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Taj Mahal builders lost hands, Ram Mandir workers honoured: Yogi Adityanath

►Uttar Pradesh Chief **Minister Yogi** Adityanath said that those who now lay claim to ownership of India's heritage were not even born when our culture began to exist.

New Delhi. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that while the hands of workers who built the Taj Mahal were "chopped off", Prime Minister Narendra Modi honoured the construction workers who worked at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. He was comparing the treatment of workers in India's historical and modern contexts."You would have seen how on January 22 [day of Ram temple's consecration], Prime Minister Narendra



Modi was giving respect to the workers who constructed the Ram Mandir. That is one side where the PM was raining flowers on them, but on the other hand, the situation before was such that the workers who constructed the Taj Mahal had their hands chopped off," he said at an event in Mumbai on Saturday. The UP Chief Minister also mentioned that workers in the fine cloth industry in history also had their hands chopped off, destroying a whole tradition and legacy."Today, India respects its labour force, gives them all kinds of protections. On the other hand, there were rulers, who chopped off the hands of labourers and destroyed the legacy of fine cloth, destroyed the tradition completely," he said at the World Hindu Economic Forum (WHEF).It is alleged that Shah Jahan, the 17th century

Mughal emperor who commissioned the Taj Mahal, ordered the hands of the workers to be chopped off after the construction. However, there are no historical records to prove the claim.Commenting further about India's historyand heritage, Adityanath remarked that foreigners' bloodlines in India cannot tolerate the country's progress or Indians gaining respect globally. He also said that those who now claim India's heritage were not even born when the country's culture came into existence. Adity anath further described Uttar Pradesh as a blend of

heritage and development."Our heritage dates back thousands of years. Those who advocate terrorism and now lay claim to our heritage should know that our culture has existed since before they were even born,' he asserted. The Chief Minister also emphasised India's scientific advancements, contrasting them with Pakistan's struggles.

'It took 100 years for an encephalitis vaccine to come to India. Modi ji delivered the Covid-19 vaccine in just nine months. Today, Pakistan is begging, while we are providing free rations to 80 crore citizens without any discrimination based on caste or religion".He also praised PM Modi for bringing India out of the "identity crisis" and "rescuing the country from demonic

AAP announces final Delhi poll candidate list: Kejriwal, Atishi to contest current seats in response to BJP's dare

NEW DELHI. The AAP on Sunday released its final list of 38 candidates for the Delhi Assembly polls due in February, with party supremo Arvind Kejriwal to contest from the New Delhi constituency AAP has now announced its candidates for and Chief Minister Atishi fielded again from Kalkaji.In its bid for a third consecutive term in power in the national

capital, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has nominated its senior leaders from their own constituencies. Ministers Saurabh Bharadwaj, Gopal Rai, Imran Hussain, Raghuvinder Shokeen and Mukesh Kumar Ahlawat will contest the polls from Greater Kailash, Babarpur, Ballimaran, Nangloi Jat and Sultanpur Majra respectively.In the 2020 election, the AAP had secured 62 of the 70 seats in Delhi, solidifying its dominance in the capital's politics.

The upcoming polls are expected to be a litmus test for the party's governance model and its appeal to the electorate.

By fielding Kejriwal, Atishi, and other top ministers from their current constituencies, AAP has responded to the BJP's challenge after the ruling party released its second list of candidates. Following former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's decision to move from his current seat in Patpargani to Jangpura, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva had claimed that many AAP MLAs were reluctant to contest due to fears of defeat.

He suggested that with Sisodia's move, it was clear the AAP leaders were afraid, adding that Kejriwal and Atishi would likely follow suit.

all 70 Delhi Assembly seats. Following the release of the final list, Mr Kejriwal stated that the party would contest the



polls with full confidence and preparation."The BJP is invisible. They have no Chief Ministerial candidate, no team, no plan, and no vision for Delhi. Their only slogan is 'remove Kejriwal.' If you ask them what they've done for the past five years, they'll simply say, 'we abused Kejriwal," said the former Chief Minister, who resigned from the post and vowed to return only after the verdict in the "people's court."

DK Shivakumar slams PM's Lok Sabha speech: Congress gave him all the rights

Prime Minister Narendra Modi criticised the Congress on Saturday (December 13), accusing the grand old party of disrespecting not only the Indian **Constitution but** also its own internal democratic processes.

New Delhi. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar responded sharply to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent Lok Sabha speech, where the PM accused Congress of repeatedly undermining the Constitution. Prime Minister Narendra Modi criticised the Congress on Saturday (December 13), accusing the grand old party of disrespecting not only the Indian Constitution but also its own

internal democratic processes.Participating in the special discussion on the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution, PM Modi alleged that the Congress sidelined democratic sentiment within the party to favour Jawaharlal Nehru as



Prime Minister and Congress President, even though its state units had shown support for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

He also alleged that the Congress, having "tasted blood", repeatedly wounded the Constitution while his government's policies and decisions since he took office in 2014 have been aimed at

boosting India's strength and unity. Speaking to reporters, DK Shivakumar said, "The Prime Minister should know that Congress has given him all rights — with the Constitution, the national flag, the national anthem, and independence. It is because of Congress that democracy was established, and now he is the Prime Minister of this country."Prime Minister Modi, in his speech in Lok Sabha, outlined 11 resolutions aimed at strengthening India's future. He asserted that since taking office in 2014, his government's decisions have focused on boosting the country's unity and strength. In response to the Prime Minister's 11 resolutions, Shivakumar said, "Let us see. Let us hope for the

Mahayuti cabinet's swearing in at 4 pm, Shinde Sena to get additional portfolio

Mumbai. Following a resounding victory in the Maharashtra Assembly elections, the swearing-in ceremony of the Mahayuti cabinet is scheduled for 4 pm today in Nagpur. Several Shiv Sena and NCP MLAs are set to be inducted into the council of ministers, reflecting the alliance's push to finalize its governance team.

The BJP, which holds a significant share of cabinet berths, is expected to bring in new faces during the expansion. However, sources indicate that some of its 20 allotted seats will remain vacant for now, leaving room for future adjustments. From the Shiv Sena, 13 MLAs are expected to take oath. Among the ministers to be retained are Uday Samant, Shambhuraje Desai, Gulabrao Patil, Dada Bhuse, and Sanjay Rathod. In addition, several new faces from the Deputy Chief Minister Eknath

Shinde-led Shiv Sena are likely to join the cabinet. Sanjay Shirsat, Bharat Gogawale, Prakash Abitkar, Yogesh Kadam. Pratap Sarnaik are expected to be sworn-in. However, some notable Shiv Sena leaders, including Deepak Kesarkar, Tanaji Sawant, and Abdul



Sattar, will not be returning to the cabinet this time. The NCP, another key player in the Mahayuti alliance, is also set to have its members inducted. Aditi Tatkare, Babasaheb Patil, Dattatray Bharane, Hasan Mushrif, and Narhari Zirwal are among those expected to take oath as ministers. From the BJP, several prominent MLAs are likely to join the cabinet, signalling the party's intent to strengthen its foothold in the alliance. Those who reportedly received calls for induction include Nitesh Rane, Shivendra Raje, Girish Mahajan, Meghna Bordikar, Pankaja Munde, Jaykumar Rawal, and Mangal Prabhat Lodha.

While the saffron party has been allocated 20 cabinet berths in the Mahayuti government, it appears that some of these will remain unfilled for now as the BJP considers inducting fresh faces into its ranks in the future. The BJP is likely to hand over the housing ministry to the Shiv Sena in the Maharashtra cabinet expansion while retaining the home ministry, news agency PTI said, citing sources. The sources also indicated that both Shiv Sena and NCP are expected to keep the portfolios they held in the previous Mahayuti government, with the Shiv Sena gaining one additional ministry.

"Source Of Inspiration Abroad": Amit Shah's Swipe At Rahul Gandhi

New Delhi. Attacking Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that the Congress leader's "source of inspiration" for raising issues is abroad and he comes up with a new charge every time a Parliament session is on. The minister's remarks were seen as a reference to the United States' indictment on Adani Energy. The Adani Group has emphasised that the conglomerate's Chairman Gautam Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani, and senior executive Vneet Jaain are clear of bribery charges. Gautam Adani has also said that the group has not faced a challenge like this for the first time and stressed that "every attack makes us stronger". Congress has sought to raise the indictment issue strongly in Parliament, contributing to a logjam, but allies like the Trinamool Congress and Samajwadi Party have said that there are other pressing matters and they would like the House to function to be able to raise them. Rahul Gandhi had also earlier held a mock



'interview' within the Parliament complex with some Congress members who were wearing masks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Gautam Adani.

"I don't know why Rahul Gandhi always gets his inspiration from abroad. This country has a Comptroller and Auditor General, a Vigilance Commissioner, High Courts, Supreme Court, but Every time a Parliament session is on, there is an allegation from outside and he talks about them, wears jerseys. His source of inspiration is abroad, which does not surprise me. I know why his source of inspiration is abroad," Mr Shah said at the Agenda Aaj Tak event on Saturday. The minister's comments come in the wake of a volley against the Congress by the BJP, which has accused Rahul Gandhi of being a "traitor" and part of a dangerous triangle - including "some agencies of America" and billionaire George Soros - that is "trying to destabilise India". The attack followed a report by French outlet Mediapart

best for this country".

that claimed "hidden links between a giant of investigative journalism - a reference to OCCRP (the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, an Amsterdam-based news network) - and the US government". Mediapart said the OCCRP is financially dependent on the United States and is also funded by George Soros' Open Foundation and countries like France and Sweden.

Congress must justify leadership role in INDIA bloc, says ally Omar Abdullah

Omar Abdullah. acknowledging the Congress' prominent role as a pan-India party and the largest opposition in Parliament, stressed that leadership must be "earned" and cannot be assumed or taken for granted. Srinagar. Acknowledging growing discontent among INDIA bloc partners with the Congress, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has asked the party to Yet there is a sense of disquiet among justify its leadership role in the alliance instead of taking it for granted. Abdullah, while recognising the Congress' significant position as a pan-India party and the largest opposition in Parliament, emphasised that leadership "has to be earned" and cannot be taken for granted. He also suggested that the party should raise the issue of restoration of statehood in Jammu and Kashmir."By virtue of being the single largest party in Parliament, and also having the leader of opposition in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, the fact that they have a pan-India footprint, which no other party can lay claim to, they are natural sort of leaders of an

opposition movement," Abdullah told PTI in his first interview after becoming the chief minister in

October. some of the allies because they feel the Congress is "not doing enough to justify it or to earn it or to keep it. That's something the Congress might wish to consider."Still, Abdullah praised former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, describing her as a leader of unparalleled stature within the opposition alliance. "When the INDIA bloc comes together, she plays an important leadership role," he added.Abdullah chose not to give a direct answer to a question about statements made by leaders like Sharad Pawar or Lalu Yadav favouring West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as a better leader but highlighted the INDIA bloc's lack of consistent



engagement, warning that the coalition risks becoming a mere election-time convenience.

Abdullah stressed the need for sustained interactions beyond the electoral cycle, noting that the alliance's current approach appears sporadic and ineffective."Our existence can't just be about six months before Parliament elections. Our existence has to be something more than that. The last time we met was when the Lok Sabha results had

only just come out. There has been no formal or informal sort of work that has been done for the INDIA bloc," he said. Abdullah, who is the vice president of the National Conference, also stressed the importance of establishing a structured communication framework."You need to have a programme of regular interactions," he explained, adding "not that you just come alive once Lok Sabha elections are announced and suddenly start talking and trying to work things out". Abdullah's comments suggest underlying tensions within the opposition alliance, indicating that infrequent meetings could potentially magnify

minor disagreements. "If we had a more regular process of interaction, perhaps these smaller irritants wouldn't assume larger proportions," he added. Abdullah has

also not been very happy with the electoral alliance his National Conference party formed with the Congress before the Jammu-Kashmir assembly elections, where it failed to pull its weight during campaigning. The NC won 41 seats while Congress got six. Observers noted that Congress leaders did little work during the campaigning, and left all the heavy lifting to the NC.

INDIA bloc was formed as a combined opposition to stop the ruling BJP juggernaut but has failed to make much dent. Despite its good showing in the parliamentary elections, the Congress and its allies have failed miserably in two recent assembly elections - Haryana and Maharashtra. Abdullah's comments are further proof of the discontent within the INDIA bloc and the challenges it faces in countering the BJP in future political engagements.

Four family members, including newlyweds killed in car- bus collision in Pathanamthitta

PATHANAMTHITTA. A newlywed couple returning from their honeymoon among four members of a family were killed after their car collided with a bus carrying Sabarimala pilgrims at Murinjakal in Koodal in the district on Sunday. The deceased have been identified as Mathayi Eappen, Biju P George, Nikhil, and Anu, all residents of Mallassery in Pathanamthitta. The accident occurred around 4 a.m. on the Punalur-Muvattupuzha state highway, just seven kilometers from the victim's house. After a honeymoon trip to Malaysia, the couple—Anu, the daughter of Biju, and Nikhil, the son of Eappen—were heading back home from Thiruvananthapuram airport.According to reports, Nikhil was employed in Canada.Prima facie, the police assessed the accident might have happened as the driver fell asleep at the wheel.Carrying Ayyappa devotees, the bus from Tamil Nadu, was damaged partially while the front portion of the car was completely disfigured and crumbled.Driver, including a few passengers, suffered minor injuries in the collision.Immediately after the accident, Police and the Fire Force reached the spot and carried out the rescue services. While they reached the spot, three men in the car died on the spot, while Anu succumbed to her injuries at a nearby private hospital. The police, led by the SP and other senior officials reached on the spot and are investigating the accident.

Buoyed by bypoll wins, UDF to go for micro-level management

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Taking a a plan for this," he said. cue from the BJP which prioritised According to the UDF leadership, assembly constituencies as A, B and C on the basis of winnability, the UDF is also taking a similar step to maximise its winning chances in the coming LSG and assembly elections. However, unlike the BJP, the UDF would be focusing on booths, instead of assembly segments. The UDF is set to enter into micro-level election management ahead of the 2026 assembly elections by prioritising each booth in the assembly constituencies as A, B and C based on the strength of the front. The UDF meeting to be held on December 17 would start a preliminary discussion on formulating a strategy along this line.

n the last assembly election, the BJP had classified around 40 constituencies as A class and identified these as seats where the party had a good chance of win. The candidate selection was also based on the winnability factor in these seats. However, the UDF plans to go one step further. The front leadership has decided to classify booths as A, B and C based on the front's strength in each booth. "The UDF has created wonderful results through micromanagement and disciplined work," UDF secretary C P John told TNIE. "This is an achievement for the front. We will prepare

of the 100 constituencies, there are 15 in which the front's chances of winning are grim. In 20 seats the front could win. The idea of booth- level classification came after the UDF implemented it successfully in Palakkad, Chelakkara and Wayanad by-election. In Palakkad, where all the fronts fought for survival, the booth-level experiment gave an upper hand for the UDF."In Palakkad, we identified 2,000 elders who had crossed 85. We categorised the booths based on winning chances. Around 40

booths were in C category in Palakkad," a UDF leader who was in charge of the constituency told TNIE. In Thiruvananthapuram parliament constituency, out of 1,300 booths, 175-180 are identified in C category. The leadership is also of the view that after identifying the front's strengths and weaknesses in the booths ahead of the election, it could concentrate on rectifying the faults."There are some booths where we couldn't do much as our opponents have the majority there. As far as B category booths are

concerned, we can recapture them if we rectify the weaknesses. Through this we Tried and true method Congress leader told E.The idea to concentrate on booths came up as the Congress, which is leading the UDF has organisational issues at the grassroots level. The lack of workers in many booths is a challenge to the Congress and The idea of booth-level classification came UDF. The leaders are also aware that in the assembly elections the strategy used in byelections would not work. "In by-elections, we can successfully parachute workers from other constituencies. However, in the

general election it is not possible. Hence, identifying the pitfalls will be decisive," he said.

Meanwhile, the Congress central leadership has started a survey ahead of the assembly election. The aim is to categorise assembly segments into A, B and C. "There are some seats where we could win if we field a good

Community is also a factor. In Thiruvananthapuram district, in the last election, there was a complaint that enough representation was not given to Ezhava and Nadar communities. Such matters would be taken care of in the future," a KPCC leader said.

could increase the chances of winning," a The UDF has decided to classify booths as A, B and C based on the front's strength in each boothAccording to the UDF leadership, of the 100 constituencies, there are 15 in which the front's chances of winning are grim and 20 where it could win

> after the front implemented it successfully in Palakkad, Chelakkara and Wayanad byelections. In Palakkad, the booth-level experiment gave an upper hand for the

Less than 40 per cent urban homeless in Odisha have got pucca house: H&UD department

Similarly, work of 8,085 pucca houses against the approved 13,167 have been completed in Koraput district.

BHUBANESWAR. Less than 40 per cent of the total urban homeless identified across all civic bodies in state have been provided pucca houses so far. Sources in the Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) department said more than 3,53,000 homeless families had been identified in the state in the 'Housing for All' plan of action survey in 2017-18.

