, which was — until now — the highest annual count recorded by traffic police. According to traffic police, 1.46 lakh challans were issued for wrong-side driving and Rs 10.3 crore was recovered as fines from commuters till Nov 30 this year. Cops also identified 38 spots in the city, where commuters tend to drive on the wrong side of the road. These include Sheetala Mata Road, Signature Tower Chowk towards Huda, Sohna Road near Iris Tech Park, Subhash Chowk, Basai Chowk, Galleria Market to Golf Course Road, Guru Dronacharya Metro station, Hero Honda Chowk, Hero Honda Chowk to Rajeev Chowk, IFFCO Chowk, Kadipur main bus stand, MDI Chowk, Sadar Bazar, Pataudi Road and others.

UP set to build Dudheswar Nath temple corridor for yatra ease

Ghaziabad. On the backburner for nearly three years, UP gov't has initiated a survey to expedite work on the Dudheswar Nath temple corridor on the lines of Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath temple project.

The corridor is proposed to have a 70m entrance gate, an internal pathway and zoning for better organisation. Located in one of the most populous areas of the Old City, the temple draws lakhs of devotees during the annual Kanwar yatra. It leaves the already overcrowded lanes leading to the temple complex in the throes of intense traffic congestion. Currently, the boundary wall of the temple is defaced with various posters, while autos, e-rickshaws, roadside vendors and stray cattle eat into every inch of the road. Overhead wires — utility poles threaded together by thick power cables — are a common sight too.

"The proposal is to develop a comprehensive development plan to restore the Dudheswar Nath temple complex's significance as a major



spiritual destination. The survey of the complex will focus on creating dedicated zones, improving connectivity and infrastructure, and removing squatters," said an official from the district administration. "The temple can be accessed from GT Road on one side and Vijay Nagar on the other. These roads and bylanes are to be widened as per the proposal," the official added. According to the proposal, Rs 2.2 crore will be spent on the development of the entrance gate,

which is a good 70 metres from the temple. The estimated cost for the development of the internal pathway leading to the temple will be Rs 58.2 lakh, while Rs 24.7 lakh will be spent on murals. Facade lighting of the temple will come up at a cost of Rs 1.2 crore. The final estimates are to be drawn up once the survey is completed.

Mahant Narayan Giri, head priest of Dudheswar Nath Temple told TOI the survey was initiated in and around the temple complex after chief minister Yogi Adityanath, during his recent visit to Ghaziabad, stressed the need to create the corridor.

"The temple corridor is hanging fire for the last three years. The CM, during his visit to Ghaziabad during the bypoll, directed the administration to expedite work. Hopefully, by next year, the corridor will be ready," added Giri.

Garbage finds new home in city: Dwarka Eway

Gurgaon. Less than a year since its inauguration, the eight-lane Dwarka Expressway is lined with heaps of garbage being dumped along the high-speed corridor illegally. The matter was raised by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), which last week wrote to MCG, seeking urgent intervention by the corporation to clear up garbage dumps along the expressway.

NHAI said in the letter that the right of way (ROW) along the expressway had turned into a dumping ground, and local bodies and street vendors were adding to the mess. Despite deploying additional teams to maintain cleanliness, NHAI said, the situation has become unmanageable for them. ROW is open area along the carriageways, and is kept for maintenance and providing related road infrastructure. "This constant dumping undermines efforts to maintain cleanliness along the expressway, affecting its usability and aesthetic appeal. Moreover, it further compounds issues of choked drains and the presence of stray animals along the corridor, creating a road safety hazard," an NHAI official told TOI on Monday, adding that the expressway was an infrastructure project of national importance.



The waste problem isn't new. NHAI had flagged similar concerns earlier this July about waste falling off uncovered and overloaded trucks onto the expressway.

The 18.7km Gurgaon section of the Rs 9,000-crore expressway was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March this year, almost 18 years after Haryana gov't conceived the idea of building a link road between Delhi and Gurgaon. MCG, asked about NHAI's

concern, assured action. "We will activate enforcement in the area to keep a check on illegal dumping of waste along the expressway. These dumps are because of illegal waste vendors operating in the area," said MCG commissioner, Ashok Kumar Garg. Residents of new sectors along the expressway said waste dumping reflected a systematic failure of authorities in managing garbage.

Discom staff to wear black bands in stir against privatisation

Gurgaon. GMDA is planning to develop a new bus terminal in Sector 29 to strengthen the city's public transport infrastructure and provide better connectivity for commuters. The metropolitan authority might discuss the matter in the upcoming meeting with the Haryana chief secretary this week. Around three acres of land have been identified for the project. The land, however, currently lies with the transport department, and the metropolitan authority is now seeking its transfer to proceed with its plan. If GMDA has its way, the bus terminal will be built near Millennium City Centre metro station, which is expected to benefit daily commuters by offering easy access between buses and metro. Moreover, another metro station is also being planned near the existing one as part of the city's metro expansion. The proposed terminal will accommodate up to 50 buses at a time and will also have charging stations to support the operation of e-buses. A senior GMDA official said they sought



the land transfer from the transport department as they are not providing bus services in the city. "Since the Gurugram Metropolitan City Bus Limited (GMCBL) is now catering to the city bus services' needs, the land earmarked for city bus operations should be transferred to GMDA," the official said. With the proposed rapid rail station likely to come up at Rajiv Chowk, GMDA aims to develop the depot-cum-terminal as an integrated transit hub. Earlier, the transport department had planned to develop a bus stand at Rajiv Chowk, but the project remained in limbo for a decade. Additionally, converting the existing bus depot in Sector 10 into an integrated terminal is also in the works. The proposed terminal will be located next to the upcoming metro station to ensure the seamless transfer of passengers. Earlier, GMDA planned 15 such terminals but could not proceed further due to land constraints. At present, the city has two bus depots, in Sector 10 and Sector 52-53, catering to the needs of the existing fleet of 200 buses. The mobility plan recommends the establishment of nine city bus depots to support the operation of city buses.

"It is ironic that a world-class infrastructure project is flanked by piles of garbage. While this area is still developing, the lack of proper enforcement and waste management is creating a mess," said Prakhar Sahay, convener of the Dwarka Expressway Gurugram Development Association. He also pointed out that illegal scrap businesses were mushrooming in the area. "These businesses operate without oversight, adding to the chaos," he said.

Earlier this year, Haryana gov't declared solid waste exigency in Gurgaon and formed a panel to specifically implement what it called SWEEP — Solid Waste Environment Exigency Programme.

Since then, more panels have been formed in the city to monitor its garbage crisis, which is always looking to annex more areas. Still, residents say waste collection from their homes is erratic and the corporation is struggling to scale up capacity to clear Bandhwari landfill, where all of the city's civic waste is dumped. Sunil Sareen, a resident of Sector 102, said waste dumping is polluting the area along the expressway. "It can also contaminate groundwater and lead to other environmental issues," he added.

NEWS BOX

In A First, Israel's PM Set To Testify In Bribery, Corruption Trial

World Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to testify on Tuesday in his bribery, fraud, and breach of trust trial. The hearing will begin in an underground room at the Tel Aviv District Court, moved from Jerusalem due to security concerns. Netanyahu is expected to testify three times a week for at least two weeks, according to local reports. This is the first time a sitting Israeli PM has been charged with a crime, IANS reported citing Xinhua news agency.

The trial began in early 2020 and involves three cases against Netanyahu. He is accused of bribery, fraud, and breach of trust. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister, denies the charges. He claims the trial is a politically driven 'witch hunt.' On November 24, the court partially granted Netanyahu's legal team a 15-day postponement for his testimony. However, it dismissed a recent plea for a delay from 12 ministers in Netanyahu's cabinet. The trial was earlier paused for over two-months due to Israel-Hamas conflict. If convicted, Netanyahu could face severe penalties, including jail time. This would make him the first sitting Israeli prime minister to be sentenced for criminal charges.

Netanyahu's trial is further complicated by ICC arrest warrants issued in November. The warrants, targeting him and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, accuse them of "crimes against humanity and war crimes" committed between October 8, 2023, and May 20, 2024.

Donald Trump's Pick Kash Patel Meets Senators As His Nomination Gains Momentum

Washington. The Nomination of Indian-American Kash Patel as FBI Director gains momentum as he meets several influential Senators at Capitol Hill, many of whom openly came out in his support.

If confirmed by the US Senate, Patel would be the first-ever Indian-American to head the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the powerful investigating agency of the United States. Today I reminded Kash that transparency brings accountability, and it's badly needed at the FBI. As a former congressional investigator, Kash understands that cooperation with Congress is not optional and whistle-blower protection is essential," a statement from Senator Chuck Grassley, the incoming Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said after meeting Patel. Once formally nominated, I'd look forward to holding a hearing on Kash's nomination in the Senate Judiciary Committee," he said following the meeting. "I just wrapped a wonderful meeting with Chairman Chuck Grassley. I share his love for government transparency and whistle-blower protection," Patel wrote in a social media post. Earlier in the day, the Iowa Senator in a letter demanded the current FBI Director Christopher Wray step aside from the post he has held for the last seven years. An FBI Director's position is for ten years.

For the good of the country, it's time for you and your deputy to move on to the next chapter in your lives... (I) must express my vote of no confidence in your continued leadership of the FBI," Grassley wrote in his letter to Wray. A day earlier, incoming President Donald Trump expressed his full confidence in Kash Patel. "He's going to do what he thinks is right," Trump told NBC News in an interview. "If they think somebody was dishonest or a corrupt politician, he probably must do it. But I'm not going to direct him," he said. Senator Joni Ernst from Iowa also endorsed Patel. "Kash Patel will create much-needed transparency at the FBI. He shares my passion for shaking up federal agencies, downsizing the D.C. bureaucracy, and having public servants work on behalf of the American people!" he wrote on Twitter. "I just finished a great meeting with Sen. Joni Ernst. We discussed the importance of transparency at the FBI and deploying agents in the field to fight fentanyl and crime in Iowa. The FBI needs courageous leadership to implement reform, Sen. Ernst is that partner," Patel said after the meeting.

4-day workweek in Tokyo from next year: Is population decline reshaping Japan's workforce

World The Tokyo administration found a new way to address the country's low birth rates and that is to implement a four-day workweek scheme for its staff. Tokyo's Governor Yuriko Koike has declared that from April onwards, metropolitan government staff will have the choice of a three-day off each week.

"We will review work styles ... with flexibility, ensuring no one has to give up their career due to life events such as childbirth or child care," she stated during her policy address at the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly's fourth regular session, NBC news reported. This initiative aims to encourage procreation amongst Japanese couples, as the country's fertility rate has reached an unprecedented low. According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, last year's rate fell to 1.2 children per woman during her reproductive years, despite increased governmental efforts to promote family formation. Population stability requires a minimum rate of 2.1. Koike introduced an additional measure allowing parents of elementary school pupils to reduce their working hours in exchange for a proportional salary adjustment.

"Now is the time for Tokyo to take the initiative to protect and enhance the lives, livelihoods and economy of our people during these challenging times for the nation," she declared.

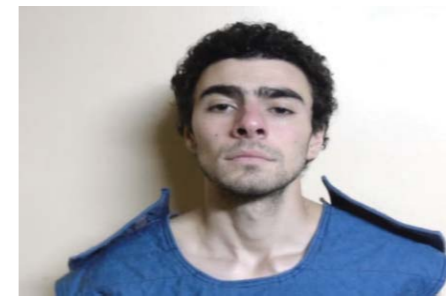
Japan registered only 727,277 births last year, as reported by the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. This low figure may be attributed to the country's overtime work culture, which often forces women to choose between professional advancement and motherhood.