However, a little over 1.33 lakh

families, only about 38 per cent, have been provided pucca houses in these seven-and-half years between 2017-18 and 2024-25 fiscal so far.All the beneficiaries have been provided the houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) as the state didn't have its own scheme. Housing and Urban Development minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra had also informed

the Assembly recently that Odisha

government doesn't have any system

in place to provide pucca houses to

urban homeless under its own



scheme. Moreover, the state ensure construction of all the houses approved for the beneficiaries under PMAY-U. Out of a total of 1,84,627 pucca houses approved for the beneficiaries in the state so far, the government has been able to complete

about 1,33,023 housing units so far. government has also been unable to Out of 14,481 pucca houses approved for the urban homeless in Khurda district under PMAY-U, only about 5,042 units have been completed so far. Similarly, work of 8,085 pucca houses against the approved 13,167 have been completed in Koraput district. In Cuttack, the

number of PMAY-U housing units completed so far is about 6,800 against the approved target of 10,035. Considering the delay in completion of

houses, state government in November this year had sought extension of the project timeline of PMAY-U, which is set to end on December 31, by another year. Two months back, it had also sought an assistance of around Rs 180 crore from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to complete several PMAY-U houses that were under different stages of construction.Officials in the Odisha Urban Housing Mission (OUHM) said the launch of PMAY-U 2.0, unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September this year, will pave way to cover more left out beneficiaries under the scheme. The state government and OUHM have already worked out a plan to take up IEC drive in urban areas to cover more number of beneficiaries under the scheme, they said.

Inflow to Thamirabarani receding, 52k cusecs flowing into sea: Collector K Elambahavath

THOOTHUKUDI. Residents living along the Thamirabarani riverbank need not panic as inflow is gradually receding due to declining rainfall, said Collector K Elambahavath on Saturday.

In the wake of heavy rainfall triggered by low pressure, Thamirabarani was in full spate on Saturday and submerged two old bridges at Author and Eral, and inundating several villages. Notably, the two new bridges at Authoor and Eral were damaged during the December 2023 floods and the old bridges were providing access. However, both old bridges have been submerged, forcing authorities to provide alternate routes. Over 18 main road stretches across the district have

become unusable and alternate routes have been charted. Speaking to, Collector Elambahavath said the Thamirabarani was carrying 52,000 cusecs through Srivaikuntam Anaicut into the sea as of 6 pm. The water level in the river would reduce further as water release from Gadananadhi Dam



has reduced to 10,000 from 20,000 cusecs, he said after a consultation meeting with the Tenkasi collector." As the Thamirabarani is capable of carrying over one lakh cusecs of water, we are safe. However, the public is urged to exercise caution," he added. The collector further said, "Officials from the revenue and public works department are involved in removing sand dune blocking at the mouth of the Thamirabarani at Punnakayal. As many as 1,238 persons have been shifted to relief camps across the district and provided with necessities," he said." Most of them were shifted from flood prone areas along the Thamirabarani early on, by the revenue, police and civic bodies," the collector said. Meanwhile, SP Albert John appealed to devotees not to approach the beach at the Tiruchendur Murugan temple on full moon day. He said that road access through Thoothukudi-Tiruchendur and Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur are unsafe.

Staff must be treated on par with cops, give solatium for death in line of duty: TN forest staff association

COIMBATORE. The Tamil Nadu Forest Staff Association alleged that in stark contrast to police personnel, the state government does not provide solatium to the kin of forest department staff who died while on duty hours. They pointed out that even after the death of a 32-year-old forest guard, who was the sole breadwinner of his family in a road accident at Dindigul three weeks ago, the state government have not made any announcement to provide solatium to his wife and two kids.

The forest staff members across the state crowd-funded Rs 7 lakh and deposited the amount in the account of the deceased's children.The deceased V Ramasamy, a resident of Chindaiyankottai, was working as a forest beat guard in Sengadampatti under the Kannivadi forest range in the Dindigul forest division. On November 20, Ramasamy was returning on his bike to his house at Koolampatti Pirivu on the Sempatti-Vathalakundu National Highway, along with his relative Arun Pandian (17) and an acquaintance Arvind Pandian, both of whom were riding pillion. While plying along Sempatti, a truck moving at a high speed hit the two-wheeler from behind, killing all three. On Saturday, the team led by S Karthikevan, who is the president of Tamil Nadu Forest Staff Association met the deceased's wife R Valliand, and handed over the cash to their son R Dinesh Kumar (8) and daughter R Bhuvana (3). "We have also

sought the senior forest department official's

help to issue funds. However, nothing has



been done so far. The government should immediately release the solatium," he said."Likewise, the state has not provided solatium to C Chandru, who died on duty at

the Pollachi forest range in Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) in May 2020. The family of Ramasamy is destitute and his wife has to take care of their two children," said Karthikeyan.He added, "Chief Minister MK Stalin announced Rs 25 lakh solatium to the kin of constable K Paranthaman (39) who died in a road accident. Likewise, 25 lakh was given to the kin of Head Constable A Sridhar (45) who used to work at Ariyamangalam traffic police station. However, no solatium is being given to the kin of forest department staff."

When tried to reach out to Principal Secretary to Government, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forests P Senthil Kumar, he was unavailable for

They protested by consuming eggs in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office, and have even threatened to serve it at the venue.

Odisha Universities Bill stall; delays vice-chancellor, faculty appointment

The Supreme **Court has since** put a stay on the Act which was against the UGC guidelines for the appointments.

BHUBANESWAR. The hopes of appointment of vice-chancellors and faculty in state-run universities, which have been stalled for nearly four and half years, have been dashed with the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2024 hanging fire. The Bill, which would have allowed appointments to the top and key positions in the universities, was introduced in the House by the present BJP government but the At a time when universities have Assembly was adjourned sine die before it could be discussed and passed. Appointment of faculty members and vice-chancellors in public universities have been put on hold owing to the contentious Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020 which was brought into effect by the previous BJD government. The University Grants Commission (UGC) had challenged the new amendments over many violations. The Supreme Court has since put a stay on the Act which was against the UGC guidelines for the appointments. To end the impasse, the new government had last month decided to amend the parent act -

Odisha Universities Act, 1989 - to grant more autonomy to universities for making the appointments. It was approved by the state cabinet too and the government on December 3 had introduced it in the Assembly. The Bill could neither be discussed nor passed.

reached a situation where vicechancellors' tenures are being extended and many departments forced to manage with just one or two faculty members, academicians said students in higher education have been the worst-hit because of the conflict with law.

"For the last over four years, there have been no new recruitments which is a cause of great concern for not just the students but also the government. Many faculty members have already retired and the vacancies arising out of it are affecting not just academics but also



research," said Berhampur University vicechancellor Geetanjali Dash.

According to the Higher Education department reports, of the total sanctioned posts of 1,911, only 724 teachers are in position. Of the 1,187 vacant positions, some are being managed by guest faculty. Besides, seven universities in the state.

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News box

NGT seeks report on green impact of kanwar corridor

Ghaziabad. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked agencies to disclose the environmental impact assessment for the construction of the 111km kanwar route spread across three districts in UP — Ghaziabad, Meerut and Muzaffarnagar. An estimated 1.1 lakh trees along the Upper Ganga canal need to be felled to make way for the two-lane kanwar route. These include 33,776 'big' trees. Earlier, the NGT formed a joint committee comprising the director, Forest Survey of India, a senior scientist not below the rank of joint secretary, ministry of environment, forest and climate change (MoEFCC), the chief secretary, state of UP or his representative, and the Meerut district magistrate, who was made the coordinating agency. The committee filed an interim joint report before the NGT, but the court found anomalies in the report

The NGT quorum, comprising chairperson Prakash Shrivastava, Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert member A Senthil V, while referring to anomalies in the interim report, pointed out that "no environmental impact assessment on account of road construction, particularly with reference to maintaining the integrity of biodiversity/terrestrial ecology, is disclosed".

The court also found that in the interim report, "proceedings so far could not disclose the extent of trees felled and areas identified/demarcated for compensatory plantation." "So, parties are directed to submit their "clarificatory affidavit on the above aspect," Satendra Singh, co-petitioner in the case, said. While the state of UP has been directed to submit the final report of the joint committee within four weeks, agencies have been given the same time to file their response affidavit/objection, Singh said. The court is due to hear the case on Dec 12. The NGT in Sept this year imposed a symbolic fine of Re 1 on the Surveyor General of India for disregarding the tribunal's prior orders. The rationale behind constructing the route that was placed before the NGT was: "Every year in the month of Shravan, about 1 crore Shiv devotees come from Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, etc., who return from Haridwar to their respective states."

Made to work 12 hours a day, 4 aged below 14 rescued from dhaba

Ghaziabad. Four boys aged below 14 years were rescued from child labour at a roadside eatery and hotel near Hapur road, Dasna bus stand. The rescue was carried out on Friday by a team of anti-human trafficking unit (AHTU), labour department, and a Delhi-based NGO.

After being rescued, the boys were produced before the Child Welfare Commission and given accommodation at the govt-run children's shelter home in Govindpuram."While two children were found working at a dhaba, two others were found working at a mechanic shop. All four are residents of Dasna. Their families live there as well. However, they were given temporary accommodation at the shelter home until their age is officially determined and their parents' statements are recorded," said GP Bhadradas Nair, CWC chairperson. Deputy commissioner of labour department Anurag Mishra said that the rescue was part of an anti-child labour drive carried out by the department every month. According to members of the rescue team, the children were being made to work 12 hours every day and were paid Rs 200-250 per day. "The children seem to be between the ages of 10 and 13 years old. They lived on the eateries' and the mechanic shops' premises. These children are trafficked from different states and forced to work in exploitative conditions, which severely affects their physical and mental development," said Shekhar Mahajan, director of Sahyog Care for You, an NGO which was part of the rescue team."We are seeking compensation for the rescued children from the labour department and have urged authorities to seal the establishments involved, he said. According to labour department data, 171 adolescents and 53 children below the age of 14 years were rescued from child labour in shops, factories, and eateries across the district this year.

NAME CHANGE

NATH RAINA R/o A-287, 2ND FLOOP IPIN GARDEN, NEW DELHI-110059 have changed my name from RUI KRISHAN RAINA to ROOP KRISHEI

NAME CHANGE PREM KUMAR S/O MURARI LA

R/O G-68/5 STREET NO-04 BRAHM PURI SEELAMPUR DELHI 110053 CHANGE MY NAME PREM KUMAF

NAME CHANGE

No-9515612L Rank-HAV Name-MITH ESH KLIMAR Father of RACHI KUMAR Presently residing at VILL PIRHO, PO-RAMPUR CHAY, PS TEH-KARPI, DIST-ARWA BIHAR-804428 have changed my mino son's name from RACHIT KUMAR to SARTHAK for all future purposes vio Affidavit No-21178/24 dated 04/09/202 efore Executive Magistrate, Bihar.

NAME CHANGE R SESHA KUMARI Wife of N

4829145L Rank-HAV Name-NAGA MUNEIAH RAVURI R/o VPO-LINGOJ PRAKASHAM, ANDHRA PRADESH 523370, have changed my name from F SESHA KUMARI to RAVURI KUMAR or all future purposes vide Affidavit date 4/12/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

t is for general information that SANTOSH KUMAR PURI S/O: Hira L Puri.R/O 18. CSP FLATS. NEAF OURGA MANDIR, VTC: East Of Kailas Phase-I, PO: Sriniwaspuri, Sub Distric (alkaji, District: South Delhi,Delhi een wrongly written as Santosh Puri nv minor sons Arihant Puri aged 1 ars and Arnav puri 15 years in h chool record and birth certificate N MCDOLR 0114006023899, an MCDOLR09401173, The actual name of nine is Santosh Kumar Puri, which ma be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

JC-768407F, Rank-SUB, Name-KE AGANNATH RAO S/o K ANURUDHU esiding at VILL-MACHA BOLLARAN PO-ALWAL, DIST-MEDCHAL MALKA GIRI, TELANGANA-500010 ha changed my son's name from KET PAVAN KUMAR to K PAVAN KUMAR fo all future purposes vide Affidavit date 14/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

Shobha mother of Name-Dongre Aru Arjun residing at Village - Akola, P.O. Akola, Tehsil - Akola, Distt.-Akola, Maharashtra -444001 have changed my ame from Shobha to Shobha Arju Dongra for all future purposes vide Afffidavit dated 13.12.2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

NAME CHANGE

Arjun father of Name- Dongre Aru Arjun residing at Village - Akola, P.O. Akola, Tehsil - Akola, Distt.-Akola, Maharashtra -444001 have changed m name from Arjun to Arjun Shanka Dongre for all future purposes vid Afffidavit dated 13.12.2024 before Nota Public, Delhi,

NAME CHANGE

t is for general information that I, JESS\ RAJAN W/O RAJAN ABRAHAM, R/o E , TOWER-2, TYPE-4, N B C C, KIDWA IAGAR EAST, SAROJINI NAGAF DELHI-110023 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written a JESSY RAJAN ABRAHAM in m Passport No S3440986. The actual ame of mine is JESSY RAJAN which nay be amended accordingly. It is cer fied that I have complied with other lega

NAME CHANGE

RIKAIYA W/O ALIM IKRAM R/o H NO RAMESH BUILDING BHOL NATH NAGAR SHAHDARA DELH 10032 HAVE CHANGED MY NAM FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE

Sheela W/o Lajpat Rai R/o 206 - 1 E Sali No. 10, "Bhola Nath Naga my name to Sheela Rani for all futur

NAME CHANGE nitherto known as SONI KAUSHIK a

SONI Sharma D/O Lekhraj W/O MOHIT KAUSHIK residing at House No. E-159, Krishna Gali, Chhajjupura, East aharour. Delhi 110032 have change

NAME CHANGE

SIMRAN DUA D/o JEET RAJ DUA R/ 89-D/30, Adrash Nagar Rohtak Haryana-124001 hereby undertake that SIMRAN DUA want to change my name o ADITYA DUA and gender as Male. SIMRAN DUA henceforth be known a ADITYA DUA S/o JEET RAJ DUA.

Farmhouses, banquet halls come up within 1km of Sultanpur park

Gurgaon. Several farmhouses and buildings have emerged within a kilometre of Sultanpur National Park one of Delhi-NCR's biggest birdwatching attractions that was recognised as a Ramsar site in 2021.On Friday, TOI found several ornate gates, banquet halls, residential buildings and even a school around the protected area, which is internationally recognised for its ecological value. A dozen more construction projects were under way within metres of the park's periphery. Sultanpur is supposed to have a 5km noconstruction zone, which acts as a buffer to protect the sanctity of the wetland. Although this was transgressed long ago, this is probably the first time that hectic urban activity has been noted so close to the park.Officials said these illegal constructions would not only lead to pollution, but also increase humananimal conflict.A committee formed in Feb by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) had earlier listed 101 violations around the park that necessitate immediate action. Anand Mohan Sharan,

the additional chief secretary of forest

and wildlife, followed it up on Friday — asking officials concerned to act against violators within a week. This directive comes a week ahead of a Dec 21 meeting of the standing committee of NBWL on environmental violations in the Aravalis. Asked about illegal structures coming up so close to the park, wildlife inspector Jyoti Kumar said, "We have recently submitted a list of 32 violations in the eco-sensitive zone. A month ago, we listed some 78. So, there 110 violations in total. The town and country planning department will take action."

Environmentalists raised concerns, saying the govt needed to do much more to protect the sanctity of the Ramsar site.

"Construction activities around protected The 5km eco-sensitive zone around sites are not just illegal but also environmentally destructive. They are compromising the integrity of an internationally recognised national park," said ecologist Sunil Harsana. "The park is home to numerous species of birds and other wildlife. It needs to be protected for its ecological balance."The Sultanpur park is also a part of the Central Asian Flyway — a major migratory route

for birds travelling between their breeding grounds in central Asia.Pankaj Gupta, a member of the Delhi Bird Society, also criticised the authorities for their failure to curb construction activities."There is a need for stringent action against those violating ESZ norms. The govt must ensure that the rules are enforced to protect this area," he added. Vaishali Rana, another activist, also questioned the govt's role. "The authorities must focus on protecting the limited forest cover it has. Why is it allowing encroachment to happen in the eco-sensitive zone? Why does it remove encroachments when it can prevent it in the first place," he added.

Sultanpur park has 22 villages. No construction is allowed within 300m of the wetland, while buildings no higher than two storeys are allowed up to a 500m radius. Polluting industries and commercial construction are barred within a 3km perimeter of the park.Recognised as an 'important bird area' by BirdLife International, the Sultanpur park is home to over 320 species, both resident and migratory. It also serves as an important stopover for migratory species, providing them with essential habitat for resting, feeding, and breeding.

According to officials, the migratory birds which usually visit the park can be classified under three categories waders (water dependent birds), sucks (require slightly deeper water) and warblers (prefer reeds). Birds from Europe, Russia, Siberia, China and Gulf countries make the park their home for the winter months.In March this year, an intergovernmental panel — comprising the Gurgaon deputy commissioner, officials of the irrigation department, state wetland authority, chief wildlife warden, and experts from the Indian Institute of Roorkee — carried out an inspection of the area. They submitted their report to the standing committee of NBWL, noting violations such as encroachments around the Sultanpur lake, an affordable housing colony in Garhi Harsaru, another multi-storey residential building in Dhorka village, and farmhouses in Farrukhnagar.

Don't allow waste heaps on roads: Gurgaon civic chief

Gurgaon. MCG commissioner Ashok Kumar Garg on Saturday directed officials to prioritise cleanliness and promptly resolve any grievances reported by residents. The directive came during an inspection where Garg reviewed cleanliness, sewage overflow, encroachments, public toilet maintenance and waste management at secondary collection points.After visiting several areas — including Beriwala Bagh, Rajiv Chowk, Sohna Chowk, Sabzi Mandi, Khandsa Road, Sector-37 and Basai Road — Garg Garg instructed the removal of directed the officials to address civic shortcomings.At Beriwala Bagh's material recovery facility (MRF), Garg stressed the need for regular garbage collection and directed officials to initiate composting of wet waste."NGOs or experts should be engaged to implement the composting effectively and the MRF should

become fully operational as soon as possible," he said. While visiting Court Road, he directed officials to remove debris and litter, ensuring streets remain clean and navigabe. As public toilets at Kamla Nehru Park and Khandsa Road were found in poor condition, Garg ordered their immediate repair and directed officials to ensure proper maintenance and hygiene. Encroachments on Khandsa Road also came under

unauthorised structures to ease traffic congestion and improve pedestrian access. He directed the preparation of a proposal to widen the road.At several locations, including Basai Enclave and Sector-37 Pace City-2, the MCG chief observed scattered construction debris and sewage overflows. He directed the

engineering wing to resolve these issues promptly. At Khandsa's secondary garbage collection point, industrial waste was being dumped improperly. While issuing a strict warning against such practices, Garg said, "If any vendor is found dumping industrial waste here, an FIR will be filed without delay."Meanwhile, 11 vehicles were caught by the sanitation security force in the last week. Out of these, FIRs were registered against seven vehicle owners or drivers, while a penalty of Rs 5,000 to Rs 25,000 was imposed on four vehicles."Throwing garbage and debris in public places, vacant lands, green belts and roadsides in the municipal area is a punishable offence. The SSF team has been continuously patrolling and strict action is being taken," Additional Commissioner of MCG Balpreet Singh said.

Gurgaon explosions: 2 held in Chandigarh to be quizzed

Gurgaon: Two men arrested in connection with the Nov 25 blasts outside nightclubs in Chandigarh will be brought to Gurgaon for questioning by a team of cops probing similar attacks in a party hub in the NCR city's Sector 29 last week.

The recent attacks, officials said, appear to be part of an organised extortion scheme targeting nightlife establishments."We will complete the papework to bring both suspects on a production warrant next week," a senior police officer told TOI. On Nov 25, two crude bombs exploded outside two Seville Bar and Lounge, owned by rapper Badshah, and De Orra Club in Sector 26 of Chandigarh. Four days later, Chandigarh police and Haryana STF apprehended two accused in Hisar after a brief encounter.On Dec 10, bombs hurled by a suspected member of the Kala Jathedi-Goldi Brar gang exploded outside two clubs in Sector 29. Four persons have been arrested so far in connection with this case, including prime suspect Sachin Taliyan (27), who hurled the bombs.

It was around 5.15am when Sachin walked up to the entrance of Warehouse Café and hurled the first bomb, which exploded near a parked scooter and damaged it.A worker at the club said they rushed outside after hearing a loud noise. "There was smoke all around. There were a few guards, a balloon vendor and some customers standing nearby. Fortunately, no one was injured," the worker told TOI. Within seconds — before people could come to terms with the first explosion— Sachin threw another bomb at 'Human', damaging the letter 'M' on the club's digital signage.

As he moved ahead, a four-member team of crime branch sleuths and SWAT personnel nabbed him. The armed guards — stationed behind sandbag barricades — were in a picket that was set up recently in the wake of the Chandigarh explosions. "I am an associate of Goldi Brar. I did this since you did not obey his instructions," Sachin shouted as he was pinned to the ground by cops. Notorious gangster Rohit Godara, associated with Goldy Brar and Lawrence Bishnoi, claimed responsibility for the attacks through social media. Godara warned that these incidents were merely a "trailer". Apart from police, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) took cognisance of the attacks and started its own probe since Brar's name cropped up in the case. Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused received explosive devices from a Lawrence gang member on Tuesday morning, targeting the Sector 29 market. The operation was reportedly supported by additional gang members who supplied the firearms and ammunition from Ambala.

What next Mother too poor, 12-year-old girl rescued from Noida flat caught between a rock and a hard place

Noida. Back home, it was a life of abject poverty, from which she thought she got out when her mother sent her away a year ago. Here, what she landed up in was worse – slogging at an apartment, with the threat of a beating or an actual one never too far away.Rescued on Nov 11 from her employers at Logix Blossom County, the 12-year-old girl finds herself between a rock and a hard place. For now, she is under govt care at a shelter home. It's been a lonely one month, waiting for her mother to come. But travelling from Bokaro to Noida is beyond her mother's means. The scars on her hands and back are grim reminders of the beatings she endured for minor mistakes, while her hollow cheeks tell of days spent hungry. The breaking point came when, unable to bear the abuse any longer, she escaped from the flat last month. A resident who saw her sitting by herself on a lawn called the authorities. The horror ended for her. But what next? Home, besides poverty, wasn't a safe place for her either. In her statement to the CWC shortly after her rescue, she said,

NAME CHANGE

YASH S/O PROMOD KUMAR SHAR NA R/O D-54 STREET NO-10 BRA

AMPLIRI NEW SEELAMPLIR DELH

10053 I CHANGE MY NAME YAS

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that JYOT BALA W/O BIRENDER, H No.B-984

haroli Dairy Colony, Mayur Vihar Phas

Gharoli, East Delhi, Delhi-110096

eclare that name of mine has been

rongly written as JYOTI in my minor so

amely PRATYAKSH CHHIKARA age

me of mine is JYOTI BALA, which ma

15 years in his school record. The actual

NAME CHANGE

is for general information that I, AVE IESH KUMAR SINGH S/o SARJI

RASAD SINGH, R/o E-82, J J Colon

Shakur Pur. North West Delhi, Delhi

minor Son has been wrongly written as HEMANT KUMAR in my minor sor

namely HEMANT KUMAR SINGH age 13 years in his School Records. Th

actual name of my minor son i HEMANT KUMAR SINGH, which ma

NAME CHANGE

First floor Fateh Nagar Tilak Naga

om Baran Singh to Baran Singh Jauha

NAME CHANGE

K Venkata Lukshamma mother of

No-14827488H Rank-Hav Name

amuri Raghava Reddy R/O Vil

adinenipalle, PO- Badinenipalle, Tehsi

iddalur, Dist-Prakasam, Andhr

radesh-523373, have changed m

ame from K Venkata Lukshamma t

Camuri Venkata Lakshamma for a uture purposes. Vide affidavit date

14.12.2024. before Public Notary Delhi

ran Singh S/o- Charan Singh R/o D

e amended accordingly.

r all future purpos

e amended accordingly.

HARMA

"My father passed away three years ago and my mother remarried. My stepfather commits thefts for a living and would come home and hit me and my three brothers. My mother watched quietly."The job she was convinced to take up was a ruse thrown at her, by her maternal aunt and uncle. She was brought to Delhi by them in 2023. "They said I have to stay with a family and play with their children and I will get food and shelter. But the lady in this house hit me every day over the smallest of mistakes. I would beg her to stop and apologise, but she would continue to hit me. "So. what next is a tricky question for this girl, who needs love, care and education. The CWC in Bokaro has put in a formal request at the Noida CWC to transfer the girl after her mother made multiple visits. "She often asks about her mother and her three younger brothers," said an official at CWC. "The counsellors at the shelter home console her, telling her she will be reunited with them soon.""She is being provided non-

NAME CHANGE

SHAKUNAT MALIK W/O MOHI

ARIR MALIK R/O M-54/A ARUI FAZA

ENCLAVE-1 THOKER N0-5 JAMIA

IAGAR OKHLA DELHI-110025 HAVE

CHANGE MY NAME SAKUNAT MALIF

NAME CHANGE

DHARM SINGH S/o RAM SINGH R/

Ghookna,Ghaziabad,Ghaziabad, Utta Pradesh - 201001, declare that name o

mine has been wrongly written a DHRAM SINGH in my minor son NAKUI

SINGH age 17 year in his 10th Clas Educational Documents. The actua

ame of mine is DHARM SINGH which

NAME CHANGE

MAHENDER KHANDUJA S/o BHIN

AIN KHANDUJA, R/o AD-104-A

chalimar Bagh Opp. All Heavens, Ring Road, Shalimar Bagh, North West Delh

Delhi - 110088 have changed the name

of my minor son CHETANYA KHANDU JA alias CHAITANYA KHANDUJA, ager

4 years and he shall hereafter be know

NAME CHANGE

is for general information that I, ANANI (UMAR S/o KAILASH BATHEM, R/o D

Patel Chest Flats, Near Geeta Bhaw Mandir, Dhakka Complex Dr. Mukher

lagar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009

declare that name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as ANANE KUMAR BATHEM and BARKHA BATH

EM in my minor son's namely YASHARTH BATHEM aged 11 years in his Birth Certificate No. C 5331702 and

School Record. The actual name of mine and my wife are ANAND KUMAR and

BARKHA respectively, which may be

ended accordingly.

s CHAITANYA KHANDUJA.

ay be amended accordingly.

Marke

Tyagi

FOR ALL PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE

SHARMA R/O D-54 STREET NO-10

BRAHAMPURI NEW SEELAMPUR DELHI 110053 I CHANGE MY NAME

NAME CHANGE

Chandan Pandey S/O Shash

Shekhar Pandey R/o Flat no. 202, Towe

O, Pan Oasis Apartments, Sector 70, Noida (U.P.) Pin -201301, have changed

he name of minor Son PUSHKA

ereafter be known as RAGHAVENDRA

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as Navida Babbar D/0

Suresh Babbar W/O Gaurav Batra, R/O

C-178, First floor, Madhuban, Nea

changed my name and shall hereafter be

NAME CHANGE

Shardha Seth S/o Mohit Seth R/o E

Anand Vihar Colony East Delhi, Delhi -

NAME CHANGE

nerto known as Santa Indwar

Chumni Indwar D/O Lohru Indwar W/O

Mahendra Ekka, R/O Jhuggi No- N-41-790/2 Ground Floor, Block IB Suraj Park,

10042,have changed my name and shal

ereafter be known as SANTA INDWAR

NAME CHANGE

SABIR MALIK S/O SIDDIQE R/O N

54/A ABUL FAZAL ENCLAVE-1 THO-

DELHI-110025 HAVE CHANGE MY

NAME MOHD SABIR MALIK FOR ALL

KER N0-5 JAMIA NAGAR

North West Delhi Delhi-

110092 have changed my name Shradha Seth for all future purposes.

PANDEY aged 7 years and he sha

RIYANKA SHARMA

formal education. She has never been to school, so the experience is new to her, and teachers are slowly introducing her to studies," said Virmani. An official said the girl is eager to learn. "She picks up quickly and loves drawing. Art seems to be her way of expressing emotions she finds hard to articulate. She is low on confidence, so avoids eye contact while talking." She has made two friends at the shelter, both girls her age.Shankar Rawani, chairperson of the CWC in Bokaro, said, "The parents are so poor that they did not even have money to return to their house from our office. They don't have money to buy food. We helped them with what we could."Rawani said she is transferred from the custody of Noida CWC, the local CWC will write a social investigation report (SIR) on the girl's family and take statements from her guardians about whether she is capable of providing a safe life to her. SIR is prepared under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

NAME CHANGE

PROMOD KUMAR S/O HAR SHANKAR SHARMA R/O D-54 TREET NO-10 BRAHAMPURI NEW SEELAMPUR DELHI 110053 HANGE MY NAME PROMO

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as DILIP KUMAR S/ RAMU SHUKLA residing at 38-4 econd Floor, Bhagwan Nagar, Jiwa Hospital, Ashram, Jungpura, South Delh Delhi-110014, have changed my nam and shall hereafter be known as RA\ DILIP SHUKLA, for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE is general information that I, Suna pahiya W/o Sumit Dahiya R/o D-68 shwar Colony, Arjun Park, Najafgarh

South West Delhi -110043, Declare that Name of Mine has been Wrongly Writtens Sunaina Devi in My 10th, 12th, Clar ducational documents, The Actua lame of Mine is Sunaina Dahiya, Whic lay be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

SANTOSH TIWARI S/o GANESI WARI R/o House No. L342, Rajnag Sec-23, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-20100 nave changed the name of my minor so PREM KUMAR aged 17 years and he sha e hereafter known as ASHUTOS WARI, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

is for general information that I, MOH SHARIK S/o MOHD SHAKIR R/o H.No G-401, Street No. - 13/4, Bhagiratl Vihar, North East, Delhi - 110094 declar that name of my Father has been wrong by written as MOHD ANIS in my Voter II ard No. ZYF3012564. The actual nan of my Father is MOHD SHAKIR which nav be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE hitherto known as RAM GOPAL MIT

TAL alias RAM GOPAL S/o GANESH IAI residing at C-7/7 1st Floor Nex Town-III, North West Delhi, Delhi shall hereafter be known as RAM SOPAL, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

is for general information that KULDEEP S/o RAGHBIR SINGH, R/o House No. - 529, Makrana, PO Makrana. Dist: Charkhi Dadri, Haryana 127022, declare that the name of m inor son and my wife has been wro written as ANSHU and BABLI in my ninor son namely NITIN LAMBA age ocuments. The actual name of m minor son and my wife are NITIN LAMBA and BABALI DEVI respectively hich must be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

DIVYA ARORA Daughter of ANIL ARORA, residing at Jain Chowk, Near Lal Dass Mandir, Bhiwani, Bhiwani, Haryana - 127021, hereby undertake that I, DIVYAARORA want to change my name to DEVDARSH and gender a Male. I, DIVYA ARORA henceforth be known as DEVDARSH S/o ANII ARORA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

BANSAL son of RAJENDER KUMAF leclare that name of mine and my father as been wrongly written as RAJINGUPTA and RAJINDER KUMAF GUPTA in my Pan Card No. AFKPG4192C. The actual name of mine ay be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE sudha W/O PREM KUMAR TOMA

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. DCE-BL-19-20-2024

R/O G-68/5 STREET NO-04 BRAHM PURI SEELAMPUR DELHI 110053 CHANGE MY NAME SUDHA TOMAR

Executive Engineer/Bridge/Ope Line/N.E. Railway/Gorakhpur actin for and on behalf of the President o India invites E-Tenders for the following works - S.N. (1), E-Tender No.: DCE-BL-19-2024, Descriptio of Work: Replacement of corrodec amaged bed plate and holding down bolts of different Bridges in LJN IZN & BSB Divisions of N.E. Railway., Approx. Tender Value (₹) 1,19,72,811.42, Earnest Mone (₹): 2,09,900.00, Cost of tende document Nil, Completion period from the date of issue of acceptance etter: 12 (Twelve) months. S.N. (2) E-Tender No.: DCE-BL-20-2024 Description of Work: Conducting

UAS (Drone) based Visual Inspection of Br. No. 97 (19X24.4m PG) in Lucknow Division, Br. No. 137 Dr. (13X30.5m OWG) in Varanas Division & Br No. 270 (8X30.5n OWG) in Izzatnagar Division of N.E Railway., Approx. Tender Value (₹) 4,63,086.81, Earnest Mone (₹): 9,300.00, Cost of tender document Nil, Completion period from the date of issue of acceptance letter: 03 (Three months. 1. Date of E-Tender opening 11.00 Hrs on 06.01.2025 2. Receipt of E-Tender upto 10.59 Hrs on 06.01.2025, 3. Detailed E-tender notice, Eligibility criteria terms & conditions are available a

website: www.ireps.gov.in Executive Engineer/Bridge/OL/ CPRO/W - 329 'Never travel on roof and foot boards

GUPTA, R/o House No. B-7/92/2 Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029 RAJENDER KUMAR GUPTA, which

NEWS BOX

4 Arrested For Damaging Hindu Temple, Houses In Bangladesh

Dhaka.Law enforcement agencies on Saturday arrested four people for vandalising and damaging a Hindu temple and houses and shops of the community in Sunamganj district in north Bangladesh. Police also filed a case against 12 named persons and 150-170 unidentified people.

Alim Hossain, 19, Sultan Ahmed Raju, 20, Imran Hossain, 31, and Shajahan Hossain, 20, were arrested for vandalism in the Doarabazar area of Sunamgani district earlier this month, a press release from the Chief Adviser's press wing here.

'On December 3, a Facebook post by Akash Das, a resident of the Sunamganj district, sparked tensions in the district. Even though he deleted the post, screenshots spread widely, leading to violence in the area," state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) said quoting the press release.

The Dhaka Tribune newspaper said although the post was deleted, its screenshots were circulated, sparking tension among locals. Police detained Das on the same day, but a group of people attempted to snatch him from police custody."For safety reasons, Das was transferred to the Sadar Police Station instead of being kept in Doarabazar," it said.

The newspaper further added that later, on the same day, enraged locals attacked and vandalised the Loknath Temple and also homes and shops belonging to the Hindu community. The situation was brought under control with the intervention of the Superintendent of Police (SP), the District Commissioner (DC), and personnel from the army and police, it added. Police said they are conducting an in-depth investigation to identify those involved in the incident. On Saturday, the press release also said that the police identified the accused involved in the incident and filed a case against 12 named persons and 150-170 unidentified people, the BSS added. The relations between India and Bangladesh came under strain after the interim government headed by Muhammad Yunus came to power after deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country on August 5 following a student-led protest.

The relations deteriorated further in recent weeks over continued attacks on Hindus and especially after the recent arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of ISKCON Bangladesh and now, a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote organisation.