Suspect in UnitedHealthcare CEO killing charged with murder in New York, court records show

ALTOONA. After UnitedHealthcare's CEO was gunned down on a New York sidewalk, police searched for the masked gunman with dogs, drones and scuba divers. Officers used the city's muscular surveillance system. Investigators analyzed DNA samples, fingerprints and internet addresses. Police went door-to-door looking for witnesses. When an arrest came five days later, those sprawling investigative efforts shared credit with an alert civilian's instincts. A Pennsylvania McDonald's customer noticed another patron who resembled the man in the oblique security-camera photos that New York police had publicized. Luigi Nicholas Mangione, a 26-year-old Ivy League graduate from a prominent Maryland real estate family, was arrested Monday in the killing of Brian Thompson, who headed one of the United States' largest medical insurance companies. He remained jailed in Pennsylvania, where he was initially charged with possession of an unlicensed firearm, forgery and providing false identification to police. By late evening, prosecutors in Manhattan had added a

charge of murder, according to an online court docket. He's expected to be extradited to New York eventually. It's unclear whether Mangione has an attorney who can comment on the allegations. Asked at Monday's arraignment whether he needed a public defender, Mangione asked whether he could "answer that at a future date." Mangione was arrested in Altoona, Pennsylvania, after the McDonald's customer recognized him and notified an employee, authorities said. Police in Altoona, about 233 miles (375 kilometers) west of New York City, were soon summoned. They arrived to find Mangione sitting at a table in the back of the restaurant, wearing a blue medical mask and looking at a laptop, according to a Pennsylvania police criminal complaint. He initially gave them a fake ID, but when an officer asked Mangione whether he'd been to New York recently, he "became quiet and started to shake," the complaint says.

When he pulled his mask down at officers' request, "we knew that was our guy," rookie Officer Tyler Frye said at a news conference in Hollidaysburg. New York



Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said at a Manhattan news conference that Mangione was carrying a gun like the one used to kill Thompson and the same fake ID the shooter had used to check into a New York hostel, along with a passport and other fraudulent IDs. NYPD Chief of Detectives Joseph Kenny said Mangione also had a three-page, handwritten document that shows "some ill will toward corporate America." A law enforcement official who wasn't authorized to discuss the investigation publicly and spoke with The Associated Press on condition of anonymity said the document included a

line in which Mangione claimed to have acted alone. "To the Feds, I'll keep this short, because I do respect what you do for our country. To save you a lengthy investigation, I state plainly that I wasn't working with anyone," the document said, according to the official. It also had a line that said, "I do apologize for any strife or traumas but it had to be done. Frankly, these parasites simply had it coming." Pennsylvania prosecutor Peter Weeks said in court that Mangione was found with a passport and \$10,000 in cash \$2,000 of it in foreign currency. Mangione disputed the amount. Thompson, 50, was killed last Wednesday as he walked alone to a midtown Manhattan hotel for an investor conference. Police quickly came to see the shooting as a targeted attack by a gunman who appeared to wait for Thompson, came up behind him and fired a 9 mm pistol. Investigators have said "delay," "deny" and "depose" were written on ammunition found near Thompson's body. The words mimic a phrase used to criticize the insurance industry.

Netanyahu claims Israel-occupied Golan Heights in Syria will remain Israeli 'for eternity'

JERUSALEM. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday that the Golan Heights, occupied by Israel for almost 60 years, would remain Israeli "for eternity". Speaking at a press conference in Jerusalem, Netanyahu thanked US President-elect Donald Trump for recognising Israel's 1981 annexation of the territory during his first term and said "the Golan will be part of the State of Israel for eternity." Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said Monday that his country's military takeover of the buffer zone along its border with Syria was a temporary move, after Islamist-led rebels took control in Syria.

Israeli troops that have moved into the buffer zone on the edge of the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights "constitute a violation" of the 1974 disengagement agreement between Israel and Syria, a UN spokesman said Monday.



"This is a limited and temporary step we took for security reasons," Saar said in a press conference at the foreign ministry in Jerusalem. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Sunday that he had ordered the army to "take control" of the zone -- on the east of the Israeli-annexed Golan -- after the fall of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad the same day. Saar and an Israeli government spokesman both confirmed that Israeli troops had moved beyond the demarcated buffer zone onto the slopes of Mount Hermon.

The UN peacekeeping force deployed in the Golan Heights, known as UNDOF, "informed the Israeli counterparts that these actions would constitute a violation of the 1974 disengagement agreement," said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. He said that the Israeli forces that entered the zone were still present in at least three locations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Sunday he had ordered the army to "seize" the demilitarized zone in the Syrian-

controlled part of the Golan Heights after rebels swept Syrian president Bashar al-Assad from power.

Most of the Golan Heights plateau has been occupied since 1967 by Israel, which later annexed it in a move not recognized by most of the international community. In 1974 a buffer zone was established to separate the Israeli-held and Syrian territories, with UN peacekeepers stationed there.

Amid the downfall of Assad, Israel announced a troop deployment to the Golan Heights citing "the possible entry of armed individuals into the buffer zone." Israeli forces "will continue to operate as long as necessary in order to preserve the buffer zone and defend Israel," it added. Israeli troops "have entered the area of separation and have been moving within that area where they remain in at least three locations throughout the area of separation," Dujarric said. "There should be no military forces or activities in the area of separation. And Israel and Syria must continue to uphold the terms of that 1974 agreement, and preserve stability in the Golan," he said.

Ex-Assad Regime Syrian Officials Indicted In US For War Crimes Against Americans

World A US federal indictment has charged two former senior Syrian intelligence officials from the regime of former President Bashar al-Assad with "war crimes against Americans and other civilians," the Department of Justice announced. The indictment accuses Jamil Hassan, 72, and Abdul Salam Mahmoud, 65, of conspiring to commit war crimes by subjecting detainees, including US citizens, to cruel and inhuman treatment at detention facilities such as the Mezzeh Military Airport prison near Damascus, according to the justice department. Warrants for their arrest have been issued, though both remain at large, the statement read on Monday.

"The perpetrators of the Assad regime's atrocities against American citizens and other civilians during the Syrian civil war must answer for their heinous crimes," Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement. As alleged,

these Assad regime intelligence officials whipped, kicked, electrocuted, and burned their victims; hung them by their wrists for prolonged periods of time; threatened them with rape and death; and falsely told them that their family members had been killed. The Justice Department has a long memory, and we will never stop working to find and bring to justice those who tortured Americans," he added. Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco reaffirmed the US's commitment to accountability, stating, "The Assad regime may have fallen, but our commitment to accountability continues unabated. For the second time in a year, the Department of Justice has brought charges against those who committed war crimes against US citizens, deploying a previously unused federal law to hold accountable individuals who engaged in cruel and inhuman atrocities during

armed conflict." FBI Director Christopher Wray said the bureau remains dedicated to collaborating with international law enforcement to ensure justice is served. "Hassan and Mahmoud allegedly oversaw the systematic use of cruel and inhuman treatment on perceived enemies of the Syrian regime, including American citizens," he said. According to the Justice Department, Hassan, as the Director of Syrian Air Force Intelligence, managed a network of detention centres, including Mezzeh Prison. Mahmoud, a Brigadier General, directed operations at the prison.

From January 2012 to July 2019, the two allegedly conspired to identify, intimidate, and punish individuals detained at Mezzeh, including protesters, medical aid providers to regime opponents, and those who publicly criticised the Assad regime.

Elon Musk warns Republicans against standing in Trump's way, or his

DES MOINES. A week after President-elect Donald Trump's victory, Elon Musk said his political action committee would "play a significant role in primaries."

The following week, the billionaire responded to a report that he might fund challengers to GOP House members who don't support Trump's nominees. "How else? There is no other way," Musk wrote on X, which he rebranded after purchasing Twitter and moving to boost conservative voices, including his own. And during his recent visit to Capitol Hill, Musk and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy delivered a warning to Republicans who don't go along with their plans to slash spending as part of Trump's proposed Department of Government Efficiency. "Elon and Vivek talked about having a naughty list and a nice list for members of Congress and senators and how we vote and how we're spending the American people's money," said Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga.

Trump's second term comes with the specter of the world's richest man serving as his

political enforcer. Within Trump's team, there is a feeling that Musk not only supports Trump's agenda and Cabinet appointments, but is intent on seeing them through to the point of pressuring Republicans who may be less devout. One Trump adviser, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal political dynamics, noted Musk had come to enjoy his role on the campaign and that he clearly had the resources to stay involved.

The adviser and others noted that Musk's role is still taking shape. And Musk, once a supporter of President Barack Obama before moving to the right in recent years, is famously mercurial. "I think he was really important for this election. Purchasing Twitter, truly making it a free speech platform, I think, was integral to this election, to the win that Donald Trump had," said departing Republican National Committee co-chair Lara Trump, the president-elect's daughter-in-law. "But I don't know that ultimately he wants to be in politics. I think he considers himself to be

someone on the outside." During the presidential campaign, Musk contributed roughly \$200 million to America PAC, a super PAC aimed at reaching Trump voters online and in person in the seven most competitive states, which Trump swept. He also invested \$20 million in a group called RBG PAC, which ran ads arguing Trump would not sign a national abortion ban even as the former president nominated three of the justices who overturned a federally guaranteed right to the procedure. Musk's donation to RBG PAC — a name that invokes the initials of former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a champion of abortion rights — wasn't revealed until post-election campaign filings were made public Thursday. Musk has said he hopes to keep America PAC funded and operating. Beyond that, he has used his X megaphone to suggest he is at least open to challenging less exuberant Trump supporters in Congress. Another key Trump campaign ally has been more aggressive online. Conservative activist

Charlie Kirk, whose group Turning Point Action also worked to turn out voters for Trump, named Republican senators he wants to target. "This is not a joke, everybody. The funding is already being put together. Donors are calling like crazy. Primaries are going to be launched," Kirk said on his podcast, singling out Sens. Joni Ernst of Iowa, Jim Risch of Idaho, Mike Rounds of South Dakota and Thom Tillis of North Carolina as potential targets. All four Republican senators' seats are up in 2026. For now, Musk has been enjoying the glow of his latest conquest, joining Trump for high-level meetings and galas at the soon-to-be president's Mar-a-Lago resort home in Palm Beach, Florida. The incoming administration is seeded with Musk allies, including venture capitalist and former PayPal executive David Sacks serving as the "White House A.I. & Crypto Czar" and Jared Isaacman, a tech billionaire who bought a series of spaceflights from Musk's SpaceX, named to lead NASA.

French President Macron eyes broad alliance to form new government

PARIS. French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday called cross-party talks aimed at "forming or making possible a government of national interest" after the ouster of Prime Minister Michel Barnier triggered a political crisis. Party leaders were invited to Macron's Elysee Palace office on Tuesday, the presidency said, in a departure from Macron's previous method of meeting leaders individually.

France's parliament has been divided almost evenly between a left alliance, Macron's centrists and the far right since snap elections in July, producing deadlock.

The president took almost two months to name conservative Barnier as premier in September. But the PM was toppled last week in a no-confidence vote over a cost-cutting draft budget for 2025 meant to tackle France's yawning deficit. Macron's office said that only those who had "shown they placed themselves in a framework of compromise" had been called upon for Tuesday's talks -- appearing to exclude the far-right National Rally (RN) and hard-left France Unbowed (LFI). Cobbling together any compromise between centre-left, centrists and conservatives will be tricky as all have been clashing fiercely since Macron's first presidential win in 2017.

Initial talks would aim "to make progress on an agreement about the method" to find consensus, the Elysee said. Macron's call for a broad-based meeting suggests a new executive will not be put together quickly, disappointing calls to move fast from allies including parliament speaker Yael Braun-Pivet.

"Each of us will have to take a step towards the other," Green Party chief Marine Tondelier had said earlier Monday as she arrived for talks with Macron -- adding that it was up to the president "to offer something that isn't just a continuation of his policies". Some have called for Macron, 46, to himself resign and trigger a new presidential poll.

But a defiant Macron last week said that he planned to serve out the remainder of his term, vowing to produce "30 months of useful action" and promising to name a new prime minister in the "coming days." The weekend reopening of Paris's Notre Dame cathedral, refurbished after a devastating 2019 fire, offered a brief respite from the political crisis as he hosted world leaders including US president-elect Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Macron is now under huge pressure to form a government that can survive a no-confidence vote and pass a budget for next year in a bid to limit political and economic turmoil.

"Can't go on like this"

"We can't go on like this," Macron's centrist ally Francois Bayrou said on Sunday, warning that the French did not want uncertainty to continue.

Bayrou heads the MoDem party, which is allied to, but not part of, Macron's centrist force. He has been tipped as a possible contender for prime minister. "If I can help us get through this, I will," he said. However many do not support his candidacy.

NEWS BOX

982 male health assistants terminated after HC verdict

VIJAYAWADA. A total of 982 Multi-Purpose Health Assistants (MPHAs-Male) were terminated from service by District Medical and Health Officers (DMHOs) across Andhra Pradesh after the High Court's final judgment in a decades-long legal dispute. Addressing the media persons on Monday at Secretariat, Special Chief Secretary (HM&FW) M.T. Krishna Babu informed that the recruitment process for 2,324 MPHA (Male) vacancies, initiated in 2002 for the combined state of Andhra Pradesh, faced prolonged litigation over qualifying criteria. The original notification specified SSC with a one-year MPHA (M) training as the qualification. However, interim court orders allowed recruitment based on Intermediate qualifications, leading to inconsistencies and numerous legal challenges.

The Supreme Court, in 2011, upheld SSC as the required qualification, prompting the termination of 1,200 MPHAs recruited with Intermediate qualifications. However, these candidates were reappointed in 2013 under GO Rt. No. 1207 after serving for nearly nine years, which sparked further litigation.

In its latest verdict on November 29, 2024, the High Court deemed the reappointments under GO 1207 as backdoor entries and dismissed WP No. 38060/2013, invalidating the recruitment of an additional 216 MPHAs. Consequently, 766 MPHAs recruited under GO 1207 and 216 appointed through interim court orders were terminated. Special Chief Secretary (HM&FW) M.T. Krishna Babu noted that this judgment resolves a 22-year legal battle involving 299 writ petitions and contempt cases. He highlighted the complexities caused by conflicting court orders and the significant administrative resources spent on the issue. The High Court acknowledged the long tenure of terminated employees but upheld the legal principle of adhering to recruitment norms. The government has now complied with the judgment, marking a decisive end to one of the most protracted recruitment disputes in Andhra Pradesh's history, he added.

Police conduct raids at 18 spas in Guntur, 10 women rescued

GUNTUR. Raids were conducted at 18 spas in Guntur West and South divisions over the past few days to crack down on unlawful activities such as cross-gender massage and flesh trade. Speaking to TNIE, ASP Supraja explained that under the instructions of Guntur district SP Sathish Kumar, special teams -- comprising DSPs, CIs, SIs, and women constables -- identified unlawful activities at a spa in Lakshimpuram. The owner of the spa, manager and three customers were arrested for indulging in illegal activities and flesh trade. The police also rescued 10 victims.

One of the spas where inspection was conducted has been sealed. Cases have been booked under relevant sections. Pattabhipuram police are investigating whether the spa centres have permissions and licenses to operate. While some of the employees were reportedly from Thailand, few others hailed from various parts of the State. The women employees were shifted to rescue homes. According to sources, as many as four women from Thailand were working in another spa where raids were conducted. However, the police did not file any case against them as there was no evidence that they were involved in illegal activities. During the raids, cops observed that majority of the spa owners in the city were operating their businesses without permissions. Stating that more raids will be conducted, ASP Supraja warned of severe action if owners are found to be indulging in unlawful activities.

Police on high alert in Telangana Mulugu district after bandh call by Maoist party

MULUGU. In response to the state-wide bandh called by the banned CPI (Maoist) party on Monday, police in agency areas have heightened security, conducting vehicle checks and continuing combing operations in Mulugu, Mahabubabad, and Jayashankar Bhupalpally districts.

The CPI (Maoist) party has released a letter accusing the police of staging fake encounters of seven Maoists in the Pulakomma forest area, located along the Telangana-Chhattisgarh state border. On December 5, the Maoist Telangana State Committee released a statement attributed to their spokesperson, Jagan. The letter claims that an informer provided details about the seven Maoists in the Chelpaka forest area. A tribal person from the Chelpaka grama panchayat was allegedly instructed to prepare a meal for the Maoists, after which he reportedly surrendered and turned into a police approver. According to the letter, the police took advantage of this by poisoning the food and sending it via the approver.

After consuming the food, the Maoists became unconscious, and the police allegedly set fire to their bodies, executing them at close range. The party condemned the actions of the Congress government and, in protest against the alleged fake encounter of the seven Maoists, has called for a Telangana state-wide bandh on Monday. For the past five days, police forces have been alert in Mulugu, Bhupalpally districts and along the Mulugu Chhattisgarh state border.

Six months & counting, 30K yet to be paid for cleaning school loos in rural areas across TN

According to sources, many school headmasters and teachers give them money by spending from their pockets.

COIMBATORE. Over 30,000 sanitary workers who clean toilets in government schools in rural areas across the state have not been paid salary for more than six months in this academic year allegedly because the department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj stopped releasing funds. According to sources, many school headmasters and teachers give them money by spending from their pockets.

K Solachi (55) of Thiyagarajapuram at Sankarapuram block in Kallakurichi district told TNIE she has been working at the middle school in the village for more than 10 years. "During last academic year, out of 12 months, the panchayat paid salary for only six months. Rs 9,000 salary for the remaining six months was not paid. I have been meeting officers frequently regarding this, but to no avail. Since the beginning of this academic year, I have not been paid salary. I have to get Rs 18,000 for 12 months," she said. She said without salary, she could not meet food and medical expenses and eats noon meal at school. Like Solachi, around 30,000 sanitary workers are facing this situation across the state. K



Thirupathi, an activist in Kallakurichi told that despite appealing about this issue, the officers of the rural department did not address it. "A meagre sum of Rs 1,000 is given to workers in primary schools which is not enough to live with dignity. The government should increase the salary to at least Rs 5,000," he said.

A headmaster of a panchayat union middle school in Thondamuthur block in Coimbatore said they did not receive funds for the employees from panchayat for one-and-a-half year.

"We have two toilets in the school. I have been providing Rs 3,000 per month to a worker from my salary," he said. He said that except for a few

schools in the block, workers are reliant on the salary provided by the panchayat. R Kanagaraj of Tamil Nadu Primary School Teacher Federation at Karamadai block in Coimbatore said the department has not allocated even a single rupee for salary or toilet maintenance to schools in this academic year. "Allocating Rs 300 for primary schools is not enough to purchase items for toilet cleaning. As even this amount has not been given, teachers spend their own money to buy these items every month," he said. When contacted, a block development officer in Coimbatore said funds have been stopped by the rural department since this March. He said there is no possibility of giving salary and maintenance funds to schools due to the lack of general funds in the panchayats. He added that around Rs 80 lakh is required in an academic year to provide salary and toilet maintenance funds to 671 government schools in 12 blocks in the Coimbatore district. When asked about it, director of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj P Ponniah said that the directorate has taken steps to release the funds soon.

Spell out plan to tackle pollution at Thamirabarani origin point: Madurai Bench of Madras HC

MADURAI. Shocked with the findings that the Thamirabarani is polluted even at the source at Agasthiyar Falls, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday told officials to inspect and file a report on the causes of pollution, and sought an action plan to eradicate or prevent the same. The court issued the directions to the deputy director of forests, Kalakkad Mundanthur Tiger Reserve, the joint chief environmental engineer of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) and the Tirunelveli collector.

A special bench of Justices GR Swaminathan and B Pugalendhi further directed additional advocate general Veera Kathiravan to obtain instructions on whether the state government has any proposal to call upon the Ministry of Jal Shakti to seek funds for the rejuvenation of the Thamirabarani. The directions were issued on a batch of petitions, including a contempt petition, filed by one S Kamaraj alias Muthalakurichi Kamaraj,



alleging that sewage water flows into the Thamirabarani. The main petition was already disposed of by the court in March this year, by issuing a series of directions to various departments. However, the matter is being listed periodically for reporting compliance. In the previous hearing, the judges mentioned the findings of their inspection of the river on November 10, and sought a report from the collector and corporation commissioner on

funds allotted and utilised by the state government towards the conservation of Thamirabarani River. However, when the case was heard on Monday, the collector reported that except for the Rs 271 crore received under the AMRUT Scheme for underground drainage system and Rs 45 lakh and Rs 40 lakh sanctioned for removal of seimai karuvelam trees and choke pits, respectively, no funds were allotted for the river itself.

Confirming the same, the Tirunelveli corporation commissioner further added that the government has a proposal to allot Rs 40 crore for the river under the Pollution Abatement and Riverfront Development Project.

Expressing concern over the fact that no specific funds have been allotted by the government for the restoration of the river, the judges asked the AAG to inquire if the state is likely to get financial support from the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Sabarimala sees massive rush; Devaswom Board expects surge of over 15 lakh devotees

PATHANAMTHITTA. As Sabarimala is witnessing a massive influx of pilgrims amid the Mandalam-Makaravilakku annual festival, the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) is expecting a surge of over 15 lakh devotees this year compared to the previous year. TDB president P S Prashant said the departments concerned have arranged additional facilities from Nilackal to Sannidhanam to manage the surge. In order to manage the parking issue, additional parking centres have also been set up at P a m p a and Nilackal. Pointing out the successful implementation of the virtual queue, he said, the new system increased the arrivals

to Sannidhanam on all days throughout the season. As per the current trend, the numbers are likely to surpass last season, he added. Over 50 lakh devotees visited Sabarimala temple during the two-month season in last year, generating a record income of Rs 357 crore. Highlighting the unprecedented sale of 'aravana' and 'unniappam', main prasadam (offerings) of the temple, he said, at the beginning of the Mandalam period, 40 lakh aravana tins were stocked in advance. Over 25 lakh tins are now in reserve, while 3.5 lakh aravana tins are being sold every day. A new resting centre for senior women and children has been opened at Pampa. A similar centre will be set up at Sannidhanam by next season, TDB president said.



NIA court orders Viyyur prison in Kerala to keep cells unlocked for three hours daily

The court observed that being an inmate in a high-security facility does not justify the denial of basic rights afforded to prisoners in other jails.

KOCHI. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) court in Kochi has directed the authorities at Viyyur High-Security Prison, where individuals accused in terrorism-related cases are detained, to keep the cells unlocked for three hours a day. The order comes in response to a petition filed by Mohammed Azarudeen, the prime accused in the 2019 ISIS Coimbatore module case. Azarudeen had alleged that under-trial prisoners detained under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) were being kept in solitary confinement for 24 hours a day, which he argued violated Kerala Prison Rules. Azarudeen claimed he had orally raised the issue with the jail superintendent but received no response. He described the conditions as inhumane and sought the court's



intervention to end the practice. In response, the court instructed the jail authorities to submit a report. The superintendent's report stated that individuals accused in terrorism cases were remanded by the Special Court and placed in High-Security Prisons under special departmental orders. According to the report, the jail houses

Stones pelted during protest against rape of minor girl in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI. Over a thousand activists from various organisations, including the Banjara community and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, came together under the banner of Sakala Hindu Samaj and staged a demonstration here on Monday in protest against the rape of an 11-year-old girl, which took place at Yadrami town of Kalaburagi district recently.

The activists, mainly belonging to the Banjara community congregated at Banjara Bhavana at 12 pm and came in a procession to Mini Vidhana Soudha. When they were going towards SVP Circle, violence broke out and some miscreants threw stones on a car which was parked near the second gate of Mini Vidhana Soudha.

Window panes of the car were broken. Some miscreants also pelted stones at some shops. They also burnt a tyre near Mini Vidhana Soudha. The leaders of the agitation requested the volunteers not to indulge in violence as it could harm the purpose of their protest.

The activists blocked the main road connecting Mini Vidhana Soudha and SVP Circle and the leaders, including former MP Umesh Jadhav, former minister Revu Naik Belangi, VHP senior leader Shri Lingarajappa Appa, president of state unit of Sri Rama Sena Siddalinga Swamiji, who is the pontiff of Karuneshwara Mutt of Andola, Apparao Devi Mutya, who is the pontiff of Shakti Peetha Sharana Sirasagi, Baliram Maharaj of Gobbur Wadi, Murari Maharaj of Chowdapur, Lokesh Maharaj of Chikka Nagav and others, led the protest.

Jadhav alleged that atrocities on women and rape incidents including on minors have increased since the Congress government came to power in the state.

All leaders demanded capital punishment for the accused who is head of the institution where the victim was studying in Class 5. The incident took place on December 2.

Waqf, Panchamasali quota issues rock Houses

BELAGAVI. Both Houses witnessed heated debates on the Waqf issue and the demand to increase reservations for the Panchamasali Lingayat community on Monday. As soon as the session began, MLAs from the ruling and opposition parties traded accusations and blamed each other over the demand for increasing reservations for Panchamasalis, Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader adjourned the House for an hour.