Russia Pulling Back But Not Out Of Syria After Assad's Fall: Report

World. Russia is pulling back its military from the front lines in northern Syria and from posts in the Alawite Mountains but is not leaving its two main bases in the country after the fall of President Bashar al-Assad, four Syrian officials told Reuters.

The ousting of Assad, who along with his late father, former President Hafez al-Assad, had forged a close alliance with Moscow, has thrown the future of Russia's bases - the Hmeimim airbase in Latakia and the Tartous naval facility - into question. Satellite footage from Friday shows what appeared to be at least two Antonov AN-124s, among the world's largest cargo planes, at the Hmeimim base with their nose cones open, apparently preparing to load up.

At least one cargo plane flew out on Saturday for Libya. a Syrian security official stationed outside the facility said.Svrian military and security sources in contact with the Russians told Reuters that Moscow was pulling back its forces from the front lines and withdrawing some heavy equipment and senior Syrian officers.But the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation, said Russia was not pulling out of its two main bases and currently had no intention of doing so. Some equipment is being shipped back to Moscow as are very senior officers from Assad's military but the aim at this stage is to regroup and redeploy as dictated by developments on the ground, a senior Syrian army officer in touch with the Russian military told Reuters.

Storms coat Iowa, Nebraska in ice, spark rare Tornado alert for San Francisco

World. A severe ice storm swept across Iowa and eastern Nebraska this weekend, creating hazardous travel conditions and causing chaos across the region. The storm forced the temporary closure of Interstate 80 highway after cars and trucks started to slide off the icy roads. The icy conditions, which began Friday evening, have claimed at least one life in eastern Nebraska. A 57-year-old woman lost control of her pickup truck on Highway 30 near Arlington, colliding with an oncoming truck. The other driver suffered minor injuries, according to the Washington County Sheriff's office."Luckily, some warmer air is moving in behind this to make it temporary," said Dave Cousins, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Davenport, Iowa. Temperatures rose on Saturday afternoon, melting the ice in many areas.

Meanwhile, California faced a rare tornado warning in San Francisco and nearby San Mateo County. The warning, issued early Saturday morning, was lifted within 20 minutes. Later that day, a tornado struck Scotts Valley, about 70 miles south of San Francisco, overturning cars, toppling trees, and damaging power lines and buildings. The city last experienced a tornado in 2005, though Meteorologist Roger Gass noted the warning

system may have missed it back then. Based on video, photos, firsthand accounts, and radar signatures, a tornado occurred (at) 1.40 pm," confirmed the National Weather Service. Images showed vehicles overturned and significant damage to the area. Several people were injured and hospitalised, including a battalion chief with the California department of forestry and fire

Malaiyaha Tamils of Sri Lanka: Shackled to a legacy of tea, toil for 200 years

NUWARA ELIYA. Sixty-three-year-old Natesan Jayaraman, in his 44 years of working in a tea plantation, has learnt that avoiding unnecessary conversations is a useful strategy that kept him away from trouble with his kanganis (supervisors) and dorais (a colonial term still used by many to refer to estate managers). It is therefore after a lot of hesitation that he started talking when TNIE met him on the way from Hatton to Nuwara Eliya in the Central Province of Sri Lanka.Jayaraman, a Malaiyaha Tamil whose ancestors were brought from India to work in tea estates, started working in a plantation when he was 18 for a daily wage of LKR 5. The daily wage for an estate worker was recently increased from LKR 1,000 to LKR 1,350 (close to Rs 400 in INR). Despite doing the same amount of work, Natesan still earns only LKR 1,000 since he has technically crossed the retirement age of 60.Even that income is on the condition that applies to all workers that they pluck at least 20 kilos of tea leaves a day, failing which the daily wage gets cut proportionately. "I have to pluck 24 kilos in

fact since the remaining four kilos are counted as commission," he said.Jayaraman, his wife, who is also a plantation worker, and two children still live in a Layam, as the "line houses" constructed since the British period for housing the workers within the estates are locally called. He and his wife are still the breadwinners since his son and daughter, who could not progress much in education with their limited opportunities, are yet to obtain regular employment."My wife is turning 60 soon. I am worried that her daily salary will also be cut from 1,350 to 1,000, he said. The story of Jayaram is representative of the plight of the Malaiyaha Tamils (Hill country, upcountry or Indian-origin Tamils) in Sri Lanka, whose ancestors were taken as labourers from Tamil Nadu by the British 200 years ago to create tea estates in the country. The tea industry has since grown by leaps and bounds, making the country the third largest exporter of tea and thereby being a key engine of its economy. However, the life of Malaiyaha Tamils, the main foot soldiers of this industry, who are



the fourth largest ethnic group in Sri Lanka with more than a million in population, has remained largely unchanged

Deprived of citizenship in 1948, the community had to struggle for more than half a century to secure the right, during which around half a million people were sent back to India as per the Sirimavo-Shastri Pact of 1964. Today, the community lags behind others in all socio-economic indicators. For instance, stunting among

children is 31.7 % in the community compared to the national average of 17.3 %. More than 50 % of the over 2.2 lakh families in the estates lacked water and sanitation facilities while around 80 % needed better housing, as per a report of the Ministry of Hill Country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development (MHCNV).Nuwara Eliya (23.9) and Badulla (28), where the majority of the Malaiyaha Tamils live, are the districts with the highest percentage of poor holds while the national average is 11.7 as per the Economic Statistics of Sril Lanka 2024 brought out by the Department of Census. Thirty-year-old Jeevan Thondaman, a fourth-generation politician from the influential Thondaman family, which has led the largest trade union cum political party - Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) - representing the community, for more than seven decades since the time of his great grandfather Savumiamoorthy Thondaman, said it wouldn't be inappropriate to say that the community is seen as the "children of a lesser god".

South Korean leaders seek calm after Yoon's impeachement

SEOUL. South Korea's opposition leader on Sunday urged the Constitutional Court to rule swiftly on a bid to remove President Yoon Suk Yeol from office, a day after parliament voted to impeach him over a shortlived attempt to impose martial law.

Yoon's powers will be suspended until the court rules on the case, either removing Yoon from office or restoring his powers. The court has up to 180 to decide, and if he's dismissed, a national election to choose his successor must be held within 60 days.Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, the country's No. 2 official, took over presidential powers later Saturday. government has struggled to pass legislation in the opposition-controlled parliament.

Lee Jae-myung, the leader of the opposition Democratic Party, told reporters Sunday that a swift ruling is the only way to minimize national chaos. Lee also proposed the creation of a national council where the government and the National Assembly would work together to

bipartisan cooperation is essential to navigating the political paralysis that has halted high-level diplomacy and the first of its kind in more than four spooked financial markets since Yoon's martial law decree.



Han was appointed by Yoon, whose Lee also said that the Democratic Party would not seek to impeach of Han, despite some calls to do so over his alleged inaction to prevent Yoon's martial law enforcement. Lee said there was no need to introduce further political uncertainty. The Democratic Party will actively cooperate with all parties to stabilize state affairs and restore international trust," Lee said. "The National Assembly and government will work together to quickly resolve the crisis that has swept across the Republic of Korea."

the first of its kind in more than four decades, lasted only six hours, but has caused massive political tumult, halted diplomatic activities and rattled financial markets. Yoon was forced to lift his decree after parliament unanimously voted to overturn it.

Yoon sent hundreds of troops and police officers to the parliament in an effort to stop the vote, but they withdrew after the parliament rejected Yoon's decree. No major violence occurred.

Opposition parties have accused Yoon of rebellion, and say that a president in South Korea is allowed to declare martial law only during wartime or similar emergencies and would have no right to suspend parliament's operations even in those cases.

The conservative Yoon rejects the charges and says he aimed to issue a warning to the Democratic Party, which he has called an "anti-state force" as it's used its control of parliament to impeach many top officials and hold up the government's budget bill for next year.

What is drug captagon, how is it linked to Syria's fallen Assad regime

World After the fall of the al-Assad regime in Syria, large stockpiles of the illicit drug captagon have reportedly been uncovered. The stockpiles, found by Syrian rebels, are believed to be linked to al-Assad military headquarters, implicating the fallen regime in the drug's manufacture and distribution.

But as we'll see, captagon was once a pharmaceutical drug, similar to some of the legally available stimulants we still use today for conditions including attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Captagon was once a pharmaceutical Captagon is the original brand name of an old synthetic pharmaceutical stimulant originally made in Germany in the 1960s. It was an alternative to amphetamine and methamphetamine, which were both used as medicines at the time. The drug has the active ingredient fenethylline and was initially marketed for conditions including ADHD and the sleeping disorder narcolepsy. It had a similar use to some of the legally available stimulants we still use today, such as dexamphetamine.Captagon has similar effects to amphetamines. It increases dopamine in the brain, leading to feelings of wellbeing, pleasure and euphoria.It also improves focus, concentration and stamina. But it has a lot of unwanted side effects, such as low-level psychosis. The drug was originally sold mostly in the Middle East and parts of Europe.

It was available over the counter (without a prescription) in Europe for a short time before it became prescription-only. It was approved only briefly in the United States before becoming a controlled substance in the 1980s, but was still legal for the treatment of narcolepsy in many European countries until relatively recently. According to the International Narcotics Control Board pharmaceutical manufacture of Captagon had stopped by 2009. The illicit trade took over The illegally manufactured version is usually referred to as captagon (with a small c).

It is sometimes called -- chemical courage -- because it is thought to be used by soldiers in war-torn areas of the Middle East to help give them focus and energy.

For instance, it's been reportedly found on the bodies of Hamas soldiers during the conflict with Israel.

Its manufacture is relatively straightforward and inexpensive, making it an obvious target for the blackmarket drug trade.Black-market captagon is now nearly exclusively manufactured in Syria and surrounding countries such as Lebanon.

It's mostly used in the Middle East, including recreationally in some Gulf states. It is one of the most commonly used illicit drugs in Syria. A recent report suggests captagon generated more than US\$7.3 billion in Syria and Lebanon between 2020 and 2022 (about \$2.4 billion a year). What we know about illicit drugs generally is that any seizures or crackdowns on manufacturing or sale have a very limited impact on the drug market because another manufacturer or distributor pops up to meet demand. So in all likelihood, given the size of the captagon market in the Middle East, these latest drug discoveries and seizures are likely to reduce manufacture only for a short time.

One week into a new Syria, rebels aim for normalcy; Syrians vow not to be silent again

security — one of the rebels who marched across Syria to the capital arrived with his team. The few maintenance workers who showed up for work huddled around Mai Hamza al-Ahmed, eager to learn what will happen next. They quickly unloaded all the complaints they had been too afraid to express during the rule of President Bashar Assad, which now, inconceivably, is over. They told the bearded fighter they were denied promotions and perks in favor of pro-Assad favorites, and that bosses threatened them with prison for working too slowly. They warned of hardcore Assad supporters among airport staff, ready to return whenever the facility reopens. As Al-Ahmed tried to reassure them, Osama Najm, an engineer, announced: "This is the first time we talk."This was the first week of Syria's transformation after Assad's unexpected fall.Rebels, suddenly in charge, met a population bursting with

DAMASCUS. At Damascus' emotions: excitement at new freedoms; apart by war, former prisoners are international airport, the new head of grief over years of repression; and traumatized by the brutalities they hopes, expectations and worries about the future. Some were overwhelmed to the point of tears. The transition has been surprisingly smooth. Reports of



reprisals, revenge killings and sectarian violence have been minimal. Looting and destruction have been quickly contained, insurgent fighters disciplined. On Saturday, people went about their lives as usual in the capital. Damascus. Only a single van of fighters was seen. There are a million ways it could go wrong. The country is broken and isolated after five decades of Assad family rule. Families have been torn

suffered, tens of thousands of detainees remain missing. The economy is wrecked, poverty is widespread, inflation and unemployment are high. Corruption seeps through daily life.

But in this moment of flux, many are ready to feel out the way ahead. At the airport, al-Ahmed told the staffers: "The new path will have challenges, but that is why we have said Syria is for all and we all have to cooperate."

The rebels have so far said all the right things, Najm said. "But we will not be silent about anything wrong again."

Idlib comes to DamascusAt a torched police station, pictures of Assad were torn down and files destroyed after insurgents entered the city Dec. 8. All Assad-era police and security personnel have vanished. On Saturday, the building was staffed by 10 men serving in the police force of the rebels' de facto "salvation government," which for years governed the rebel enclave of Idlib in Syria's northwest.

Ousted PM Sheikh Hasina involved in enforced disappearance: Bangladesh commission

DHAKA. An inquiry commission set up by the interim government in Bangladesh has said that it found evidence implicating deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and top-ranking military and police officials The ex-military and police officers are on the from her regime in alleged incidents of enforced disappearance.

The five-member Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances submitted an interim report titled "Unfolding The Truth" to Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on Saturday. The commission estimated that there would be more than 3,500 enforced disappearances.

'The commission has found evidence of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's involvement as the instructor in the incidents of enforced disappearance," the press wing of the office of Chief Adviser said in a statement on Saturday night. It said the deposed premier's defence adviser Major General (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, former director general of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre and sacked Major General Ziaul

Ahsanand senior police officers Monirul Islam and Mohammad Harun-Or-Rashid and several other senior officials were found to be involved in those incidents.

run, mostly believed to be abroad since the ouster of Hasina's Awami League regime on August 5 following a student-led uprising.According to the statement, retired Supreme Court judge Mainul Islam Chowdhury, the chairman of the commission, told Yunus that during investigations they found a "systematic design" that allowed incidents of enforced disappearances to go undetected.

Individuals carrying out enforced disappearance or extrajudicial killing (even) lacked knowledge about victims," Chowdhury said. The report said the police's elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), which draws men from the Army, Navy, Air Force, regular police and other law enforcement agencies had collaborated with each other to pick up, torture and keep victims in detention and



deliberately segmented the operations. The commission simultaneously proposed the abolition of the RAB alongside scrapping or thoroughly amending the Anti-Terrorism

Rights activist and commission member Sajjad Hossain said they recorded 1,676 complaints of enforced disappearances and, so far, have examined 758 of them.Of these, 200 people or 27 per cent of the victims never returned while those who returned were mostly shown on records as arrested. Besides the chairman, the commission comprises Justice Farid

Ahmed Shibli, rights activist Nur Khan, private BRAC University teacher Nabila Îdris and rights activist Sajjad Hossain.

At a press conference earlier, the commission

announced that they had found eight secret detention centres in Dhaka and its outskirts. The panel chairman on Saturday informed Yunus that they would deliver another interim report in March and would require at least another year to complete the scrutiny of all allegations they had received."You are doing a really very important job. We are ready to give you all kinds of support that you need," Yunus was quoted as saying.TV channels and social media carried interviews with several victims of the alleged enforced disappearance, including former military officers and opposition activists who were active in opposing Hasina's regime. While receiving the report yesterday, Yunus said he would visit some of the joint interrogation cells and secret detention centres as he wanted first-hand knowledge about the sufferings of the victims.

CHENNAI. Finding the judgment of the trial court to be "perverse", the Madras HC has reversed the acquittal of seven persons and sentenced them to double life imprisonment in a murder case. Holding that the prosecution has proved the charges beyond doubt, the bench sentenced Ramesh, Pandu alias Pandurangan, Sathish alias Sathishkumar, Prakash, Suresh, Ravi alias Pillakka Ravi and Kutti alias Dillibabu to double life imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 1,000 each for criminal conspiracy and murder.Ramesh, Prakash, Pandurangan and Sathish are brothers. The seven were also sentenced to six months imprisonment under Section 147, one year under Section 148 and five months under Section 448 r/w 149 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for rioting with deadly weapons and trespassing into a house. However, the bench ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

The bench also confirmed the acquittal of Mariamma and Chitra who were the convicts' relatives. One of the accused, Siva, passed away while the court split up the case against Sekar alias Dhanasekar who had gone absconding.

The orders were passed on the appeals filed by the prosecution and the mother of the victim Siva, an autorickshaw driver, who was hacked to death by the accused along with others under the Ashok Nagar police station limits on June 3, 2012, due to previous enmity. As many as 11 persons, including the convicted seven men, had assaulted him with weapons while he was inside his house before dragging him on to the road where they attacked him, inflicting 33 cut injuries on vital parts of his body. The XIX Additional Sessions Court acquitted them on April 26, 2018, and "erroneously disbelieved" the eyewitness account of the wife and mother of the victim, the bench said.

of seven in murder case, of seven in murder case, them double life term. Tamil Nadu: Fields will be inspected for crop damage soon, says Minister Panneerselvam

CUDDALORE. Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister MRK Panneerselvam inspected floodaffected areas in Kattumannarkoil and Kumaratchi regions and interacted with the farmers on Saturday. The minister reviewed the water discharge levels from the Velliyankal regulator near Lalpet, Kattumannarkoil, along with Public Works Department (PWD) senior officials. He also inquired with agriculture department officials about crop damage. Farmers said that crops like paddy and groundnuts were severely damaged due to waterlogging. Addressing the press,

the minister said, "Rainwater, along with overflow from the Veeranam Lake maintained at a level of 45 feet, caused extensive flooding in our regions. Residential areas were submerged, and 325 families were According to officials, Veeranam Lake evacuated and accommodated in relief camps where food is being provided.""The discharge of surplus water from Veeranam Lake has flooded agricultural fields in Kattumannarkoil, Kumaratchi, Keerapalayam, and other areas. Once the water recedes, an assessment of the damage will be conducted. Across Tamil Nadu, approximately 3.59 lakh hectares of crops, including paddy, groundnuts, casuarina, and Mettur Dam level at 117 feet, public safety horticultural crops, have been damaged due to the recent rains," he said.

Cuddalore District Collector Sibi Adhithya Senthil Kumar, MLA M Sinthanaiselvan, Chidambaram with PWD officials Ghandharuban and Assistant Engineer Kolanjinathan, Agriculture Department Joint Director Jebakumar Kennedy, and local officials accompanied the minister.

receives 15,376 cubic feet of water per second through Sengal Odai, Vennanguzhi, and Pappakudi streams. Water is being discharged at 15,230 cubic feet per second through the Velliyankal regulator and 2,100 cubic feet per second through the Sethiyathope dam. The lake's total capacity is 47.50 feet, of which 46.59 feet is currently filled.

advisory issued

PWD Assistant Engineer Kolanjinathan of the Keezhanai Kollidam basin issued a press release stating that the water level at Mettur Dam reached 117.57 feet on Friday. With a significant inflow, 35,000 cubic feet of surplus water is being released into the Cauvery River. This may increase to 60,000 cubic feet, necessitating safety measures for residents along low-lying areas near Kollidam.The advisory warned against entering or crossing the Kollidam River due to the presence of crocodiles. Residents were asked to move to safer locations to ensure the protection of lives and property.

NLCIL deploys industrial pumps for flood relief

Neyveli Lignite Corporation India

Limited (NLCIL) has deployed industrial pumps to aid flood relief efforts in Cuddalore following a week of heavy rainfall.According to a press statement from NLCIL, the deployment was initiated at the request of the district administration. "We have deployed two industrial pumps of 15 HP and 25 HP respectively along with necessary equipment and manpower to the severely affected areas," the statement read. The dewatering activity has been focused on areas such as KN Pettai, which were among the worst affected, and extended to other locations in the district. The pumps, usually utilised in NLCIL lignite mines, have highcapacity output and are designed.

Cops rescue kidnapped 10-monthold boy in Andhra Pradesh

ONGOLE. Prakasam police swiftly resolved a kidnapping case, rescuing a 10-month-old boy hours after receiving a complaint on Saturday. District SPAR Damodar handed the child over to his parents at his office that evening. The boy's parents, Pradeep and Urvasi, residents of Pragathi Nagar Colony in Ongole, originally from Odisha, lodged a complaint at Taluk police station around 3 pm on Friday. Urvasi had left her 10-month-old son in the care of Daya Mani, a domestic worker from a neighbouring house, while she went to take a bath. When she returned, she discovered both Daya Mani and her belongings were missing. Suspecting foul play, Urvasi informed her husband.SP Damodar instructed Ongole Deputy SP R Srinivasa Rao to form five special teams to trace the child. The teams, led by inspectors from Ongole Town, Taluk, Rural, and Singarayakonda police stations, circulated photographs of the child and the suspect through WhatsApp groups, local police networks, and railway authorities. Acting on a lead, officers located the abandoned child in a mango orchard in Gudluru mandal. The suspects, Manikantha and Daya Mani, fled before police arrived.SP Damodar

Tattoos, tailor's sticker clues to crack Odisha woman's murder case

CUTTACK. Ascertaining the identity of the woman, who was brutally murdered and abandoned on the banks of Kathajodi river near Paramhansa within Kandarpur police limits here on Thursday night, has posed a big challenge for the police. City DCP Jagmohan Meena on Saturday said the murderer had disfigured the face of the

victim and the only clues that the police have till now are the four tattoos on the woman's body and the blood-stained clothes seized from the spot. The clothes are presumed to be of the killer. The trouser has a sticker on 'New Star Tailors' on it. The tailor shop is being detected as it could provide some information on the customer, he said."However, the

priority is to identify the deceased first after which the investigation will proceed. Multiple police teams have been formed which are working on verifying the CCTV footages installed in the nearby areas, collection of data on any missing woman from the police stations of bordering districts, analysing the evidence through scientific intelligence, detection of the tailor shop besides enquiring about the deceased woman from the

Ashram and disciples of Baba Balia," he said.

A team from cyber cell is also collecting evidence by adopting artificial intelligence. The deceased's fingerprints have been collected. If necessary, the fingerprints will be matched with Aadhaar with due permission from the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) for identification of the

> deceased. Besides, the molar teeth of the deceased have also been collected and preserved for DNA test if required, informed the DCP.

The body of the deceased woman believed to be around 35-40 years in age was found lying on the Kathajodi river bank on Friday morning. There were deep cut injuries on her

neck and face. While the deceased's right hand was tattooed with 'Om Baba Balia' in Odia and MATA in English, 'PITA' KPSM had been inked in English on her left hand. Beside a chapad (chopper), a blood-stained trouser and shirt of a male person, a polythene bag containing a Junior Horlicks bottle, frock of a one to two-year-old baby girl, brush, tongue cleaner and some gutkha pouches were also found lying near the body.

Theyyam community protests show in UAE

KANNUR. Renowned theyyam artist E P Narayanan Peruvannan has been barred from performing the sacred ritual following his refusal to apologise for a controversial performance in Ajman, UAE, last month. The performance had sparked a heated debate among theyyam practitioners and temple committees over perceived violations of customs and rituals.

A group of 13 artists, including Narayanan Peruvannan, staged the main theyyams of north Malabar, including Kadankottu Makkavum Makkalum, Vishnumoorthy, Gulikan, and Sasthappan on November 24 at a sports club in Ajman, an act that drew sharp criticism from sections of the theyyam community. Many accused the artists of disrespecting the sanctity of the ritual, leading to their collective ban from performing in theyyam sacred groves, or kavus, for a year. The State Malayan Community Development Association wrote to Chirakkal Kovilakam, urging it to revoke the ceremonial status granted to the artists. The association emphasised that theyyam artists swear an oath to



and practices."Some individuals are violating these vows by performing theyyam on public stages, streets, and even in luxury hotels," the letter said. "We request that the Kovilakam reclaim their ceremonial rings and restore the sanctity of these rituals."

The Valapattanam Muchilottukavu Bhagavathy temple, where Narayanan Peruvannan traditionally performs the Muchilottu Bhagavathy Kolam, has decided to replace him this year."Narayanan Peruvannan was always our first choice, but we must adhere to customs. This year, we selected another koladhari (theyyam performer)," Shaji, a temple committee member, said.Meanwhile,

Narayanan Peruvannan said he hasn't apologised for his actions. "We followed all the rituals and customs before performing at Ajman," he told.

While Narayanan Peruvannan, a Padma Shri awardee, remains defiant, stating that all rituals were adhered to before the Ajman performance, some of his co-artists have expressed regret. "We performed Theyyakolam under the

impression that it was suitable for houses and fields during festivals," said Koladhari Prasoon at a press meet in Kannur.

"We now realise that our actions have caused pain to believers. We deeply regret the inconvenience and assure the community that this will not happen again."Venu Ayyankavu, district president of the Vishnumurthy Wayanad Kulavan Velayappadu Paripalana Sangham, criticised the commercialisation of theyyam."Sacred kolams meant for tharavadu moolasthanams (ancestral shrines) and kavus were performed abroad, making devotees feel betraved," he said.

'Bless and Bliss' for orphan children in Kurnool

of Kurnool city, a small yet extraordinary endeavour has become a haven of hope for over 300 orphaned, abandoned, and impoverished children. At the heart of this venture are two postgraduate sisters, Blessy and Blissy, who have devoted their lives to running the Home of Hope orphanage, carrying forward the mission of their late

father, K Raja Bhushanam. The orphanage, established in 2010 under the registered name Compassion Society, was the brainchild of Raja Bhushanam and his wife MMH Prameela Devi, who envisioned a sanctuary for destitute children. Located near G Pulla Reddy Engineering College on the way to Jagannatha Gattu, the orphanage has separate accommodation for boys and girls with a family-like atmosphere.When their father died of COVID, Blessy and Blissy stepped in with unyielding determination to preserve his



dream. Guided by their mother, who shares their spirit of service, the sisters have expanded the home's activities. "From the beginning, we wanted to create a space where these children could feel loved and valued, like they are part of a real family," said Blessy.Beyond food and shelter, Home of Hope offers education, vocational training, and emotional support to the inmates, shaping their futures with a sense of dignity and self-reliance. The home's vocational programmes like tailoring and crafts equip children with essential skills, preparing them for independent lives when they turn 18.

far beyond its four walls. Over the years, it has celebrated the marriages of at least five young women, ensuring they begin BERHAMPUR. Even as paddy procurement in Ganjam is scheduled their new life journey with love, dignity, and security. "We feel that serving orphans is a gift from God. Every day, we get the opportunity to touch lives and make a lasting impact," shared Blissy.

The sisters' commitment is reflected in the smiles and stories of the children they've nurtured. Priya (name changed), a beneficiary, recalled, "I will never forget the day I walked down the aisle. This home gave me a family and helped me pursue my dreams. Without Home of Hope, I wouldn't be where I am today."B Satish, who worked as the home's in-charge for six years, noted, "We treat them as our own children. We ensure they are emotionally, socially, and financially ready before they step into the world.'

Damaged paddy due to untimely rain affecting farmers ahead of purchase in Odisha's Ganjam

to begin in a few days, farmers of the district are in dire straits as most of their stock have been rendered damaged due to unseasonal rain. Sources said paddy cultivation in the district was initially affected by inadequate rains compelling most farmers to leave their land barren. However, just as it started picking up pace, unseasonal rains shattered farmers' hopes of reaping a bounty harvest. Now owing to the unseasonal downpour, most paddy stock have

been left discoloured putting farmers in a tight spot. Apprehending that they might incur heavy losses if their stocks aren't sold, farmers have appealed the government to relax the fair average quality (FAQ) norms fixed for sale of the produce. Secretary of Rushikulya Rayat Mahasabha Simanchal Nahak said over 1,000 hectare of standing paddy crop in at least 11 blocks have been damaged due to untimely rain. "If the norms are



not relaxed, farmers would have to sustain severe losses," he added.

Blaming the district administration for its alleged apathy in streamlining the procurement process, Nahak said around 30,000 farmers have failed to register themselves to sell their stock this procurement season, forcing them to opt for distress sale. Another reason for the same, he said, was the new norms set by the government to determine FAQ Chief district agriculture officer (CDAO) RN Panda said all possible measures have been taken to make the procurement process smooth. "Over 30 per cent paddy had been harvested before rain and the remaining would be completed in a fortnight. The exact extent of damage due to unseasonal rain can be determined after cropcutting and reviewing insurance claims. Affected farmers would be

paid compensation as per norms," he

added. Paddy procurement in the district is scheduled to begin from December 23. While 365 primary agriculture cooperative societies (PACS) along with 117 women self-help groups (WSHGs) and one pani panchayat has been engaged in the procurement process, one nodal officer has been entrusted to each purchase centre and a supervisor allotted to four to five such centres to oversee the procurement process.

Country's largest solar-electric boat soon to host night tourism cruises in Kochi

Services to start in new year with a refurbished 'Indra' having Kudumbashr ee food counter

KOCHI. Ring in the New Year, the visitors could hop on to the country's largest solar-electric boat and experience a thrilling ride under the night skies while tuning in to live music and dancing under the stars. With its day trips enjoying high patronage, the State Water Transport Department (SWTD) is all set to start night tourism cruises on the Kochi backwaters using the solar vessel 'Indra'. The 100-seat airconditioned double-decker vessel, exclusively for tourist voyages, boasts of a specially-made "open spaced" upper deck, where

tourists can enjoy the alluring scenery of the backwaters, along with a food counter and on-board entertainment facilities."We've refurbished the boat with LED and 'warm lights' to have that splendid look in the night. According to our plan, the night trip will start at 7pm and conclude by 9.30 - 10pm. Minister K B Ganesh Kumar will announce the service soon, which will be operated from New Year onwards," said a senior SWTD official.The Rs 3.5-crore boat, two trips daily at 11am and 4pm, each three hours long. As many as

10,570 visitors have already travelled in the solar cruise vessel as the revenue aggregated over Rs 24 lakh, clocking an average monthly revenue of Rs 4 lakh. "There is a huge demand for the sunset trip as the vessel is among the few tourist services that goes up to the mouth of the sea. Since it operates on solar energy, the cost of operations will be much less. More importantly, there will not be any carbon or noise pollution," the official said.

launched on March 31, operates While the private vessels conduct late evening trips, the same will only be one-hour rides and not

cover the distance as much as Indra."We're getting a lot of enquiries, and hence decided to introduce the night cruise trips," he pointed out. Starting from Ernakulam boat jetty, the vessel sails to Bolgatty Palace, Vallarpadam, Container Terminal, Vypeen, Kamalakadavu, Fort Kochi and the sea mouth before returning to Marine Drive via Willingdon Island. The ticket costs Rs 300 per head for adults and Rs 150 per child. The SWTD has tied up with Kudumbashree to provide the on-board food counter facility.



How AI skills will drive economic growth in 2025

With artificial intelligence poised to reshape industries worldwide, a paradox is emerging. Despite a growing demand for people with the knowledge to leverage the technology's potential, AI-related skills remain in short supply.The scarcity of AI-related skills — from proficiency in machine learning, prompt engineering and data science to an understanding of Al's ethical implications — is becoming a major obstacle in deploying the technology effectively. In one recent report, 47 per cent of executives say their employees lack the necessary skills. This will affect companies' ability to move AI projects from conception to implementation. A 2023 report from the World Economic Forum finds that "six in 10 workers will require training before 2027, but only half of workers are seen to have access to adequate training opportunities today."This gap in skills bodes ill not only for individual career growth, but also for economic growth more broadly. Capitalising on the opportunities that AI presents will require updated approaches to education and training. In the coming year, educational and vocational institutions will likely place a much greater emphasis on teaching AI ethics skills, offer flexible lifelong learning and infuse AI into their offerings to be more competitive.

AI ethics skills will become a core concern — and for good reason. In the space of just a few years, generative AI has become available to anyone with a computer and an internet connection. For employers and their information technology (IT) departments, this raises the problem of "shadow AI," or unsanctioned use of generative AI by employees. It could expose companies to a wide range of security, compliance, and reputational risks. In addition, the workforce will need AI ethics skills to manage new AI agents: tools that can automate complex tasks that would otherwise require human resources.

Shadow and agentic AI both demand new guardrails to help users protect AI applications based on responsible AI practices. To this end, education providers will begin to emphasise training on the fundamentals of AI explainability, fairness, robustness, transparency and privacy. Without a basic understanding of how AI models generate their output, for example, those responsible for protecting data or controlling autonomous systems will be ill-equipped for the task.

With AI and other new technologies evolving rapidly, lifelong learning will become the new normal. The process can be divided into developing skills that meet immediate needs, anticipate future needs and furnish always-indemand expertise. Many traditional roles within an organisation will soon change. For example, some employees who currently work independently (who don't manage other people) may join new types of teams in which humans manage AI agents. And to prepare them for this fundamental change, demand for online courses and digital credentials in AI-related fields like natural language processing and machine learning will likely increase. Moreover, the future use of quantum computing will continue to drive the need for new skills. And the steady rise in the number and variety of cyberattacks — such as "harvest now and decrypt later" (HNDL) hacks — underscores the importance of up-to-date cybersecurity skills. That is why our own organisation is working with community colleges across four US states to offer a new cybersecurity certificate that will prepare students for in-demand roles across the workforce. Similarly, our collaborations with Singapore Polytechnic and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the US provide free training in AI to young learners. And while this process may begin in the classroom, we can also expect to see more opportunities for upskilling as the relevant technologies evolve. For anyone who wants to stay competitive in the job market, lifelong learning has become indispensable.

India learning to play it both ways

THE GREAT GAME: In Afghanistan and Bangladesh, India's hyper-realist foreign policy is the mantra for our times

FOREIGN Secretary Vikrim Misri's measured remarks on his visit to Bangladesh with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs in Delhi this week is a welcome return to the realistic middle ground for which India's foreign policy has been well known.Most interestingly, Misri addressed the Sheikh Hasina question with repeatedly, talk to Khaleda Zia and to the rest of the full forthrightness. He was speaking to his MPs, but, no doubt, the message was being read and heard in Dhaka equally carefully. The result was a fine balance, an adroit defence of a friend of whom you have not fully approved in the past nor in the present circumstances, but cannot fully wash your hands of.

Misri said Hasina was using "private communication devices" — sometimes called a phone or an ipad or a computer, via any number of service providers — to make the highly critical comments that she had recently done on the Bangladesh interim government and its chief adviser Muhammed Yunus as well as Dhaka's lack of protection of the minority Hindu community in Bangladesh. Misri never once said whether India approved of what Hasina was saying. He pointed out that India's ties with Dhaka were not dependent on a "single political party" but focused on the "people of Bangladesh."

So, let's read between the not-so-finelydrawn lines. India, Misri was clearly saying, was ready to move on from its old tie with Hasina and try to restore a measure of normalcy with Naya Bangladesh after all, it's not as if Delhi has not dealt with not-so-friendly governments in its eastern neighbour before. Ask Ronen Sen,

the old ambassador with a penchant for history, about the time when Mujibur Rahman, Hasina's father, was assassinated that late night or early morning, depending on your sleep cycle, back in 1975, and why such a brutal event, if not an assassination, was waiting to happen. Ask the other ageing diplomat with a razor-sharp mind, Deb Mukharji, about his interactions with Hasina and Khaleda Zia and why the two women who ran the country between them for decades detested each other with such full-blown certainty, and why the August 4 "uprising" or "debacle", depending on how you saw it, was inevitable.