The Upper House also witnessed noisy scenes during the debate on the demand for more quotas for Panchamasalis. Chairman Basavaraj Horatti adjourned the House temporarily as his efforts to pacify the irate members failed. Given the first day's developments, both Houses are likely to witness heated debates on Tuesday as well. According to sources in the BJP, their legislators are prepared to target the ruling

Congress over the Waqf issue when it comes up for discussion, particularly in the Lower House. In the Council, the discussion on the Waqf issue was allowed under Rule 68 after opposition members appealed to Horatti, stating that many landowners, particularly farmers, had been affected by the Waqf Board's notices claiming rights over their lands. Leader of Opposition in the Council, Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, claimed that landowners, especially farmers, were living in fear of losing their lands. He alleged that the problem started when the then-Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave unchecked powers to the Waqf Boards.

Congress MLC B.K. Hariprasad countered this claim, stating that the law was initially framed during British rule in 1913 and came into force in 1923. "Don't mislead people by



suggesting the Act was formulated by the Congress government," he said. Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister Priyank Kharge accused BJP legislators of spreading false information on the Waqf issue. Ministers Dinesh Gundu Rao and Kharge, along with other Congress

MLCs, presented documents showing that several notices had been issued to farmers and other landowners by the Waqf Board during the BJP's rule.

The House descended into chaos when BJP MLC C.T. Ravi alleged that the UPA government had amended the Waqf Act, granting unchecked powers to the Waqf Boards. Congress MLC B.K. Hariprasad raised a point of order, objecting to Ravi's statement and asserting that no such amendment was made by the UPA government. Congress MLCs Abdul Jabbar and Nasir Ahmed challenged Ravi, stating they would resign if he proved his claim. "If you don't prove it, you should resign," Nasir told Ravi. Deputy Chairperson M.K. Praneesh attempted to restore order but was unsuccessful. Eventually, the House was adjourned for the day.

The power of silence

In today's fast-paced world, silence is often overlooked. Yet, it holds profound spiritual and psychological power. Silence is not just the absence of sound but an intentional pause that allows inner reflection and wisdom to emerge. Across spiritual traditions, silence is revered as a tool for self-discovery, mindfulness and clarity. But what is the power of silence, and how can we embrace it in our busy lives? Silence, in its purest form, is more than just quiet. It is the stillness that allows us to connect with our inner selves. In Hinduism, the concept of mauna (voluntary silence) is key to mental discipline and self-purification. Ramana Maharshi practiced silence not just as an external act but as a deep internal discipline to achieve self-realisation.

Maharshi's silence transcended the ego and allowed him to access higher consciousness. Mahatma Gandhi also saw silence as a powerful spiritual tool. His practice of "noble silence" helped him clear his mind and stay grounded during the complex struggles of the Indian independence movement. In Buddhism, silence is a path to enlightenment, where the stillness of mind allows the true nature of reality to emerge. Similarly, in Christianity, silence is a means of communing with God, removing distractions to hear divine wisdom. Silence centres our thoughts, quiets mental noise and creates space for insight.

A 2013 study published in *Brain, Structure and Function* found that two hours of silence daily in mice led to new brain cells in the hippocampus, a region associated with memory and emotions. Hence, silence shows promise for supporting cognitive and emotional well-being.

Why Silence is Important

In today's world, we are constantly bombarded by noise—social media, work and daily distractions. This leads to stress, mental fatigue and disconnection from ourselves. Silence offers respite from these external stimuli, helping us regain focus and connect with our deeper thoughts. It is essential for personal clarity and growth. Moreover, silence fosters better communication. In conversations, pauses can be more meaningful than constant chatter. Mindful silence during dialogue allows for deeper understanding and reflection, leading to more meaningful connections. By practicing silence, we listen more intently, respond with greater care and create stronger relationships.

How to Embrace Silence

To benefit from silence, we must make space for it. Here are several practical ways to incorporate silence into our daily routines: **Meditation:** Meditation is one of the best ways to cultivate silence. It quiets the mind and encourages inward focus, helping to reduce stress and improve clarity. In Hinduism, meditation is vital for realising one's true nature (Atman) and connecting with the divine.

Silent Retreats: Common in both Buddhist and Hindu traditions, silent retreats offer deep immersion in silence. These retreats allow individuals to disconnect from external distractions and focus entirely on inner reflection. While full retreats may not always be possible, incorporating periods of silence into the day can have a similar effect. **Nature Walks:** Spending time in nature provides a natural form of silence. Walking in the woods or near the sea quiets the mind, allowing for reflection and peace. This practice, embraced by many spiritual figures, offers a break from the noise of modern life.

Mindful Listening: Silence also means listening deeply. Pauses in conversations can foster better understanding and empathy. By listening mindfully, we enhance communication and strengthen connections.

Reducing Noise: Technology often bombards us with constant noise. Turning off notifications or creating quiet spaces at home or work can promote silence and enhance focus. In many Hindu practices, creating a sacred, quiet space for prayer or meditation is considered essential for spiritual growth.

Opacity continues to afflict India-China relationship

A comprehensive White Paper that builds on the External Affairs Minister's detailed statement in Parliament would be a much-needed first step.

The positive tenor in the post-Galwan India-China relationship was enabled by a brief meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, in late October. It received considerable official comment and caused parliamentary discord in early December.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar made a detailed statement in Parliament on December 3. He traced the history of the unresolved territorial-cum-border issue from 1958 right up to the most recent thaw in the relationship at Kazan in a lucid, albeit selective, manner. He unequivocally stated: "We are clear that the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in border areas is a prerequisite for the development of our ties. In the coming days, we will be discussing both de-escalation as well as effective management of our activities in the border areas." Regrettably, the EAM's statement resulted in the Opposition members staging a walkout, since a discussion was not allowed. This legislative discord was avoidable. The EAM's statement was followed by the 32nd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China Border Affairs in Delhi on December 5 between officials from both countries.

The Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA) readout regarding the outcome of the WMCC meeting was brief and intriguing. The most significant assertion is the line that reads: "The two sides positively affirmed the implementation of the most recent disengagement agreement which completed the resolution of the issues that emerged in 2020." Does this imply that the disengagement process is complete and that the seemingly intractable issues, which emerged in 2020 (the Galwan setback), have reached satisfactory resolution? The second question is whether the use of the word 'agreement' has been accepted by the Chinese side and if this is a reference to a written document or is the agreement an oral understanding?

After the initial fumble and obfuscation that took place in the immediate aftermath of the Galwan clash in June 2020 (the statement by PM Modi that there was no intrusion) — the Indian position gradually crystallised with two major objectives. One, that

there has to be a return to the April 2020 status quo as regards the patrolling protocols along the Line of Actual Control (LAC); and two, that all agreements signed between India and China regarding the unresolved territorial/border issue would be respected. An objective review of the tactical situation after the Galwan incident revealed that India had forfeited certain patrolling rights along the LAC in Ladakh. Furthermore, concerns were voiced that buffer zones were being created along the LAC, which would inhibit both Indian patrolling and grazing rights that existed in April 2020. Was this a case of China imposing a 'new normal' along the LAC? The most recent official statements do not



shed any light on these issues. One presumes that they will be addressed by the Special Representatives at their next meeting later this month. Dissonance in the MEA statements was highlighted by Ashok Kantha, former Ambassador to China, in a series of tweets on social media. He added: "The MEA statement that 'all issues that emerged in 2020' have been resolved is baffling to someone who was a border negotiator with China for nearly a decade." This is a welcome intervention in the public domain by an astute China expert. Hopefully, the statements from the MEA will be harmonised with the final military objective that was reiterated by Army Chief Gen Upendra

Dwivedi, who noted (on October 23) that both armies need to restore trust and "go back to the status quo of April 2020". The MEA statement after the WMCC talks also noted: "Both sides reviewed the situation in border areas, and reflected on the lessons learnt from the events of 2020 in order to prevent their recurrence." The reference to 'reflecting' on lessons learnt warrants a zoom out for Delhi, which has been grappling with this unresolved border problem for well over 65 years. India was surprised by the October 1962 Chinese attack and the limited border war that ensued; and much the same pattern unspooled in June 2020 at Galwan.

India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was at the helm in October 1962. There were many defence policy blunders and omissions on his part. Yet, Nehru did not prevent the debacle from being discussed in Parliament. A few Opposition MPs, including a young Atal Bihari Vajpayee, sought a special session of Parliament. This was held on November 8 — when the war was still being prosecuted and India was on the defensive. And when it was suggested that this be a 'secret session', Nehru rejected the proposal, stating that the issues before the House were of "high interest to the whole country". On December 10, 1962, a full session was devoted to the Chinese invasion in the Lok Sabha; the comprehensive proceedings have been recorded in 145 pages. Yet, even Nehru was reluctant to let the Henderson Brooks report (which was tasked with reviewing the military lapses of the October 1962 war) from being placed in the public domain. This opacity continues to plague the post-Galwan period of the troubled India-China relationship. Tensions between the two Asian giants have been festering for decades. Complex geopolitical factors and domestic political compulsions on both sides have further exacerbated the situation. Sunlight is often the best disinfectant, and ensuring transparency about what has transpired would be highly desirable. Democratic India would be better served by allowing this vital national security issue to be discussed both in Parliament and the media. A comprehensive White Paper on the India-China relationship that builds on the EAM's detailed statement in Parliament would be a much-needed first step.

Rumblings in INDIA

Opposition alliance faces leadership crisis

SIX months after its creditable performance in the Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition's INDIA bloc finds itself at a crossroads. The alliance did well in the Jharkhand and J&K Assembly elections, but the stunning losses in Haryana and Maharashtra have laid bare differences among its constituents. The knives are out especially after the drubbing suffered by the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi at the hands of the BJP-helmed Mahayuti in Maharashtra. The grand old party's poor show has dented its predominant position in INDIA, prompting Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee to throw her hat into the ring. Dissatisfied with the bloc's functioning, Mamata has signalled her intention to take charge of the alliance, if given the opportunity. She has found support from Nationalist Congress Party stalwart Sharad Pawar, who has called her a "prominent leader" of the nation. It's apparent that Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the



Opposition in the Lok Sabha, is losing ground as the face of INDIA. There are three Gandhis in Parliament now — with Priyanka being the latest entrant — but this dynastic

milestone has not enthused the Congress' allies. Though party president Mallikarjun Kharge is also the chairperson of the bloc, it is no secret that the Gandhi family is calling the shots. But this arrangement is strengthening neither the Congress nor INDIA.

The Congress has no option but to pay heed to its partners. Overconfidence cost it dear in Haryana, where it chose to give short shrift to fellow INDIA members. Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena has not helped matters by hailing those who demolished the Babri Masjid, triggering a backlash from the Samajwadi Party, which has a sizeable Muslim vote bank in Uttar Pradesh. Mutual respect and accommodation must be the way forward if the bloc has to remain intact. Otherwise, this alliance might implode sooner or later, leaving the field open for the BJP and PM Modi.

The cost of GST & fiscal crises in states

If the Indian Union has to be protected, evidence suggests that the GST 'experiment' must be abandoned.

MORE than seven years since its introduction, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, hailed as a game-changing innovation at the time of its launch, is still being sustained with hype. From the point of view of performance, the regime, while not yielding the revenue gains its "efficiency" was supposed to deliver, is proving to be the final factor driving most state governments to bankruptcy. The Central Government has sought to conceal this reality by reporting the nominal values of GST collections every month and comparing them with the previous month or the corresponding month of the previous year. It is to be expected that so long as the GDP growth is positive, revenues from taxation, especially indirect taxation, are likely to increase in nominal terms. But even this "natural" trend has been broken by multiple monthly figures that point to a lower yield of revenues than in past periods chosen for comparison.

To make up for that bad news, the Centre has tended to make much of those months when nominal or current price figures are higher than in the past, advertising "record" collections in hyped press releases. A sober and reasoned assessment points to the following: If we exclude the period from the GST's inception in August 2017 till March 2022, allowing sufficient time for the system to have overcome its "teething troubles", we have net collections of Rs 880 billion in April 2022. Between that month and October 2024 — a period of 31 months — there have been only three months when the aggregate figure exceeded that sum. These, too,

are 'nominal' receipts. Besides the growth of the economy, another reason why receipts from taxation should rise because of inherent "buoyancy" is the impact of inflation. It takes more money for a government to do the same thing when the prices are higher. The trend rate of monthly growth in receipts from the GST between April 2022 and October 2024 was just 0.86 per cent. Adjust for inflation, and the growth rate of "real" receipts falls to exactly half of that: 0.43 per cent. That is near-stagnation. This has hit the state governments particularly hard because they are the ones who ceded a substantial share of their taxation rights to the GST Council, which is dominated by the Centre. With the shift to the GST, the share of state taxes that were subsumed under the new tax regime (44 per cent) was much larger than that of the Central taxes (28 per cent).

The loss of that revenue stream occurred during a period in which the Centre had squeezed the volume of its own receipts that it devolved to the states. It did that by relying increasingly on imposts that are not included in the divisible pool of resources to be shared with states based on the recommendations of the Finance Commission. The most egregious instance of this is the reliance on surcharges and cesses that are not shareable. The share of surcharges and cesses to Gross Tax Revenue of the Centre, which was 9.5 per cent in 2013-14, rose to 14.8 per cent in 2023-24 (it was as high as 20.5 per cent in 2020-21). The other factor inflicting losses on the states is the large direct tax concessions given

to friends in the corporate sector by the Centre, which reduces the size of the divisible pool. The question does arise as to why the states agreed to cede their taxation rights and reduce their own fiscal



autonomy. One reason was their own embrace of the neoliberal ideology. Value-Added Tax (VAT), to which species the GST belongs, is the preferred means of taxation in neoliberal environments that privilege corporate profits (with lower taxes) and mobilise revenue through indirect taxes like VAT, the burden of which falls disproportionately on the poor and middle classes. This "regressive" character is sought to be papered over by claiming that these taxes are more "efficient". In India's case, that argument was fortified by the claim that a system that "harmonised" taxes across states was also efficient. Why states at different levels of development and very different economic structures should have the same structure of

taxation across commodities is, of course, not addressed. Based on such arguments, it was projected that the GST regime would not just be "revenue-neutral", but also, in fact, deliver substantial increases in revenues. The states bought into this spurious argument. In fact, they were also cajoled into accepting the major shift in regime with the promise that in case revenues accruing to the states from the GST fell short of a level that reflected a 14 per cent annual increase relative to the pre-GST collections from taxes that were subsumed under the regime, they would be compensated by the Centre. That promise was for five years, by which time the "game-changing" GST was supposed to deliver on its promises. Those promises have been completely belied. The annual average revenue realised from taxes subsumed under the GST from 2012-13 to 2016-17 is estimated at Rs 7.70 lakh crore. If that is taken as the base from which the 14 per cent growth in revenues from the GST is calculated, the actual collections reflect a significant shortfall relative to the 'promised' revenues. Not surprisingly, compensation for the shortfall financed with the compensation cess was crucial for the states. But that came to an end after five years, much to the surprise of the states. They are now more than ever dependent on the patronage of the Centre for revenues that match the expenditures associated with the developmental responsibilities they constitutionally shoulder.



Going to school alone can improve **kids** Safety perception



If children are allowed to go to school on their own either by walking or cycling, they are more likely to possess greater decision-making abilities as well as have better safety perception, finds a new study.

Children who travel to school without the assistance of elders are more likely to possess greater self-confidence, self-governing skills, decision-making abilities and improved perception about the safety of the route.

In addition, active commuting such as walking or cycling can foster a healthy lifestyle in these kids.

"This increases physical activity and cardiovascular health in children that commute actively, especially in those that go cycling," said Manuel Herrador, researcher at the University of Granada in Spain.

Previous studies have also derived a link between active commuting and an enhancement in the cognitive skills and



academic performances.

For the new study, published in the journal *Acta Paediatrica*, the team studied over 745 school children, aged between six to 12 years.

The children were questioned regarding who accompanied them to school and the safety measures undertaken while travelling alone.

The findings showed that children above 10-12 years are more likely to commute to school unaccompanied by anyone.

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Teen online friendships as valid as actual ones

Online contact enhances companionship between friends via conversations that can continue throughout the day and night without disrupting others and it also allows more time to control emotions.



Are you worried about your teenage child engaging in online activities with their friends? Stop worrying, as online friendships in teenagers are just as intimate and have similar characteristics as offline relationships.

Researchers have found that digital behaviours serve the same purpose and encompass the same

core qualities as face-to-face relationships.

"Many contacts between adolescents are mediated through technology and can provide additional opportunities for friends to spend time together, share thoughts and display affection than in offline spaces alone," said Stephanie Reich, associate professor at the University of California, Irvine (UCI).

Reich, along with the lead author Joanna Yau,



identified six core characteristics of offline friendships — self-disclosure, validation, companionship, instrumental support, conflict and conflict resolution — and their digital parallels.

For each quality, they noted ways in which online interfaces corresponded with or differed from in-person communication.

They found digital exchanges offer more benefits in some areas and carry increased risks in others.

On the plus side, online contact enhances companionship between friends via conversations that can continue throughout the day and night without disrupting others and it also allows more time to control emotions and calm down before crafting and sending a response to something upsetting.



due to the permanence of information and the speed at which it travels, but at the core, friendships seem to have the same key characteristics.

"The majority of adolescents interact electronically most often with individuals they consider friends offline. So rather than reducing intimacy in these relationships, technology-mediated communication may provide additional benefits to teens as connections occur both face-to-face and online," Reich added.

Developing resilience may help kids combat bullying

Resilient kids are those, who for a variety of reasons, are better able to withstand external pressures and setbacks and are less negatively impacted in their attitudes and actions than their less-equipped peers when facing this type of victimisation.

Ever wondered why bullying has a serious effect on some kids, while others recover easily from the trauma? Researchers, led by one of Indian origin, found that the capacity to recover quickly depends on the characteristic trait of "resilience".

The study says that resilience buffers and protects the children against internalising the harm intended through situations of adversities like bullying both at home or school as well as online.

"Resilience is a potent protective factor, both in preventing experience with bullying and mitigating its effect," said Sameer Hinduja, Professor at the Florida Atlantic University in Florida.

"Resilient kids are those, who for a variety of reasons, are better able to withstand external pressures and setbacks and are less negatively impacted in their attitudes and actions than their less-equipped peers when facing this type of victimisation," Hinduja added.

Although, the ability to be resilient comes naturally, it needs to be nurtured through social and environmental factors, as it enables kids to "bounce back" and successfully adapt to stressful

situations, the researchers noted.

The study, published in the journal *Child Abuse and Neglect*, stated that instead, of constantly seeking to protect and insulate children, parents should help bolster their self-confidence, problem-solving ability, autonomy, and sense of purpose —



which are all innate strengths.

The researcher studied over 1,204 youth between 12-17 years by a validated biopsychosocial 10-item resilience scale including various questions of tackling bullying and related stress.

The results demonstrated that students with higher levels of resilience were bullied at school or online less often.

Their experience with various forms of interpersonal peer harm also varied inversely with the students' self-reported level of resilience.

Priyanka Gandhi on BJP's alleged George Soros-Sonia Gandhi link: Ridiculous

Parliament Session: The comments were in response to BJP chief JP Nadra, who alleged that Sonia Gandhi and the Congress have links with George Soros, claiming an association with an organisation funded by the Soros Foundation, which allegedly backed the idea of separating Kashmir from India.

New Delhi. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday (December 10) strongly dismissed the BJP's allegations that former Congress president Sonia Gandhi has direct links with billionaire philanthropist George Soros.

"This is the most ridiculous thing they can come up with. They are talking about 1994, and nobody has any record of it. I don't know what they are referring to. They are doing this because they don't want to run the House," Priyanka Gandhi said.

She further accused the government of avoiding a discussion on the Adani issue, saying, "We want the House to function, but the government doesn't want a debate on Adani. That's why they keep bringing up distractions like this. The Soros matter is from 1994, and they are deliberately raising it now to evade discussions on Adani." The comments were in response to BJP chief JP Nadra, who alleged that Sonia

Gandhi and the Congress have links with George Soros, claiming an association with an

organisation funded by the Soros Foundation, which allegedly backed the idea of separating Kashmir from India. Congress Rajya Sabha MP Pramod Tiwari also dismissed the allegations, calling them "baseless, cheap, and completely wrong." The accusations led to chaos in the Rajya Sabha, with Opposition MPs staging an uproar and raising slogans against the ruling party. Congress leaders argued that the allegations are an attempt to divert attention from pressing issues, including the Adani controversy.



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The BJP, in a series of posts on X, alleged that the Congress's association with foreign entities like the George Soros Foundation indicates external influence in India's internal affairs. The BJP claimed that Sonia Gandhi, as the co-president of the Forum of the Democratic Leaders in Asia Pacific (FDL-AP) Foundation, was linked to an organisation financed by the George Soros Foundation. The Congress, however, has categorically denied these claims, accusing the BJP of engaging in baseless propaganda.

When SM Krishna abandoned Congress after 46 years, said party had no future

Veteran politician SM Krishna, who passed away on Tuesday, resigned from the Indian National Congress in 2017 after 46 years of association. Krishna, who is known as the 'Architect of Brand Bengaluru', said the Congress had no future and mentioned how he took the hard decision to protect his self-respect and dignity.

New Delhi. At 84, veteran Congressman SM Krishna faced a day unlike any other. It was the winter of 2017 and after 46 years with the Congress, he announced that he was severing ties with the party he had devoted his life to. It must have been a very tough decision to make, but Krishna was a man of self-respect and dignity who once served as Karnataka's Chief Minister and India's Foreign Minister. Known as the 'Architect of Brand Bengaluru', the visionary behind India's IT capital, left the Congress quietly, consulting no one but his wife. Seven years later, the leader who reshaped Karnataka and helped grow India's global footprint passed away in the early hours of Tuesday. He was 92.

"I have taken the decision, however painful, I am going out of the house with which I have been so familiar, including its doors and windows," lamented Krishna in March 2017. SM Krishna's move was driven by a combination of factors, including the future of the party drifting and him being "sidelined" due to his age. The veteran politician was ready with his diagnosis for the party, but there was no one to hear him out. Mindful of his "self-respect and dignity", SM Krishna did what he had to do -- he moved on.

"I have resigned from Congress to protect my self-respect and dignity after serving it for 46 years, as the high command has sidelined me because of my age," an emotional 84-year-old Krishna told reporters. "I did not consult anyone about leaving the party. And except my wife, I did not tell anyone that I was resigning from the party, though it is a painful moment in my life," he added in the 2017 press conference he had called with a heavy heart.

WHY SM KRISHNA LEFT CONGRESS, SAID PARTY HAD NO FUTURE

A day after SM Krishna resigned from the Congress, he lashed out at the party saying it didn't need mass leaders, but wanted only managers. "The Congress doesn't need mass leaders these days, they only want managers who can handle a situation," he said. "I am not retiring from politics though I have quit Congress, as its future is not bright. Disillusionment with the party started from 2012 onwards. There is a way of getting rid of political leaders. The party should learn the art of being graceful. They (party leaders) could have told me I was not required. It would have been a graceful exit," added Krishna. "I toured the state during the last elections and nobody thought I was old. Suddenly, they have discovered that I am old and need rest. I felt the Congress did not need me".

Create more jobs instead of only providing free ration: Supreme Court to Centre

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Monday (December 9), while hearing the matter pertaining to providing food under the Food Security Act, called on the Centre to focus on employment generation instead of only providing free ration to poor people.

The top court said that if the ongoing practice of providing ration at such a large level continues, the state governments may keep on issuing ration cards to appease the people, since they know that the liability to provide the grains rests with the Centre. "If the states were asked to provide free ration, many of them would say they cannot, citing financial crunch, and hence the focus should be on generating more employment," the court observed.

The court also questioned whether the states should be made to pay for the ration if they keep on issuing ration cards. The Centre's counsel, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, apprised the court that the government provides free ration in the form of wheat and rice among other essential commodities to 80 crore poor people under the National Food Security Act 2013. However, petitioner Advocate Prashant Bhushan contended that, despite that, around 2 to 3 crore people have still been left from the scheme. The court was considering a plea highlighting the problems and the plight of migrant workers, where it had earlier directed that those eligible and entitled for ration cards/food grains under the NFSA and have been identified as such by the respective states/Union Territories, must be issued ration cards before November 19, 2024.