Let's move on. Misri was telling Dhaka, even as he spoke to the Indian parliamentarians in Delhi. It's been an ugly episode, ugly for us, too. Misri will

never say this, nor will any serving Indian diplomat, but the fact remains that when India supported Hasina in her last victory this January as well as the last time she won, in January 2019, it had not-so-

repeatedly, talk to Khaleda Zia and to the rest of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, ask them to participate in the elections, this is not a one-party state. Delhi's advice to Mujib's daughter was as much for herself, for the people of Bangladesh, whose loyalties were divided down the middle



between the Awami League and the BNP, as for the safety and security of its own north-eastern states, several of which share the more than 4,000-km-long boundary between them. India's new tie with Bangladesh is as interesting as the one it is building with the Afghan Taliban. Only a few weeks ago, senior Indian diplomat JP Singh travelled again to Kabul to meet the Taliban Defence Minister, Mullah Yaqoob — who also happens to be Mullah Omar's son. The meeting set off alarm bells in several parts of the neighbourhood, notably Pakistan.

Some Americans wondered if Delhi was making nice with the bad guys — although it is more than likely that the Deep States in India as well as in the US were fully on board with the move. Remember that the Taliban have not touched one brick of the US embassy in Kabul since the Americans fled two years ago; certainly, all sides are waiting for another round of the great game. Certainly, the Russians are obliging by removing the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan from their list of banned entities.

You might wonder about Delhi's hyper-realism, and what exactly is going on. You might ask yourself: is it actually true that India wants to be friends with a regime that has banned women from singing, or girls from studying in schools beyond Class VI and kept most other human rights in abeyance? The fact is that India is taking a leaf out of the book the big powers have read and torn up, chapter by chapter,

whenever they felt like it. The simple answer is that India may be finally learning to play it both ways. To support the ghoulish Taliban regime because it helps protect India's northern border once removed — it is Pakistan that has a border, not India, of course — and because India hopes that a friendly Taliban could sometime in the future come to its aid in allowing Indian operatives to put pressure on Pakistan on its northern frontier.

As the year comes to an end, the interesting change in the Modi government's foreign policy in its third term is that has no special friends or enemies. (The one exception, of course, is Pakistan). The decision to end the fracas at the Line of Actual Control and strike a deal with the Chinese was taken with the full force of knowledge that a military standoff at high altitude was being undermined by a burgeoning imbalance in bilateral trade. Perhaps, the Russians helped — who knows.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to Moscow this week is as much a part of this hyper-realism as is the decision to cut a deal with the incoming Trump administration, whatever it takes. The last time around when Trump was in power, some arguments some as small as high tariffs around American chicken's legs, medical equipment and superexpensive Harley Davidson motorcycles — had threatened to overtake the relationship. This time around, Delhi is not about to strike the iron with things so small and silly. The moral of 2024 is also that power is not enough; it is the exercise of that power that is equally important. From Yunus' Bangladesh to the Raj Kapoor dynasts who recently met PM Modi, the message is simple. Only if you stand long enough can you be counted.

Dishonourable

Allahabad HC judge has done a big disservice

ONLY a strong institutional response will serve the cause of justice following the communally charged remarks by a judge of the Allahabad High Court. Demands have been put forth for an inquiry against Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav, suspension of his judicial work and even impeachment. The Supreme Court has sought details of the controversial speech amid protests that this brazen violation of the code of conduct casts doubts on the judiciary's independence and neutrality. Addressing an event organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad on the Uniform Civil Code, Justice Yadav said the country would function as per the wishes of the majority. Replete with communal slurs, his speech also alluded to the media attention it would generate. A line has been crossed, and what's worse, all too knowingly. Impartiality is the cornerstone of the Constitution and the rule of law. An individual who has



taken oath to uphold these principles making an exhibition

of his prejudices does a huge disservice to both his constitutional role and the judicial system. The impact is not confined to communal unrest; it erodes public faith in the judiciary's integrity. A denial or a rebuttable will not suffice. There must be consequences. The top court, the expectation is, will send a firm message on what is not acceptable.

A Supreme Court Bench's observations after its suo motu cognisance of objectionable remarks by a Karnataka High Court judge need reiteration. The perception of justice to every segment of society, it said, was as important as the rendition of justice. It was intrinsic for judges to be aware of their own predispositions, it noted, because it was only on the basis of such awareness that they could remain truly faithful to deliver objective and

fair justice. Hear, hear, Justice Yadav.

Why a pandemic treaty is still hanging fire

National capacity for an early detection and comprehensive swift responses to novel diseases are the keys to minimising the impact of future pandemics.

THE havoc caused, the deaths and the social chaos witnessed during the Covid-19 pandemic are gradually fading from public memory. This ought not be. That pandemic was neither the first such health emergency nor will it be the last one that has the potential to engulf the entire world. Any extraordinary event which constitutes a public health risk through the international spread of disease and requires a coordinated international response, implies a situation that is serious, sudden, unusual or unexpected. Since 2007, WHO has officially declared seven such public health emergencies of international concern. These were the influenza pandemic (2009), Ebola (2013-2015, and 2018-2020), poliomyelitis (2014 to present), Zika (2016), Covid-19 pandemic (2020) and mpox (2022 and 2024). Given their frequency and regularity of occurrence, it can be logically surmised that the next pandemic is knocking at our doors. The question is when it will appear with a potential to repeat or exceed the magnitude of previous pandemics. What causes a pandemic? Most pandemics during the current millennium are caused by viruses of animal origin which have originated from wildlife where millions of viruses continue to circulate. Most of these viruses are transported by bats from wildlife into nearby animal and human habitation thus kicking an epidemiological cascade from local outbreak to massive epidemics and a possible pandemic. The degradation of the environment, especially deforestation, enhances the proximity of wildlife to domestic animals and human habitation thus enhancing the risk of emergence and transmission of novel viruses.Recognising that these emergencies cannot be prevented but, with appropriate preparedness, can result in low-risk events for communities, WHO coordinated the development and promulgation of an instrument-based framework. The

binding treaty between 193 member countries, and calls upon countries to share information on public health events in a transparent manner and build their national core capacity for the prevention, detection, and response to health emergencies. What progress has been made to strengthen national core capacities? According to self-assessment in 2022, India scored 85 per cent against the global average of 66 per cent. However, the Global Health Security Index puts India at No 66 amongst 195 countries with a score of 42.8 against a global average of 28.4. According to this Global Health Security Index all countries remain dangerously unprepared for future epidemic and pandemic threats, including threats potentially more devastating than Covid-19, and no country is fully prepared for future pandemic or epidemic threats. There is unquestionable need for an urgent and comprehensive enhancement of India's capacity in alignment with international health regulations. Learning from the Covid-19 pandemic, the need for a comprehensive national public health law has been acutely felt.

A recent NITI Aayog document on future pandemics has recommended the enactment of the Public Health Emergency Management Act to facilitate the response to any public health crisis including a holistic approach to health management, prevention, control and response. At the global level, a pandemic treaty is hanging fire and being negotiated for last two years among 194 WHO member countries, but consensus remains elusive. The idea is to increase collaboration before and during pandemics after acknowledged failures during Covid-

International Health Regulation of 2005 is a legally Given the importance of multisectoral approach, the



establishment of One Health Mission at the highest technical level in India augurs well. Implementation of this ambitious Mission has the potential to bring together all sectors and catalyse convergence for meeting common national objectives. India has started strengthening its infrastructure. Major challenges include strengthening of microbiological laboratories which are critical for early diagnosis and surveillance.

Progress has been made in surveillance through a webbased Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme that detects an average of 40-50 outbreaks every week. This is indicative of the national burden of infectious diseases. A strong and battle-ready epidemiological capacity

especially trained workforce through the India epidemic intelligence service and field epidemiology training programme need to be expanded to cater to the urgent need for conducting effective outbreak investigation and taking action locally. We also need to build capacity for national surveillance and detection of novel pathogens from animals and wildlife. The national surveillance programme should facilitate community and hospital data to flow seamlessly into a unified data portal for data access and sharing across all relevant sectors for mounting appropriate interventions. An efficient integrated surveillance at human-animal-wildlife interface is critical for early detection of such unusual events. There is a need to develop a country-specific forecasting and prediction modelling system by harnessing expertise available in nonhealth institutions of excellence. Vaccines are the most cost-

effective public health interventions. It was incredible how Indian scientists, industry and regulators rose to the occasion and developed and manufactured efficacious Covid-19 vaccines in a short period. Administering 2.2 billion doses to more than 1 billion people is indeed commendable. For new vaccines, diagnostics and medicines to combat future health emergencies, a focused National Mission on therapeutics and novel drug development should be established with a 100-day target to develop, produce and make these fit for use in the communities through networking of pharmaceutical industry, research institutes and regulatory authorities







- Add the grated paneer, cucumber and garam masala powder.

Cook for a minute or two on low-

medium flame. Garnish with coriander leaves and

> switch off the flame. - Heat a tawa over medium flame.

- Warm the chapati (or tortillas).

- Add some of the paneer

vegetable mixture.

- Roll the chapati tightly. - Serve at once.

Spinach Cheese Pizza

A simple and delicious pizza that can be served for lunch or dinner.

Ingredients

Pizza Base - 1 (available readymade or use this pizza dough recipe), Onion - 1, big, finely chopped, Spinach - 1/2 bunch (or 1 small bunch), cleaned, washed, chopped, Parsley - 1/2 cup, finely chopped + extra to garnish, Cheddar Cheese - 1/4 cup, grated, Red Chilli Flakes - as per taste + extra to garnish, Cumin Seeds - 1 tsp, Olive Oil -3 tsp, Pepper Powder as per taste, Salt - a small pinch (optional), Tomato Sauce or Pizza Sauce to spread

Optional Ingredients

5 Healthy JUMCh

Try out from our list of quick and healthy breakfast/tiffin box options that are quick to make and easy to carry.

Egg Salad Sandwich

A healthy and delicious breakfast dish for kids and adults alike. These sandwiches are simple and easy to make too.

Ingredients

Bread Slices - 4, Eggs - 2, hard-boiled, finely chopped, Mayonnaise (or Butter) - 4 tsp, Red Chilli Flakes - 1/2 tsp, Salt as per taste, Pepper Powder as per taste, Ghee as required

Optional

Tomato - 1, sliced

Spring Onions - 1/4 cup, finely chopped Red Onion - 1, sliced

Lettuce Leaves - few, chopped Method

Mix the eggs, mayonnaise, red chilli flakes, salt and pepper powder in a bowl.

Spread this on 2 bread slices.

Top up with the tomato, spring onions, red onion and lettuce leaves.

Cover with the remaining slices. Heat a tawa over low flame.

Place the sandwiches and apply little ghee around the edges.

Cook for 30 seconds on each side and

remove. Serve with french fries.

Chicken Noodle Stir-Fry

A simple and delicious meal, this easy to make stir-fry with chicken, noodles and vegetables is ideal for lunch or dinner.

Ingredients

Chicken Fillets - 200 gms, finely sliced, fat trimmed, Plain Noodles - 200 gms, Oil - 1 1/2 tsp Onion - 1, small, finely sliced, Garlic - 1 clove, finely sliced, Ginger - 1 cm piece, grated, Sweet Chilli Sauce - 2 tblsp (recipe here), Fish Sauce - 3 tsp, Coriander Leaves - 1/4 cup, chopped, Green Peas - 2 to 3 tblsp, shelled, boiled

Optional

Spring Onions - 2, chopped, Button Mushrooms - 1, chopped, Carrots - 2 tblsp, chopped, Capsicum - 2 tblsp, chopped, Red Chilli Flakes - 1/2 tsp, Peanuts - 3 tsp, crushed, Lettuce - few, shredded

Method

- Cook the noodles as per packet instructions (or in a pan of slightly salted water for 4 to 5 minutes).

- Stir once and drain well.
- Keep aside. - Heat oil in a pan ove medium flame.
- Saute the onions for a minute or until soft.
- Add the ginger, garlic and cook for 20 seconds. - Add the chicken and cook for 5 minutes or until cooked.
- Add the peas, carrots, spring onions, mushrooms, capsicum, red chilli flakes, lettuce, chilli sauce, fish sauce, noodles and stir well.
- Stir-fry for 2 to 3 minutes. - Add the coriander leaves and peanuts. Stir again.
- Serve warm.

Egg Noodles **Ingredients**

Plain Noodles - 1 packet, boiled as per packet instructions, Eggs - 4, Cabbage - 1 cup, finely chopped, Carrot - 1/2 cup, grated, Beans - 1/2 cup, finely chopped, Onions - 1 cup, finely sliced, Green Chillies - 2, sliced lengthwise, Black Pepper Powder - 1/2 tsp, Ajinomoto - as required, Ginger Garlic Paste - 1 tsp, Coriander Leaves - handful, chopped, Salt as per taste, Oil

box recipes for

- Heat oil in a pan over medium flame.

- Add the ginger garlic paste and fry for 20 to 30 seconds.

- Saute the onions, beans and green chillies for a minute or two.

- Add the cabbage, salt, pepper powder and ajinomoto.

- Stir-fry for a minute.

- Add the boiled noodles and break the eggs into the pan.

- Mix well and cook for 2 minutes.

- Garnish with coriander leaves. - Serve hot.

Veg Paneer Roll

This easy to make and delicious Veg Paneer Roll makes for a perfect lunch, evening snack or a light dinner. Made with grated paneer and vegetables cooked in spices and then wrapped in a chapati (or a tortilla), they are a popular street food item these days.

Ingredients

Chapati (or Tortilla) - 3 to 4, Paneer - 3 tblsp, grated, Carrot - 2 tblsp, finely chopped or sliced, Capsicum - 1, small, chopped, Cucumber - 2 tblsp, chopped (optional), Onion - 1, small, chopped, Green Chilli - 1, small, finely chopped, Ginger Garlic Paste - 1 tsp, Tomato - 1, small, finely chopped, Red Chilli Powder - 1/2 tsp, Garam Masala Powder - 1/2 tsp, Cumin Seeds - 1/4 tsp, Saunf - a pinch Curry Powder - 1/4 tsp, Coriander Leaves - handful, chopped, Salt as

per taste, Oil - 2 tsp

Method - Heat oil in a pan over medium flame.

- Fry the saunf and cumin seeds for 30 seconds.
- Add the onions and green chillies.
- Saute for a minute or until onions turn light
- Add the ginger garlic paste and stir well for
- Add the capsicums, carrots and saute for another minute.
- Add the tomatoes and cook for one more salt and red chilli flakes
- Stir well.

30 to 40 seconds.

Tomatoes - 1/2 cup, chopped (or use sundried tomatoes), Mushrooms - 1/4 cup, chopped

Method

- Heat oil in a nonstick pan over medium flame.

- Saute the onions until golden.

- Add the spinach and cook for 3 to 4 minutes or until all moisture has evaporated and the leaves are wilted.

- Remove and transfer to a bowl.

- Add parsley and mix well.

- Sprinkle pepper powder, cumin seeds,

- Add 2 to 3 tsp of the tomato sauce on the

pizza base and spread evenly.

- Place 2 to 3 tblsp of the spinach mixture and spread well.

Sweet Potatoes More than superfood!

X-man: Apocalypse star Olivia Munn recently revealed on social media the secret behind the radical change in her appearance. She said having one roasted Japanese potato (sweet potato) everyday is the reason behind her youthful skin." Originally grown in the Americas, sweet

potato is known to have been domesticated more than 8000 years ago. Sweet potatoes, because of their fibre dense composition have widely been used throughout the Indian subcontinent long periods.

dieticians recommend it in the weight content."

According to celebrity nutritionist Sandhya Gugnani, "Sweet potatoes are nutrition dense food. If you think because of its sweet taste, it should be shunned by people who avoid sugar; one must know that they actually help in lowering blood sugar because of their



as a fasting food that satiates hunger for low glycemic index. It is helpful in controlling blood pressure and prevents Precisely this is the reason why constipation because of the high fiber

Power packed super food

Good for the eyes: If you believe in the term 'superfood', sweet potatoes fit the bill perfectly. According to a recent research on African kids, it was found that sweet potatoes meet from 35% to 90% requirement of Vitamin A.

Anti-aueing and anti-cancer: Carotenoids present in sweet potatoes are said to have important anti-oxidant and anti-cancer properties. When passing through digestive tract, this fibrous tuber absorbs dangerous free radicals and heavy metals that might cause cancer.

Studies at Harvard University have proved that there is a reduction of more than 30 percent chance of having lung cancer in people eating foods rich in beta carotenoid. Prevent stress; control blood pressure, heart-

Rich in Vitamin B6, they have been proved to reduce the risk of cardiovascular ailments. They are rich in magnesium which is necessary for healthy artery, blood, bone, heart, muscle, and nerve function.

Potassium found in sweet potatoes helps in regulating heartbeat and nerve signals and also in relaxing muscle contractions, reducing swelling, and protecting and controlling the function of kidneys.