There was a heated exchange between SG Mehta and petitioner Bhushan during the court proceedings on Monday. While pointing out that the case was initiated by the Supreme Court back in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, the Solicitor General remarked that Bhushan was trying to run the government and frame policies himself.

Mahayuti cabinet expansion likely on December 14, big names may be dropped

New Delhi. After Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis's government secured the trust vote in the Maharashtra Assembly on December 9, all eyes are now on the much-anticipated cabinet expansion of the Mahayuti alliance. The expansion is expected to be announced on December 14, ahead of the winter assembly session beginning December 16. Sources indicate that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) central leadership is firm on maintaining a clean image for the new cabinet. There is a strong speculation that many heavyweight names in the last cabinet are likely to be nixed due to their bad performance and reputation, according to sources.

MINISTERS LIKELY TO BE DROPPED

The upcoming Mahayuti alliance cabinet expansion in Maharashtra is expected to exclude several current ministers due to their alleged poor performance or tarnished reputations. From the Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde faction), three key ministers are likely to be dropped. Sanjay Rathod, who currently handles the FDA and Water Resources department, Abdul Sattar from the Minority and Marketing department, and Tanaji Sawant from the Health department are expected to lose their positions, according to sources. In the NCP (Ajit Pawar faction), Dilip Walse Patil (Co-operation department) and Hasan Mushrif (Medical Education department) are likely to be sidelined.

The BJP may also see changes, with Suresh Khade (Labour department) and Vijaykumar Gavit (Adivasi Welfare department) expected to be dropped.

PROBABLE NEW MINISTERS

The reshuffle is set to bring in several new faces across the three alliance partners, reflecting a focus on clean governance and fresh leadership. From the Shiv Sena, probable names include Uday Samant, Shamburaj Desai, Dada Bhuse, Gulabrao Patil, Sanjay Shirsat, Bharat Gogawale, Pratap Sarnaik, Ashish Jaiswal, Rajesh Khirsagar, and Arjun Khotkar. The NCP is likely to see prominent figures like Chhagan Bhujbal, Dhananjay Munde, Dharmarao Baba Atram, Aditi Tatkar, Sanjay Bansod, Narhari Zirwal, Datta Bharne, Anil Bhaidas Patil, and Makrand Aba Patil taking up ministerial roles.

Boy, 5, trapped in 150-foot-deep borewell in Rajasthan's Dausa, rescue ops on

A five-year-old boy fell into an open borewell in Rajasthan's Dausa district on Monday afternoon. The child is believed to be trapped at a depth of approximately 150 feet.

New Delhi. A large-scale rescue operation is ongoing in Rajasthan's Dausa district after a five-year-old boy fell into an open borewell. The incident occurred on Monday afternoon in Kalikhad village when the child, Aryan Meena, was accompanying his mother to a nearby field.

Aryan is believed to be trapped approximately 150 feet below the surface, officials said. Oxygen is being supplied to him through a pipe, and a camera has been inserted into the borewell to monitor his condition.

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) is leading the rescue operation, and the National Disaster



Response Force (NDRF) has also been called in to assist. Local authorities, including Dausa District Collector Devendra Kumar

and MLA Deendayal Berwa, are also at the scene along with police to oversee the rescue efforts. Teams are working simultaneously on two approaches: digging a parallel pit to safely reach the child and attempting a direct rescue from the borewell itself, officials said.

"Rescue operation has been carried out for the whole night. NDRF-SDRF teams are working here. Our priority is to rescue the child safely as quickly as possible," Dausa District

Collector Devendra Kumar said. Villagers were seen gathered at the site, anxiously awaiting updates on the boy's condition.

Asaduddin Owaisi's party fields 2020 Delhi riots accused for Assembly polls

AIMIM announced that expelled AAP councillor Tahir Hussain will contest the upcoming Delhi elections from Mustafabad, despite his controversial past linked to the 2020 riots. The move drew sharp criticism from BJP's Kapil Mishra.

New Delhi. Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) announced the candidature of expelled AAP councillor Tahir Hussain from the Mustafabad constituency in the upcoming Delhi elections. Hussain had faced accusations related to the 2020 Delhi riots. Owaisi confirmed the move, saying, "MCD Councillor Tahir Hussain joined AIMIM and will be our candidate from Mustafabad Assembly Constituency in the upcoming Delhi Vidhan Sabha elections. His family members and supporters met with me today and joined the party."

The announcement was met with criticism from Kapil Mishra, a BJP leader, who said, "Owaisi has aligned himself with the man responsible for the murder of Ankit Sharma, the one whose house was found with bombs



and stones, and who attempted to kill hundreds of Hindus in Delhi. Owaisi should remember that if another riot happens in Delhi under Tahir Hussain's name, the consequences will be remembered by his seven generations."

Hussain recently received relief from the Delhi High Court, which quashed an FIR against him in connection with the Delhi riots. The FIR, filed on February 27, 2020,

accused him of rioting and vandalism on the first floor of a building. The court noted that Hussain was already facing charges in another case related to the same incident.

The court observed that a prior FIR had been registered for the same incident on February 24, 2020. It stated that the chargesheet filed by the Delhi police in the present FIR would be treated as supplementary to the original case. Hussain had been elected as a councillor from the Nehru Nagar ward on an AAP ticket. During a November hearing, the court noted that evidence from both FIRs showed that rioters had first broken into a parking area, set vehicles on fire, and then moved to the first floor of the building, where food was being prepared for a wedding. The rioters caused significant damage to property.

Farming yields Rs 4,500 a month, less than what you'd splurge on a dinner date

Farmers in India aren't a pampered lot as they are perceived to be. A farming family ends up earning just Rs 4,500 a month from agriculture, according to a Nabard study. Even after resorting to all other avenues, including non-farm jobs, a farming household manages just Rs 13,600 a month.

New Delhi. While critics target tax-free income and 'flashy-big-vehicles' of farmers, suggesting they are affluent and a pampered lot, the reality for the majority of farmers in India is starkly different. A recent report by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has revealed that farmers in India are earning just Rs 4,476 a month from agriculture. The amount that farmers earn from farming would be less than what families spend on an evening out or thousands spend on a dinner date.

It needs to be understood that the farmers shown driving luxury vehicles in Punjabi songs are a fraction of the farming community. Millions of farmers in India are share-croppers with very little or no landholding. By just farming, they wouldn't be able to even manage their household.

While the average monthly income of a farming household, the Nabard survey revealed, is just Rs 13,661, it is left with a

meagre Rs 1,951 in savings, equivalent to Rs 65 per day. As shocking as it may sound, income from agriculture made up just Rs 4,476, or 33% of the total monthly income, meaning farming households make less than Rs 150 per day just from cultivation of crops.

The total earning of a farming household when all sources of income are considered work out to Rs 13,661 a month, which is Rs 445 a day. This is way lower than the government-mandated minimum wage for unskilled workers in India, which is Rs 783 per day.

Come to think of it, Rs 4,476 that a farming household makes wouldn't even suffice to pay for the education in most private schools in tier-1 cities. In light of the Nabard report, let's have a look at what it reveals about the farmers' income and their wellbeing in India. Also, we would try to probe if all the farmers are this poor.



HOW MUCH DO FARMING HOUSEHOLDS EARN? HOW MUCH IS FARMING CONTRIBUTING TO THAT?

According to the Nabard report, the average monthly income of a farming household from all sources in 2021-22 was only Rs 13,661, out of which Rs 11,710 was said to have been spent, leaving just Rs 1,951 as savings. What is most shocking is that earning from agriculture constituted just Rs 4,476 or 33% of the total monthly

income, meaning farming households earn less than Rs 150 per day from cultivation. The grim financial realities of farmers in India, as highlighted in the Nabard report, also underscore their reliance on alternative sources of income.

In the case of inadequate farming yields, the survey revealed that farmers depended on other sources such as animal husbandry (12%), wage labour (16%), government and private jobs (23%), and other enterprises (15%) to sustain their livelihoods.

Basically, to compliment the income from farming, an average farming household relied on these avenues. It is no secret that most farmers with small landholdings work as labourers. The report also noted that the average monthly income of households of farmers increased during the five-year period from Rs 8,059 in 2016-17 to Rs 12,698 in 2021-22, an increase of nearly 57%.



10 ways to be a Super Daughter-in-law

Here are a few tips to improve your relationship with your mom-in-law



One of the biggest challenges of married life is to get along well with your in-laws. Though this goes for both partners in a marriage, it is the woman who is affected the most.

According to research around 60 per cent of all marriages suffer from tension with mothers-in-law that is normally between the woman and her husband's mother. The nagging, meddling mother-in-law is often the cause of worry and the central idea that can help better the situation is to have a positive attitude and to show respect to the older woman.

Positive attitude Just like being a daughter-in-law is new to you taking up the role of a mother-in-law is new to her too. Always try and convey a positive attitude towards her. The older woman is probably just trying her best to fit into her role as a mom-in-law.

Equality Try to treat your mother-in-law and your mother equally. For example if you give your mother a birthday gift, then give your mother-in-law a gift for her birthday too. If you have children, then visit your mother and your mother-in-law with similar frequency.

Sensitivity The fact that the lady has spent a significant part of her life raising her son may make her a little sensitive when another person becomes the centre of attraction of her son's life.

Though most mothers do not consider her daughter-in-law competition, there are some mothers who do. The ones whose life revolved around their child for a long time because they

are a single parent or had only one child are the ones who are most likely to behave in this way. If, for example, your mother-in-law mentions how much her son always liked her home

cooking, do not try to compete by asserting how much he likes your cooking now. This would invariably hurt her.

Respect Treat your mother-in-law with respect. Consider her older and wiser. She may have been through a lot of hardships in her life. In fact, talk to her and ask her about her childhood, growing up, raising kids, and life experiences. When she shares her life with you she will develop a liking for you and that can lead to a strong bond between the two of you.

Expectations Getting to know the family you have married into may take time. Though most daughters-in-law are welcomed into the family with open arms, do not get disheartened if it does not happen. Give them time to know you better.

Be attentive When your mother-in-law is at home be attentive towards her. Sit and chat, show her around town, and if she wants to help you prepare meals, then let her. You two can get to know each other better and bond. If she prefers to sit around being waited on hand and foot, then enlist your husband to help prepare meals and clean up.

Information Try to keep mother-in-law informed; call and let her know about important events. Keep her in the loop. If you have children, send pictures to your mother-in-law. Grandmothers love getting pictures of their grandchildren.

Advice Your mother-in-law has years of experience. Don't hesitate to take her advice. You may disagree with her and decide to not follow any of her suggestions, but be open to different ideas, at least listen, show respect, and do not take any advice as a personal attack. She is only trying to be helpful.

Children Allow your mother-in-law to take care of your children. For them their grandchildren are more important than their own kids sometimes. If she wants to, let her spoil them a little, i.e. she lets them stay slightly past their bedtime or gives them some more chocolate than you would want to.

Communication Try and talk out things with the family. If something that someone said hurt you, do not keep it bottled up inside you. Discuss with your husband and your mother-in-law any slights or snubs and how it makes you feel.



How to begin your

Mornings at 100 kph

A slow start to the day means low productivity. curates a set of effective strategies to accelerate your mornings



Even the ultimate guidebook for mums will not tell you that motherhood is synonymous with chronic tardiness. It's true, children dilly-dally a lot and mums run behind them, but no one seems to get anywhere on time. To avoid the mad rush through the day, you need to ensure that your mornings run smoothly. Here are 12 smart ideas that'll help you speed up the mornings and for getting your kids (and yourself) out of the door on time.

Be up first We know you're tired, but being the first one out of bed can eliminate a big source of morning stress — getting your kids and yourself ready at the same time. This will help you have a relaxed start to the day; spend time preparing lunch and not scurrying to get things done.

Warning signals Many kids have a hard time stopping what they're doing and quickly changing course. To help them stay on schedule, give your kids 10-minute, 5-minute, and 2-minute departure warnings. Set a timer -- there are even talking ones on the market that will countdown the minutes for them. They may not have learnt to read the clock, but it puts the idea in their heads that they're doing something else shortly, and they'll have to bring their current activity to a halt.

Prepare the previous night The key to getting out the door faster is to prepare the night before. Lay out your child's uniform, make sure their bags are packed, and ensure that they've completed their homework, and signed permission slips before they have called it a night.

Set up a morning routine It always helps to establish a morning routine. If it's breakfast time, they know they have to brush their teeth, eat and get dressed with no breaks in between. By doing the same things in the same order, children know what they need to do next and it becomes automatic for them. Time your kids to see how long it takes to get out the door from the moment you say it's time to go. Allowing yourself enough time to get out the door will help you make a stress-free exit.

Make portable breakfast Serve up healthy, portable breakfast. Milk and cereals are always easy to rustle. Make sure you sprinkle a few almonds and walnuts in the bowl for an added dose of vitamin. Poha, upma, are easy to prepare too. They can be carried around without messing your car. Make sure they have a tall glass of milk before they leave home. This will keep them going through the day.

Get them to compete For young kids with a competitive streak, this can work wonders. Tell them, the first one down (or up) the stairs is the superhero. Playing 'Who Can Do it First?' can help speed up everything from

getting your kid dressed to getting them to school on time.

Switch off If you're addicted to your smart phone, it can be hard to imagine starting the day unplugged. Parents must avoid checking emails and surfing the Internet before dropping off their kids to school in the morning. These create a huge black hole when it comes to time, because it's hard to just 'check one thing really quickly. Inevitably, you'll spend way more time online than you plan. Avoid watching news in the morning too, especially if it distracts your kids from getting going.

Draw a family calendar Keep everyone's schedule straight with one calendar that all family members can follow. It's a great visual way to consult your schedule. This will not only keep all the members in the loop, it will serve as a reminder. Knowing what your kid needs on what day will help you be more organised in the morning and avoid last minute rushing around.

Early to bed If you want a 'good' morning, make sure you call it an early night. Children should ideally have their dinner by 7 pm and sleep by 8.30 pm. They shouldn't spend too much time in front of the television as it affects the sleep pattern. No chocolate or other sweets before bedtime as it'll keep them up.

Notes on child's challenges Depending on your kid's age, there are some tasks he/she may not be able to do herself. In that case, figure out what duties trip her up. If tying her shoelaces takes her a long time, consider helping her in the morning instead of repeatedly nagging her to do it herself. If your son spills every time he pours milk into his glass bowl, transfer the amount he needs into a small, easierto-handle cup.

Let them miss the bus If your kids are older, let them experience the consequences of constant dilly-dallying. This could mean a red remark in the calendar. But it's okay; that's how they'll learn. If they are chronically late, then take it a step ahead and teach the brat a thorough lesson. Don't drive him to school, let him skip it and study at home. This strategy always works and we can vouch that the next time around he will always reach school on time.

Cut out the dressing drama Is getting your kid dressed for morning weekend hobby classes the most stressful part? We suggest buy a hanging closet bin and have your kid pick out his/her outfits for the week ahead of time the method, do everything you can to tame the tantrums and tears and reduce the amount of time it actually takes your kid to get dressed for the class.

Reliance eyes \$3 billion in India's largest loan deal since 2023: Report

NEW DELHI. Reliance Industries is in talks with several banks to secure a \$3 billion loan, reported news agency Bloomberg. The funds are intended to refinance debt that is due next year, as per sources mentioned in the report. The Indian conglomerate led by billionaire Mukesh Ambani is engaging with about half a dozen banks to finalise the loan, which is expected to be syndicated to the broader market in the first quarter of 2025. Discussions are ongoing, and the terms of the loan are yet to be confirmed. The final structure could change as negotiations progress, according to people cited in the report.

Reliance Industries has nearly \$2.9 billion in debt maturing in 2025, including interest payments, as per data compiled by Bloomberg. The company has not issued an official statement on the matter yet.

If the deal materialises, it will mark Reliance's re-entry into the offshore borrowing market after a gap since 2023. In that year, Reliance and its subsidiary, Reliance Jio Infocomm, raised over \$8 billion through loans. These facilities attracted approximately 55 lenders, as banks sought to participate in high-quality credit deals.

The current loan could be the largest borrowing by an Indian company since 2023. The loan comes at a time when the Indian rupee has been under pressure, recently hitting a record low against the US dollar. This decline has been driven by persistent outflows from Indian equity markets. Despite this, Reliance Industries' strong credit profile continues to make it a preferred borrower in global markets. Reliance Industries holds a credit rating that is one notch above India's sovereign grade, a distinction achieved by very few companies. Moody's recently reaffirmed Reliance's Baa2 rating, citing its solid credit metrics, which are expected to remain stable despite high capital expenditure.

The company's strong financial position and diversified business model make it one of the most reliable borrowers in India. Its businesses span energy, telecommunications, retail, and technology, contributing to its resilience and ability to secure large-scale funding.

Government may extend laptop, PC import deadline beyond Dec 31

NEW DELHI. The government is likely to extend the deadline of the import authorisation scheme for laptop and personal computers beyond December 31, 2024, said a senior government official.

According to officials, the Commerce Ministry is expected to issue a notification shortly to announce the extension. "The government is not looking to cause disruption — no disruption has been caused so far through import authorisation scheme," he said. India launched an import management system in November 2023, which required companies to register with the government the quantity and value of their laptop and tablet imports. Before this, on August 4, the government had announced ban on laptops, personal computers and tablets.

Later in the day, it had clarified that there was no ban but electronics manufacturing companies needed a licence or required to register on import management system to import these items starting November 1, 2023. The government said the purpose of the decision was to encourage the companies to start production in India. However, the reports indicate India reversed the laptop licensing policy following lobbying from US officials concerned about New Delhi's compliance with WTO obligations and potential new regulations. Then India extended the deadline for approving imports of servers, laptops, PCs and tablets from September 30 to December 31. It means, electronics companies like Dell, HP, Apple, Samsung and Lenovo will need to obtain fresh approvals to import laptops and tablets in India starting next year, as per a government notification. As per Counterpoint estimates, India's laptop and personal computer market is valued at \$8 billion annually.

VIL to raise Rs 1,980 cr through preferential issue

NEW DELHI. Vodafone Idea (VIL), the country's third-largest telecom service provider, announced on Monday that its Board of Directors has approved the issuance of up to 176 crore equity shares on a preferential basis to raise Rs 1,980 crore.

The telco will issue these shares to Omega Telecom Holdings Private Limited (Rs 1,280 crore) and Usha Martin Telematics Limited (Rs 700 crore), both Vodafone Group companies. The shares will be issued at a price of Rs 11.28 per share, which represents a premium of nearly 40% over the closing price of Rs 8.11 on December 9, 2024.

"Up to 1,755,319,148 equity shares of face value of Rs



10 each at an issue price of Rs 11.28 per equity share (including a premium of Rs 1.28 per equity share) for an aggregate consideration of up to Rs 1,980 crore," said the company in a stock exchange filing.

Vodafone Group holds a 22.56% stake in VIL, while the Aditya Birla Group holds 14.76%. The government is the largest shareholder with a 23.15% stake. The telco will convene an extraordinary general meeting to seek shareholder approval for the preferential issue. Last week, the parent company of VIL, Vodafone Group, announced sale of its remaining 3% stake in Indus Towers for over \$300 million (approximately Rs 2,540 cr) in a block deal.

Immensely grateful: Shaktikanta Das thanks PM Modi on last day as RBI Governor

In a series of tweets, Das

extended his thanks to

Finance Minister Nirmala

Sitharaman, various

stakeholders, including

financial sector participants,

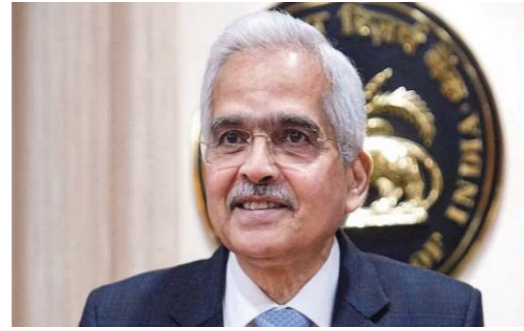
economists, industry bodies.

NEW DELHI. Shaktikanta Das, the outgoing Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and the central bank team on his last day in office. Das is being succeeded by Sanjay Malhotra, a career civil servant and the current revenue secretary in the finance ministry. Malhotra will assume the role of

RBI Governor for a three-year term, amid earlier speculation of a possible extension for Das. "Will demit office as Governor RBI later today. Thank you everyone for your support and good wishes," said Das on X. He credited PM Modi for his guidance and thoughts, which he said had greatly benefitted him during his tenure. "Immensely grateful to the Hon'ble PM @narendramodi for giving me this opportunity to serve the country as Governor RBI and for his guidance and encouragement. Benefited a lot from his ideas and thoughts," he said.

Das also highlighted his working relationship with Sitharaman, and said, "The fiscal-monetary coordination was at its best and helped us deal with the multiple challenges during the last six years." In a series of tweets, Das extended his thanks to various stakeholders, including financial sector participants, economists, industry bodies, and agriculture and service sector organisations, for their contributions and

suggestions. He also expressed gratitude to the entire RBI team, saying, "Together, we successfully navigated an



exceptionally difficult period of unprecedented global shocks. May the RBI grow even taller as an institution of trust and credibility." Das took over as the 25th Governor of the RBI in December 2018, during a challenging time marked by economic and financial sector pressures. His leadership is widely recognised for bringing stability and

steering India's economy through turbulent periods, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and high inflation. Under Das, the RBI adopted a more proactive approach, particularly in managing exchange rate volatility. During his tenure, India's foreign exchange reserves peaked at \$700 billion, providing a strong buffer against external shocks. Das also led the central bank through critical policy decisions. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), under his leadership, focused on balancing inflation control with growth promotion. Despite surging inflation and global uncertainties, the MPC has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for the past 11 reviews. However, economic challenges persisted towards the end of his tenure. The RBI recently lowered its GDP growth forecast for 2024-25 from 7.2% to 6.6%, citing global uncertainties and slowing domestic growth. Retail inflation reached a 14-month high of 6.2% in October, surpassing the RBI's tolerance limit.

ITI shares surge nearly 10% to a record high, up 39% this week

New Delhi. Shares of ITI Limited continued their impressive rally on Tuesday, 10 December, rising nearly 10% to reach a fresh all-time high of Rs 404 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE). This marks the third consecutive session of strong buying interest in the public sector undertaking's (PSU) stock.

The share price opened at Rs 385, higher than its previous close of Rs 368.10. It climbed as much as 9.8% during intraday trading, touching a record high of Rs 404.

By 10:30 am, ITI shares were trading 7.42% higher at Rs 395.40 per share on the NSE. ITI shares have been on an exceptional run, gaining 15% in Monday's session and over 13% the day before. Over the last three days, the



stock has risen approximately 42%, becoming a standout performer in the market. This sharp rally follows months of gradual recovery. ITI hit its 52-week low of Rs 210 on 25 October this year but has since experienced significant

gains. With the stock touching Rs 404 today, it has surged over 92% in less than two months.

The ITI stock has seen significant growth recently. On a monthly basis, it has surged by 38% in December, building on a 27% rise in November. This upward trend in November ended a three-month losing streak for the stock.

Looking at its performance over a longer period, ITI shares have climbed 34% over the past six months. Over the last three years, the stock has delivered an impressive gain of 235%, highlighting its strong long-term performance.

Edelweiss' Radhika Gupta explains why fixed income MFs belong in your portfolio

Fixed-income MFs, as Radhika Gupta suggests, enhance equity portfolios with stability, flexibility, and tax efficiency.

New Delhi. In the investment world, equities often steal the spotlight with their potential for spectacular returns. However, amidst the soaring highs of the stock market, fixed-income mutual funds (MFs) offer a steady, reliable foundation that shouldn't be overlooked. Despite the rapid rise of equity MFs, the potential of fixed-income MFs remains largely untapped, making them an essential part of a well-rounded portfolio.