Energy rich: As the sugar found in sweet potatoes

- Add red chilli powder, curry powder and

- Originally grown in the Americas, sweet potato is known to have been domesticated more than 8000 years ago.
- Sweet potatoes, because of their fibre dense composition have widely been used throughout the Indian subcontinent as a fasting food that satiates hunger for long periods.

is slowly released in the blood stream, they are often recommended in diet of athletes and players and those who suffer from low blood pressure.

Healthiest cooking method

It is important to 'cook' sweet potatoes before consuming them for better absorption of nutrition.

Boiling: It is a recommended method as consuming boiled and mashed sweet potatoes helps in better assimilation of beta-carotene (vitamin A). In boiled form they have a lower glycemic index and hence is helpful in slow release of sugar in body.

Stir frying: Frying it with 3-4 gm of fat is actually helpful because the nutrients become more active and are easily absorbed by body. But ensure that you do not over do it.

Steaming and roasting: Steaming for 7-8 minutes is sufficient in making nutrients available.

The commonest way of having sweet potatoes is in roasted form because it tastes the best like this. Do not over roast it, and also avoid pouring too much vegetable oil as it may destroy nutrient composition.

When one must avoid it While diabetics and weight watchers can have it in measured quantities, individuals with already existing and untreated kidney or gallbladder problems should eat it only after consulting the physician. Sweet Potato Biscuits

Ingredients

Sweet Potatoes - 1 cup, cooked and mashed, Buttermilk - 1/4 cup, Maida (Plain Flour) - 1 1/2 cups, Light Brown Sugar - 3 tsp, Baking Powder - 1 1/2 tsp, Baking Soda - 1/4 tsp, Butter - 1/4 cup, unsalted Salt - 3/4 tsp

- Combine the maida, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Whisk well.

- Add the butter and mix until the mixture is

Whisk the mashed sweet potatoes and buttermilk in an another bowl.

- Add this to the flour mixture and mix well until the dough is sticky. - Sprinkle some flour on a flat surface and

knead the dough 4 to 5 times. - Roll it out to 1/2 to 3/4 inch thickness and cut the dough into 2 inch rounds.

- Place them on a baking tray lined with parchment paper.

Place the tray into a preheated oven at 225C/450F and bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove and cool.

- Store it in airtight container and serve as needed.

Techie Atul Subhash's estranged wife, in-laws arrested in suicide abetment case

▶Techie Atul Subhash's wife, Nikita Singhania, was arrested in Gurugram, while her mother and brother were detained in Prayagraj. The arrests come after the Bengaluru City Police filed a case of abetment to suicide against them.

New Delhi. Bengaluru Police on Sunday arrested the estranged wife of techie Atul Subhash, along with her mother and brother, in connection with his suicide. Subhash, a 34-year-old software engineer, died by suicide on Monday, leaving behind a 24-page note and video accusing his wife and her family of harassment. Subhash's wife, Nikita Singhania, was arrested in Gurugram, while her mother, Nisha Singhania, and brother, Anurag Singhania, were detained in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj.

The arrests come after the Bengaluru City Police filed a case of abetment to suicide against Nikita and her family members.

The accused had earlier sought anticipatory bail from the Allahabad High Court. The applications were filed by Nikita, her mother, brother, and uncle, Sushil Singhania, following police summons issued on Friday, which required Nikita to appear before them within three days.Nisha Singhania and her son Anurag had fled their home in UP's Jaunpur on Thursday amid the investigation into



Subhash's suicide, PTI had reported, citing police officials.In his suicide note, Atul Subhash, who was from Bihar but worked for a private firm in Bengaluru, detailed what he alleged was years of emotional distress because of marital disputes and multiple cases filed by his wife and her family.Subhash claimed that his wife had filed false cases against him and demanded Rs 2 lakh per month in maintenance for herself and their four-year-old son. He said his wife, mother-in-law and his brother-in-law kept pressuring him to give them money and lavish gifts since early 2020.

He also levelled serious allegations against a family court judge in Uttar Pradesh, and said he was under severe stress due to frequent travel to Uttar Pradesh for court trials.Amid nationwide outrage over the incident, details have emerged of Nikita's 2022 police complaint alleging harassment and assault for dowry by her husband. In the complaint, Nikita alleged that after her marriage,

Subhash and her in-laws demanded Rs 10 lakh more as dowry. She also alleged that Subhash used to beat her up and started treating the husband-wife relationship "like a beast", PTI reported. Nikita and Subhash got married in 2019. While Subhash was based in Bengaluru, Nikita lived with their son in Delhi, where she worked for a

"Felt Like Double Period Of Maths": Priyanka Gandhi On PM Modi's Lok Sabha Speech

New Delhi. The Congress on Saturday termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 11 resolutions he articulated in his speech in the Lok Sabha as "hollow" and called him a "distorian" par excellence who "puts WhatsApp University to shame."The opposition party also questioned why Prime Minister Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were not present in the House when Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi spoke while participating in a two-day debate on the "Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India."PM Modi on Saturday said the Congress, having "tasted blood," repeatedly wounded the Constitution while his government's policies and decisions since it took office in 2014 have been aimed at boosting India's strength and unity in line with the Constitution.

Asked about the PM's remarks, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra likened his over 110minutes speech in the Lok Sabha to a "double period of mathematics" from school that "bored us." She also slammed his 11 resolutions as "hollow"."PM has not spoken one thing which is new, he has bored us. It took me decades back, I felt like I'm sitting in that double period of Mathematics," she said."(JP) Nadda ji was also rubbing hands but as soon as Modi ji looked at him, he started acting as if he is listening attentively. Amit Shah also had his hand on head, (Piyush) Goyal ji was going off to sleep. It was a new experience for me. I had thought that the PM will say something new, something nice," she said.Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "Mr. Narendra Modi has an MA in Entire Political Science -- whatever that means. Today in the Lok Sabha he showed that he is also a Distorian par excellence."

Some people lie in their self-interest, but our selfstyled non-biological PM does so because it is in his very nature. He puts WhatsApp University to shame," Mr Ramesh said.Congress general secretary in-charge organisation K C Venugopal on X termed PM Modi's speech a hackneyed rant against his party."On a debate about India's Constitution, the PM once again decided to bring out his tired old speech about the Congress instead. While the people were expecting an answer from him on the injustice and inequality facing Indian society, he chose to bring up stale narratives against the Congress, which have lost all resonance among the public," he said."An insincere PM whose political gurus rejected the Constitution since day one will never be accepted by the people as being loyal to the Constitution. No matter how many speeches he gives, his hypocrisy will be exposed," Mr Venugopal said. He also told reporters there was nothing new in what the PM said in the Parliament on Saturday. "It was only blame game against the Congress.""Whenever we talk of the Constitution they did not respect Parliament. When LoP spoke, the prime minister, home minister and defence minister were absent, either they are scared of Rahul Gandhi or they don't believe in opposition politics," he said.

Lok Sabha to delay One Nation, One Election bills; focus on financial business

NEW DELHI. The government has decided to delay the introduction of bills related to 'One Nation, One Election' in the Lok Sabha, according to the revised list of business issued on Sunday. The two bills --Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill were earlier scheduled for introduction on Monday (December 16), as per the initial list of business released on Friday. However, the bills have now been removed from the agenda for the day. The reason behind the government's decision to delay the introduction of these bills remains unclear



Government sources indicate that the bills may be introduced later this week, following the completion of financial business, including the passage of the first batch of supplementary demands for grants, which are listed for discussion on Monday. Despite their removal from Monday's schedule, the government retains the option of bringing in legislative proposals through 'Supplementary List of Business' with the Speaker's permission. The two bills, aimed at facilitating simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, were circulated among Members of Parliament last week in accordance with parliamentary procedures. The Winter Session of Parliament, which began on December 4, is set to conclude on December 20.

Delhi Sees Highest 'Good' And 'Moderate' Air Quality Days **Since 2018**

New Delhi. Delhi recorded the highest number of 'good' to 'moderate' air quality days in 2024 since the past six years, data shared by monitoring agencies said. According to the data, a total of 207 days saw 'good' to 'moderate' air quality, with the Air Quality Index (AOI) remaining below 200. The month of December recorded six 'moderate' air quality days so far - surpassing the previous records since 2018. The data showed that so far, December witnessed a total of eight 'poor' to 'severe' air quality days. An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered good, 51 and 100 satisfactory, 101 and 200 moderate, 201 and 300 poor, 301 and 400 very poor, 401 and 450 severe, and above 450 severe-



On December 5, the Supreme Court allowed the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to relax GRAP stage IV restrictions as the air quality improved. Since then, the AQI in the national capital has been reeling between 'poor' to 'moderate'.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data, Delhi's air quality was recorded in the 'poor' category today, with the AQI at 246 in the morning. On Saturday, it was measured at 212.

Decks cleared for rail link to connect Jammu & Kashmir

NEW DELHI. Soon, the interior Kashmir is all set to be connected to the rest of India through a rail line, with the first track work of the Centre's ambitious

Udhamapur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link project being completed. The construction of one of the tunnels that are part of the project, T-33, located at the foothills of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, have also been completed. The 3,209-metre T-33 is designed in a modified horseshoe format."The track work for the 3.2-km T-33, located at

the foothills of Vaishno Devi and connecting Katra to Reasi, was successfully completed on Friday," said Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.Safety remained a top priority during the excavation and construction of the tunnel between Katra and Reasi, as the process posed significant challenges, officials

said. Since parts of the tunnel are located within the challenging 'main boundary thrust' zone of the Himalayas, it has been reinforced with

a minimum 600mm M35 grade concrete lining, Railway ministry's executive director Dileep Kumar said. The main boundary thrust zone is a series of seismic faultlines that separate the outer Himalayas from the lower ranges. The completion of T-33, a key part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-

Baramulla Rail Link project, will

gauge line through the challenging Himalayan terrain. When completed, the project promises an all-weather, comfortable, cost-effective

facilitate the construction of a broad-

and efficient mass transportation system, Kumar said. The Commissioner of Railway Safety is expected to conduct an inspection of the T-33 on December 16-17. After this, the technical safety formalities will be completed and a report will be submitted to the Railway ministry. Further work, including electrification, signalling, and other safety-

related tasks, will be undertaken after completion of the track inside the tunnel.Sources suggest that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to inaugurate the final 17-km stretch between Katra and Reasi, which includes Tunnel T-33, potentially allowing the first direct train operation from Kashmir.

'Nehru Model Failed, We're Trying To Correct It Since 2014': S Jaishankar

New Delhi. A 'Nehru development model', which they did more than anyone else to inevitably produced a 'Nehru foreign propagate. Yet, these very beliefs policy' and "we seek to correct that abroad", just as efforts being made to "reform" the consequences of the model at home, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar said on Saturday.

In a virtual address at the launch of the book 'The Nehru Development Model' by former NITI Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya, he also said the author suggests that former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's choices set India on a "deterministic path"."The model and its accompanying narrative permeated our politics, the bureaucracy, of course, the planning system, the judiciary, the public space, including the media, and most of all teaching," the Union minister said.

Mr Jaishankar said both Russia and China today "unambiguously reject" the economic assumptions of that period,

"appear to live on" in influential sections of our country even today."Certainly after 2014, there has been a vigorous effort towards course correction, but the author does assert with good reasons that it still remains an uphill task," he added. In his address, the minister further said "A Nehru development model inevitably produced a Nehru foreign policy. We seek to correct that abroad, just as we try to reform the consequences of the model at home." In fact, the "resistance" to one is based on an "attachment" to the other, Jaishankar argued and said the two need to tackled as an "integral whole".He began his address by quoting a famous line by an American policymaker on India's independence."In 1947, John Foster Dulles famously declared, I quote, 'In India, Soviet Communism exercises



ascribing that adjective to the then government. But, more relevant, this was an assertion that for decades was treated as a geopolitical over-reaction of American policy makers to an independent India," he said. The EAM said that over these years, he has often asked himself whether Dulles was altogether wrong on this matter. "And, in

Prof Panagariya's book, I found a substantial answer to that concern." "We all know that there was a strong ideological drive to advance a particular economic model for an India that has just gained freedom. The belief that was propagated was modulated from time to time, but never fundamentally changed," Mr Jaishankar argued. It's root cause was an analysis that the only counter to imperialism lay in socialism, he said.Not just in general terms, but one particular paradigm that was centred around heavy industries. For that reason, the author actually characterised it as a 'Nehru Development Model', the minister said in his address. The paradox, however, is that for more than three decades now, there's actually been a "national consensus that this development model eventually failed

Why iconic 1971 surrender painting was replaced in Army chief's lounge

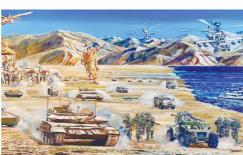
New Delhi.A painting in the Army Chief's lounge depicting the surrender during the 1971 Bangladesh War has been replaced with a new artwork titled Karam Kshetra (Field of Deeds). The new painting showcases Pangong Lake along the India-China border and the Army's offensive capabilities.In addition to the Pangong Lake, the artwork features modern military assets such as boats, all-terrain vehicles, tanks, and Apache helicopters. It also incorporates mythological figures like Chanakya and Lord Krishna guiding Arjuna's chariot in the Mahabharata. Many argue that this

FROM PAKISTAN TO CHINA: A STRATEGIC SHIFT

clear message to China.

For decades, the lounge displayed a historic painting of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, capturing the moment when Pakistan's

shift in the Army's focus and delivers a



General AAK Niazi signed the surrender document, leading 90,000 Pakistani soldiers to lay down their arms. This iconic image symbolised India's victory and its military supremacy over Pakistan. strategic symbolism reflects a significant The new painting, however, tells a different story. It highlights the Indian Army's modern warfare capabilities and its evolving focus on countering China's growing influence. Defence experts, including Major General Ashok Kumar, suggest this change underscores the Army's transition from conventional

warfare with Pakistan to addressing the military preparedness. Experts argue that complex challenges posed by China. ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY MEETS MODERN WARFARE

The artwork blends India's advanced military prowess with its ancient SYMBOL OF INTEGRATION AND philosophical heritage. It showcases boats, helicopters, and all-terrain vehicles alongside depictions of Chanakya, the master strategist of the Mauryan Empire, and Lord Krishna, symbolising leadership and dharma from the Mahabharata.Defence insiders believe the painting aligns the Army's mission with Indian philosophical traditions, emphasising its commitment to justice and duty. Drawing inspiration ASUBTLE MESSAGE TO CHINA the artwork portrays the Army as both a protector of the nation and an upholder of justice.Chanakya's wisdom, rooted in

strategy and diplomacy, serves as a

guiding principle for leadership and

these ancient principles inspired India's strategies which successfully brought Chinese forces to the negotiating table after the 2020 standoff.

FUTURE READINESS

cutting-edge weaponry like tanks, The painting highlights the synergy between the Army, Navy, and Air Force, reflecting their integrated approach to modern warfare. The inclusion of Apache helicopters, advanced tanks, and indigenous weaponry underscores India's commitment to self-reliance and technological evolution. It portrays a future-ready force capable of swift, decisive action across land, sea, and air.

from the teachings of the Mahabharata, The artwork conveys a nuanced message: while China may rely on Sun Tzu's Art of War, India has its own rich military philosophy, exemplified by Chanakya's

strategies and the teachings of the Gita,

now bolstered by advanced technology.

5 herbs that can add flavour to any juice



herbs can lend a refreshing taste to mocktails as well as fresh fruit juices

Mint: Mint leaves have a pungent but pleasant menthol flavour, with a sweetish aftertaste. Mint goes well with most fruits, so add this to your guava, peach, apple and sweet lime or pomegranate juice. Always serve chilled.

Basil: Fresh green and aromatic basil also offers several benefits. For one, it is an anti-oxidant. It also helps with respiratory problems and indigestion. To use it, simply tear a few basil leaves and add them to your juice. A great morning pick-me-up is chilled orange or watermelon juice with some cinnamon and basil

Lavender: You may not know this, but the herb lavender has a sweet floral aroma and pairs well with mint. The leaves can be used with strawberries, peaches and lemonade gets a nice burst of flavour when you add a few sprigs of fresh lavender to a glass.

Lemongrass: This one can be bought at any local market. Aromatic lemongrass not only adds flavour to a soup or hot tea but it's a nice addition to a fresh orange or pear juice. Remember, when you buy lemongrass, ensure its base is intact.

Kaffir lime leaves: Tangy kaffir lime leaves can be used to liven up any citrus juice. Just add the leaves on their own or them into smaller pieces.

How to reuse cooking oil?



Are you wary of using your cooking oil after frying a batch of nachos, because of the health implications? Here are some tips to reuse them. Choose the oil

If your frying technique is off, your oil won't be reusable. Every oil has a specific smoking point, - the temperature where the oil starts breaking down. Use oils like canola, peanut or vegetable oils with a high smoking point that won't break down easily. Avoid reusing olive oil as it has a low smoking point and a dominant flavour, which makes it a bad choice for deep-frying in the first place.

Filter the oil

After the first (and each subsequent) fry, drain the oil and filter it. Any impurities and unwanted extras like loose crumbs or bits of batter are going to spoil the oil's integrity, making it burn the next time you heat it. Put a few layers of cheesecloth in a metal strainer to filter out the crumbs.

Refrigerate it

Let the oil cool down till it's at room temperature, and then refrigerate it in an air-tight container.

Use separate oils according to flavour

The oil is going to take on the flavour of the food you cooked in it, which makes fried fish oil ideal for shrimp, but not good for onion rings. Separate the oils to prevent bad flavour overlaps.