RADHIKA GUPTA'S TAKE ON FIXED INCOME MFs

Radhika Gupta, a leading industry expert, and MD & CEO of Edelweiss Mutual Fund emphasises that while equity returns have been impressive, investors must not ignore the stability fixed-income MFs provide. In a post on X, she wrote, "Equity returns have been spectacular, but you still cannot ignore fixed income. I write a few thoughts." According to her, these funds act as a balance to equities, offering lower volatility and more

predictable returns, making them crucial for long-term financial planning. Gupta advocates for a diversified portfolio that includes both equity and fixed-income assets to reduce risks and ensure stable growth.



WHAT IS A FIXED-INCOME MUTUAL FUND? A fixed-income mutual fund is an investment avenue which mainly invests in assets like government securities, corporate bonds, debentures, and other money market instruments. These funds aim to generate income for investors through regular interest payments from the underlying securities held in the portfolio. They are commonly referred to as debt funds. Gupta underscores the unique advantages of fixed-income

MFs over traditional fixed deposits (FDs), highlighting their role in achieving financial goals despite some risks. Some of them are enumerated below:

WHY YOU SHOULD INVEST IN FIXED-INCOME MUTUAL FUNDS

Liquidity and flexibility: Unlike fixed deposits (FDs), where withdrawing early can lead to penalties and lower returns, fixed-income MFs allow for partial withdrawals without penalties. This flexibility makes it easier to manage short-term cash flow needs without sacrificing long-term growth.

Tax efficiency: Fixed-income MFs provide deferred taxation, meaning taxes are levied only when you redeem the investment. This allows your returns to compound over time, unlike FDs, where taxes are imposed annually on the interest earned. Predictable and customisable cash flows: Fixed income MFs offer systematic withdrawal plans (SWPs) tailored to your specific needs. This can provide a steady income stream, and the tax-efficient nature of SWPs helps reduce your overall tax burden.

Haldiram in demand! Three suitors eye minimum 15% at \$9 billion valuation in snack maker; Agarwal family eyes \$10 billion tag

NEW DELHI. Haldiram in demand! Alpha Wave Global, formerly Falcon Edge and a Tiger Global Management spinoff, has submitted a binding proposal to acquire a portion of Haldiram Snacks Food, India's premier snack and convenience foods manufacturer. According to informed sources, this transaction could rank amongst India's largest private-equity deals. Last week, two additional investor groups submitted firm offers for a 15% to 20% stake in Haldiram. The first consortium comprises Blackstone, GIC of Singapore and ADIA, whilst the second features Bain Capital partnering with Temasek. The US-based investment firm has joined these competing groups.

Sources told ET that the bidders have assessed the enterprise value between Rs 75,000-Rs 80,000 crore (\$8.8 billion - \$9.4 billion).

The Blackstone and Bain-led groups have separately engaged in periodic discussions with the Agarwal family, the founding promoters, for approximately a year. The Haldiram founding family has been considering various strategic alternatives. Initially, they contemplated selling a controlling stake in their 87-year-old enterprise. They are also



exploring the possibility of divesting a minority shareholding in the combined packaged foods operations of their Delhi and Nagpur divisions.

Several investor groups are seeking a larger stake of approximately 25% or management rights that would ensure equal or shared control of operations and board representation. Based on the final stake size, the deal value could range from Rs 11,250 crore (\$1.3 billion) to Rs

18,750 crore (\$2.2 billion), potentially becoming one of India's largest private-equity investments.

In the fiscal year 2024, the combined operations of Haldiram Nagpur and Delhi achieved revenues of Rs 12,800 crore, with an EBITDA of Rs 2580 crore. Their profit after tax ranged between Rs 1350-1400 crore. The seven branches comprising the promoter group from both Nagpur and Delhi divisions have been

considering whether a partial stake sale and subsequent listing would achieve their target valuation exceeding Rs 93,500 crore (\$11 billion), rather than surrendering complete control. The family continues to seek a minimum valuation of \$10 billion from private equity organisations. The private-equity investors currently view a public listing within 12-24 months as their preferred route for investment returns. "Nobody would want to write such a large cheque and be just a passive investor," said an official involved on condition of anonymity as the deliberations are in private domain. "The road to value creation, liquidity and even rights need to be clearly spelt out and agreed upon. The family has been indecisive for years."

Since 2016-17, numerous private equity organisations, including General Atlantic, Bain Capital, Capital International, TA Associates, Warburg Pincus, and Everstone, have engaged in discussions with the Agarwal family regarding stake acquisition. Subsequently, both Kellogg's and Pepsico conducted extensive negotiations to acquire 51% or greater ownership, but withdrew due to the Agarwal family's fluctuating positions and valuation expectations.



Tamannaah Bhatia's

'Mocha Mousse' Look Gets A Thumbs Up From Orry



Tamannaah Bhatia, celebrated for her exceptional acting prowess, is basking in the success of her latest film, *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar*. Her fans adore her for her daring fashion choices, and she never fails to surprise them with her unique looks. The actress is now in Dubai for Salman Khan's *Dabangg Reloaded Tour*, and her recent look has certainly turned heads. Not only did it raise the temperature, but also came with a stunning request for Pantone, showcasing her bold and innovative fashion sense. On Instagram, Tamannaah Bhatia shared a series of photos featuring her latest look: a stunning Animal-printed gown from the renowned brand Zimmermann. The voluminous piece, with its sweetheart neckline and delicate noodle straps adorned with diamond embellishments, exuded sheer elegance. The corset bodice of the dress added a touch of sophistication to her overall look. Tamannaah's stylist Shaleena Nathani teamed her dress with pump heels in a shade one-tone dark. Her make-up artist Elton Fernandez, chose a sheen makeup to add an oomph factor to her radiant style. A striking eye makeup, including a blend of glittery and smoky eyeshadow with thin strokes of kohl in the lid and waterline alongside glossy lips and blushed and highlighted cheeks, made her look perfect. Side-parted, messy and open tresses wrapped her look. Sharing the photos shot inside her hotel with a breathtaking backdrop behind her, she wrote in the caption, "Okay Pantone, can do Mocha Mousse, but let's make it animal print." This intriguing request to Pantone adds another layer of excitement to its choice of colour for 2025. Pantone, best known for its proprietary colour order system, has revealed Mocha Mousse as the colour of 2025. This unique request from Tamannaah has sparked a new conversation about the future of fashion and colour trends. Sharing a post announcing the same on Instagram, they wrote that the warming, rich brown hue, Mocha Mousse transports our senses into the pleasure and deliciousness of chocolate blended with coffee. Many celebs including Orry and Wamiqa Gabbi were impressed with Tamannaah's look as they dropped their reactions on the comment box. On the work front, Tamannaah Bhatia played the role of Kamini Singh in *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar*, co-starring Jimmy Shergill and Avinash Tiwary.

Amid Chiranjeevi-Allu Arjun Feud Rumours, Photo Megastar Feeding Pushpa 2 Laddoos



Megastar Chiranjeevi and Telugu superstar Allu Arjun have been rumoured to be in a feud this year. For the unversed, earlier this year, it was claimed that Chiranjeevi and family were upset with the Pushpa 2 actor after he supported a YSRCP candidate in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly Elections this year. Chiranjeevi and Allu Arjun did not address the claims yet. Amid this, an old photo of the duo is doing the rounds online. On Monday, a photo went viral in which Chiranjeevi was feeding Allu Arjun with a piece of laddoo. The superstars were exchanging sweets following the success of Pushpa 2. The film released last Thursday and has emerged as a blockbuster. It turns out, the photo was clicked when Allu Arjun was declared the Best Actor by the National Awards committee last year.

During the Andhra Pradesh Assembly Elections, Allu Arjun publicly extended his support to a YSRCP candidate despite his family connections with Pawan Kalyan, who was also contesting this year. For the unversed, Chiranjeevi's son Ram Charan and Allu Arjun are cousins. Eventually, Pawan Kalyan won and even emerged as the Deputy CM of the state. Allu Arjun had congratulated him but has not addressed rumours of his tiff with Chiranjeevi. Meanwhile, Niharika Konidela, a member of the family, addressed the rumours in August this year. In an interview, she said, "I don't know the reason behind whatever my father posted. But, they have their own reasons to whatever [they want]. It doesn't mean we can comment on it because they did something. We didn't actually talk too much about it. We didn't speak about it at home because everyone has their own reasons. Politically, religiously, spiritually, everyone has a choice to do what they want." Niharika added, "For me, it's always family first, and I can only speak for myself." Meanwhile, Allu Arjun is currently enjoying the success of Pushpa 2.

'Huge Admirer': Huma Qureshi Is All Praise For Jared Leto As They Meet At Grand Prix



Huma Qureshi is over the moon as she recently bagged the Filmfare OTT Critics' Best Actress Award for her role in *Maharani Season 3*. Fans and critics praised the actress for her stint in the show. Now, as congratulatory posts continue to shower her, the actress recently attended the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2024. The F1 event, which took place on Sunday, December 8, saw a flurry of celebrities watching the thrilling finale of this season's championship in Abu Dhabi. During the racing event, Huma Qureshi crossed paths with actor Jared Leto. She took to Instagram and shared a picture of their meeting with her fans and followers. In the pic, the Maharani actress can be seen clad in a V-necked long dress. The beige and black outfit comes with an overcoat to enhance its charm. Jared Leto, on the other hand, went for an all-black look that featured a sheer black T-shirt teamed with black jeans.

Dropping the image, she captioned, "So wonderful meeting the super talented @jaredleto at the Grand Prix yesterday... I am a huge admirer of his work, and meeting him was so lovely." Other than Huma Qureshi and Jared Leto, celebrities such as Tim Cook, Steve Harvey, Shradha Kapoor, Disha Patani, Esther Yu, Terry Crews, Burak Ozcivit, Dwayne Bravo, Brooklyn Beckham & Nicola Peltz Beckham, Jake Paul, Evander Holyfield, Dom Howard and Matt Bellamy were present at the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2024. The event is held over 58 laps of the 5.281 km Yas Marina Circuit on Yas Island, featuring renowned racers like Lando Norris, Oscar Piastri and Carlos Sainz.

This year, Huma Qureshi earned applause for her role in *Maharani 3* and *Mithya: The Darker Chapter*. Her upcoming projects include Geetu Mohandas's directorial *Toxic*. Starring South star Yash, Kiara Advani, Anil Kapoor, Tara Sutaria and Shruti Haasan in pivotal roles, the film is scheduled to release in theatres in 2025. It is rumoured that Huma will be playing the antagonist in the film. Apart from this, she has the courtroom drama film *Jolly LLB 3*, co-starring Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi in lead roles. She also has an investigative drama, *Bayaan* and director Vipul Goyal's *Gulaabi* in her kitty.

Aaliyah Kashyap's

Unique Bridal Mehendi Showcases Her Love For Pets; Shane Gregoire Flaunts Her Name

Anurag Kashyap's daughter Aaliyah Kashyap will get married to Shane Gregoire in a few days, and their pre-wedding festivities are currently underway. After a fun-filled Haldi ceremony, looks the like couple is enjoying their Mehendi ceremony today. We came across a few pictures in which Aaliyah Kashyap and Shane Gregoire were seen flaunting the henna on their hands. Meanwhile, Aaliyah's bestie Khushi Kapoor also adorned her hand with minimal yet beautiful henna

design. In another picture, Shane is also seen posing behind his ladylove. He opted for minimal mehendi, with Aaliyah's name within a heart on one of his palms. Meanwhile, a tiny cat and dog were drawn on the other palm. He also flaunted the henna on his palms. Aaliyah and Shane were seen twinning in pastel blue outfits. Aaliyah looked radiant in a sleeveless ethnic suit, while Shane donned a powder blue kurta pajama.

That's not all! Khushi Kapoor also shared a picture on her Instagram story that shows her flaunting the minimal mehendi she applied for Aaliyah and Shane's wedding festivities. Check out the picture below!

Meanwhile, Aaliyah and Shane's haldi ceremony took place yesterday in Mumbai, and it was attended by Khushi, Imtiaz Ali, his daughter Ida Ali, among many others. Pictures from the Haldi ceremony soon took over social media. One picture shows Anurag Kashyap hugging Shane, while Shane and Aaliyah were seen sharing a passionate kiss during the festivities. As per reports, Shane and Aaliyah will get married on December 11, at Bombay Club, Mahalakshmi Race Course in Mumbai. They have been dating



for over four years now. Shane and Aaliyah got engaged in May last year, post which they threw an engagement bash for their loved ones in August 2023.