Guilt-free Bakes take over

FOODS

Cakes, breads and cookies -the most calorie-laden, sinful delights -can be anything but healthy. Right?

However, some city bakers are all set to change the mindset. They are using wholesome and organic ingredients to add health and taste to your bakes! Think cakes like olive jalapeno, American corn, lemon pomegranate, almond tea-crunch, desi kaju katli,

meetha paan, apple oats, red-velvet (with beetroot), pumpkin walnut bread and zuchhini choco-chip cookies among others. There is something for everybody -fitness enthusiasts, lactoseintolerants, nut-intolerants, lactating mothers, vegans and even those suffering from diabetes or celiac. Gluten-free, sugar-free and vegan cakes among other healthy bakes, which use alternative ingredients like moong dal, wholewheat, oats, ragi, jowar, bajra, sooji and almond flour, are a reality now. Most of the healthy bakes are sweetened with natural ingredients like honey, jaggery, figs, nuts, dates, carrots and bananas. Instead of vegetable oil, rice bran or olive oil is used.

Fresh fruits, beetroot, zucchini and amaranth seeds are added for colour and flavour, while puffed bajra, dry fruits, muesli, soya cream, butter of dry fruits are used to decorate the cake, instead of calorie laden milk cream or the unhealthy fondant. "Staples, like millets ensure that the cakes are also rich in fibre," says baker Arun Kaulige. Durga Menon adds, "Vegetables and fruits add a different character to the bakes, which you will not find with artificial flavours or regular bakes."

Before you turn up your nose at the organic ingredients,

you should know what you are eating in the na me of sweet treats. Meeta Wala valkar says, "When I was learning how to ba ke, I was ap palled by the unhealthy ingre dients that went into it. After baking, we would bring our creations home, which was then served at dinner. In a months' time, my family started suffering from many health issues.'



And that is not startling if you consider the fact that apart from copious amounts of flour, sugar, butter, oil and cream, seven types of chemicals go into any regular bread or bake. "It is a vicious cycle -to balance the sourness of healthy bakes. Our cakes use no decoration at all. Not even names on birthday cakes," Meeta added.

The healthy revolution started about five years ago, but is gaining prominence now. When Chaitali Raizada started healthy baking five years ago, it was an uphill task for her to reach out to others. The fact that atta cakes tend to be dense, and not fluffy, led to speculation about the taste and texture. "Earlier, people were skeptical about the taste of healthy cakes. But now, the city has become much more fitness conscious, and most people who have tasted this have lost the palate for regular stuff." Chaitali believes her bakery is not about desserts. It's a way of life that is free from the clutches of white flour, sugar, artificial colours, addi tives, preservatives, chemicals, pesticides and even microwaves or non-stick ware.

A surgery and a strict diet that followed is what got Nikita Sanjay Narang to look at healthy baking seriously. "A dietician told me that I was to have no food with preservatives, flour, sugar, etc. But I had a sweet tooth and a

passion to bake. So, after six months of experimenting, I finally started coming up with healthy recipes. However, when I market my cakes as no flour, no butter and no sugar and no egg, people think it will have no taste. Though I struggled earlier, the demand is definitely on the rise now."

Karen Lobo Dutta's sweet cravings during her pregnancy prompted her to look up healthy options. Today, she aims to train the next generation to eat healthy even when they are indulging. Simran Oberoi Multani shares those views. "I started healthy baking for my son, who is a toddler now. Even if he snacks on my cakes on a daily basis, I wouldn't worry. The passion to

bake healthy also led me to devise an oats and almond biscuit containing flaxseeds and jaggery, which helps young mothers in lactating better."

However, for Jeeva Anna George, it was a question of survival. "In 2010, I was diagnosed with celiac -a disease in preservatives, you add acidity regulator, which makes the which the small intestine is hypersensitive to gluten, bread hard. So you add dough softener. Then, to balance the leading to difficulty in digesting food. I was put off most sourness, you decrease the percentage of fruit and add food items as gluten is in almost every product with a shelf sugar. So we decided to break out of it and just make life. So I started baking my own stuff," she says, adding that schools for children with special needs are part of her

How to use your ice cube tray

Use fruit cubes for your party: Fruit-infused ice cubes are a great idea for a party. Choose fruit like watermelon, strawberries and cherries (de-seed them). Put some fruit into each tray and cover with water. Freeze. You can also do this with different shaped cubes. With this, bid goodbye to artificial drinks and say hello to an enticing, flavourful treat.



Clever ways to use your ice Cube tray

eze herbs for cooking: Don't fret over herbs freeze your roses and lavender in ice cube trays to going stale anymore. Just store your thyme, oregano and rosemary in ice trays. Select fresh herbs. Chop them up neatly and place them in the different compartments. Add a little olive oil in each till it fills to the top. Cover with a plastic wrap

whenever needed. Store edible flowers: Using edible flowers in cooking is a top trend for the year and now you can

and freeze. Remove the cubes and use them

add to your chilled drinks. Simply toss a few cubes into your glass of water and enjoy the refreshing change. You can also store zucchini flowers for your ricotta, drumstick flowers for pungent chutneys and lavender for desserts, biscuits and other bakes.

Make coffee ice cubes: Here's something to add to your chilled coffee. Just pour warm coffee into the ice cube tray and let it freeze. Use these for enhanced flavour to your glass.

6 foods that are dangerous for your teeth

Who doesn't want healthy teeth which translate into a bright smile? While there are many healthy options to get a glowing batch of teeth there are also some foods that mean disaster to your teeth. Here's what you should avoid -

Sweet candy

Candy sweets, especially hard candies have tons of sugar which is bad for tooth health since the sweet can cause cavities and get stuck in the crevices causing more bacteria.

Tea and coffee

The tannic acids in coffee and even in some teas can wear down enamel and stain your teeth brown. While you cannot give up tea or coffee completely, try to keep it to the minimum and opt for green tea too.

Pickles We all find pickles tasty and great as

accompaniments to our meal, but the combination of super-acidic vinegar and sugar is a recipe for enamel erosion.

Citrus fruits

Lime, Lemons, Oranges, and Grapefruit, they all are loaded with citric acid which can cause enamel erosion and tooth decay. If you cannot completely avoid them, try to minimize it by avoiding too much of acidic foods and drinks through the day. The best way to find out an acidic food is to see if any

food or drink easily stains the teeth.

Soda

Top 5 real estate destinations to invest in 2016

Prop Tiger

Beat the heat this summer with a

Tourism Australia

trip in Australia

Recommended By Colombia

Soda has a combination of sugar, acids, and carbonation which is too bad for teeth since it leads to tooth erosion and decay. While studies show a glass of red wine every once in a while can be good for the heart and cholesterol levels, the beverage can stain teeth quite easily. The acids in red as well as white wine wear down the surface of teeth, which is why stains are so common.

'Indulge' fest to treat capital's whisky, cigar lovers

Indulge, a whisky and cigar festival to be Balblair, Cardhu, Oban, Tomatin, array of the greatest whiskies paired with a selection of cigars.

Dramz Whiskey Bar and Lounge will host the fest February 6-7.In its maiden edition, Indulge will feature 46 labels, 20 distilleries and eight experts around the world who will talk about cigars and whiskies.

Some of the prominent whiskies that the on the concept for more than a year. A patrons could relish include the likes of Glenfiddich (21, 18, 15 and 12 years), Balvenie, Glenlivet (25, 21, 18, 15, Founders Reserve and 12), Royal Salute 21, range of Chivas Regal, Old Pulteney, said in a statement.

held here next month, will feature an Mackmyra Preludium 06 from Sweden and more.

These whiskies will be paired along with some cigars that boast of names like Beenacudo, Padron, Bespoke, Campessino, Costa, to name a few, from The Smoke Company.

> "Being an ardent lover and collector of fine whiskies and single malts, I have been working

festival like this creates a platform where I could share the same with all those who love great whiskies," Sunil Aggarwal, owner of Dramz and director of Indulge,

Section of Akasa Air pilots allege mismanagement, favouritism; airline rejects accusations

New Delhi A section of the pilots of the fledgling Akasa Air has approached the civil aviation ministry alleging mismanagement, favouritism, harassment, and compromised safety standards in the airline's pilot training and evaluation processes. Reacting to the development, Akasa Air dismissed the allegations and termed them as "baseless and untrue"

The pilots wrote to Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on December 11, listing their grouses and concerns, and requested an immediate independent investigation into the carrier's management practices, training methods, and safety standards, it is learnt. A copy of the letter was also marked to the aviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which had fined Akasa Air in October for certain lapses in crew training. Akasa Air, while having been operational for just over two years, has had problems related to pilots earlier as well. Last year in September, the carrier even took some pilots to court for breach of contract, alleging that they quit the airline without serving the regulation six-month notice period. Around that time, Akasa Air was forced to cancel a number of its flights due to such resignations. The airline claims high job satisfaction levels and low attrition among its pilots, even as the unhappy pilots claimed in their letter to Naidu that 84 of Akasa Air pilots resigned on a day's notice."We categorically deny these allegations as baseless and untrue. Nor do they represent the views of Akasa pilots. At Akasa Air, our commitment to employee centricity is at the heart of everything we do. Our monthly employee survey reveals that pilots, amongst all employee groups have consistently reported the highest levels of job satisfaction, highlighting the effectiveness of our supportive culture. This dedication is further evidenced by the minimal number of pilots seeking opportunities outside of Akasa Air throughout 2024," an Akasa Air spokesperson said.

'For context, 324 pilots have joined Akasa since October 2023. During this same period, we have recorded an annualised attrition of less than 1 per cent for this employee group," the airline's spokesperson

Coal imports up 4% at 162 million tonnes in April-October period

NEW DELHI.The country's coal import rose by 4.2 per cent to 162.45 million tonnes (MT) in the April-October period of the current financial year compared to 155.87 MT in the year-ago period. Coal imports in October dropped by 14.4 per cent to 21.84 MT compared to 25.54 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal, according to data compiled by mjunction services, a



B2B e-commerce platform.

Of the total imports in October, non-coking coal imports stood at 13.49 MT against 18.82 MT imported in October last fiscal. Coking coal imports stood at 4.45 MT, against 4.31 MT imported in October last financial year.

In September, non-coking coal imports were 13.24 MT and coking coal at 3.39 MT.

"There was a modest increase (month-on-month) in non-coking coal volumes in October as buyers took fresh positions during the festive month, and ahead of the winter season. Going forward, demand is likely to be moderate due to the anticipated growth in domestic supply during the fourth quarter (Q4)," mjunction MD & ČEO Vinaya Varma said.

Switzerland revokes MFN status to India over SC Nestle order

NEW DELHI. Retaliating against a 2023 Supreme Court ruling related to Nestle, Switzerland has withdrawn the most-favoured-nation clause to India under the double tax avoidance agreement, a move that will hit Indian companies invested in the European nation.

'For dividends due from and including Jan 1, 2025, the residual tax rate in the source State is limited to 10%," the Swiss federal department of finance said in a statement issued Wednesday. Earlier they had to pay 5% tax.

India and Switzerland had originally signed the agreement in 1994 and the protocols were amended in 2000 and 2010. Subsequently, India signed tax treaties with Colombia and Lithuania that provided tax rates on certain types of income that were lower than the rates it provided to OECD member nations. Three years ago, Switzerland interpreted that Colombia and Lithuania joining the OECD meant a 5% rate for dividends would apply under the DTAA to India, too, under the MFN clause.

More nations may follow Switzerland, say experts Supreme Court last year ruled that the MFN clause doesn't automatically trigger when a country joins the OECD if the Indian govt signed a tax treaty with that country before it joined the organisation.

'On the basis of the Indian SC ruling, the Swiss competent authority acknowledges that its interpretation of para 5 of the protocol to the IN-CH (India-Switzerland) DTA is not shared by the Indian side. In the absence of reciprocity, it therefore waives its unilateral application with effect from 1 January 2025," the Swiss govt said on Wednesday

Nestlé judgment fallout: Switzerland suspends Most-Favoured-Nation clause in tax avoidance pact with India, could impact \$100 billion investment plan

The Swiss move poses risk to the \$100 billion investment commitment in India over a 15-year period by the fournation European Free Trade Association signed in March this year.

NEW DELHI In what could potentially impact Swiss investments in India and higher taxes on Indian companies operating in Switzerland starting January 1, 2025, Bern has suspended the Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) clause in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) that India and Switzerland entered originally in 1994 and amended in 2010, a statement released by the Swiss government dated December 11 showed. This decision follows a ruling by the Indian

Supreme Court last year, which determined that the DTAA cannot be enforced unless it is notified under the Income Tax Act. As a result, Swiss companies such as Nestlé face higher taxes on dividends. The Supreme Court ruling effectively overturned a Delhi High Court order that had ensured companies and individuals were not subject to double taxation while working in or for foreign entities. Tax experts said that the move by the Swiss could "impact investments" in India as dividends would be subject to "higher withholding tax". Notably, India and four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA), an intergovernmental grouping of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland signed a free trade agreement where the EFTA countries committed investment worth \$100 billion investment in India over a 15-year. However, the Swiss embassy said that there is no direct impact on the EFTA-India TEPA.In particular this week's decision does not negatively affect investment from Switzerland to India. The question of the interpretation by Switzerland and India of the most-



favoured-nation clause concerns the residual tax rate applicable to dividends based on the double taxation agreement paid by a company of one contracting state to a resident of the other contracting state. However, the change in this residual rate has no impact on the validity of the double taxation agreement as such, or on any other treaties under international law concluded between Switzerland (independently or under the EFTA framework) and India," the embassy said in response to a query. The Swiss authorities said that the suspension was enforced due to a lack of "reciprocity" in the DTAA by the Indian government. They added that for dividends due on or

after January 1, 2025, the residual tax rate in the source state would be limited to 10 per cent."Based on the Indian Supreme Court ruling, the Swiss competent authority acknowledges that its interpretation of paragraph 5 of the Protocol to the IN-CH DTA is not shared by the Indian side. In the absence of reciprocity, it therefore waives its unilateral application with effect

from January 1, 2025. Accordingly, income accruing on or after this date may be taxed in the source state at the rates provided in the DTA IN-CH, regardless of paragraph 5 of the Protocol," the Swiss government statement said. Amit Maheshwari, Tax Partner, AKM Global said that Switzerland has announced this in direct response to the Nestle ruling pronounced by the Indian apex court in 2023 where the court held that MFN application is not automatic and it requires a separate notification from India to grant lower tax rates under the MFN clauseHe said that Switzerland is of the view that it is not receiving the same treatment that India grants.

ED hands over BPSL's assets worth Rs 4k crore to JSW



NEW DELHI: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) handed over Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd (BPSL's) assets worth Rs 4,025 crore to JSW, which successfully bid for BPSL under the insolvency resolution process. The restitution of the assets to JSW is result of a Supreme Court order on 11th December 2024. The enforcement directorate had attached the properties of Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd after it found the company

and its promoters diverted bank funds to private investments in the form of shares and properties. ED investigation also revealed that the books of accounts were fudged to show fake expenses/purchases/capital assets and thereby bank funds were taken out in the form of cash. The diversion of funds resulted in financial distress of the BPSL, which ultimately landed in the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP)

The resolution plan of JSW had the provision of making a payment of Rs 19,350 crore against the outstanding loans of Rs 47,204 crore.

in 2017. The company was bought by JSW through insolvency process which lasted over two years, and JSW's resolution plan was approved by the NCLT in September 2019. The resolution plan of JSW had the provision of making a payment of Rs loans of Rs 47,204 crore. Despite the approval of the resolution plan, the enforcement directorate attached properties of BPSL, forcing the lenders as well as JSW to move the

CEO killer is US' new Anti-hero

NEW DELHI. US thought leaders are struggling to deal with the fallout of the killing of Brian Thompson, CEO of the insurer United Healthcare. The suspect, Luigi Mangione 26, who has millions of page views as a hooded assassin, and now as a protesting detainee in an orange jumpsuit, has become a cult hero on social media. Some see him as a Robin Hood out to teach the mean insurance companies a lesson; and legions of girls are swooning over his smiles and sixpacks. Even as the police collect evidence in what seems to be a watertight case of premediated murder, donations have poured in from online supporters. So far, \$50,000 has been collected through the GiveSendGo fundraiser.

A post on Redditt said: "It's not going to get better any time soon. As long as corporations are considered people, and money is considered free speech, we are stuck in this dystopian hell we call healthcare." Josh Shapiro, Governor of Pennsylvania, where Mangione was arrested, said the support for the killer was "deeply disturbing". Police officers working on the case have described him as a 'stone-cold killer'.

19,350 crore against the outstanding A crime is a crime; but from the emerging public evidence, it seems Luigi Mangione was sending a message. The bullet casings left behind on the Manhattan sidewalk where the United Health CEO was shot had 'Deny', 'Defend' and Depose' inscribed on them.

Supreme Court against the Investigators say it is a reference to the 2010 book attachment.

Investigators say it is a reference to the 2010 book 'Delay, Deny, Defend: Why insurance companies don't pay claims and what you can do about it'. Documents found on Mangione indicate he wanted to get even with the 'corporate greed'.

The message seems to be gaining traction. Reuters has reported "Wanted" posters with the faces of CEOs have appeared on walls in New York. Websites are selling Mangione merchandise, including hats with "CEO Hunter" printed across a bullseye.One week after the murder, Jay Feinman's 14-vear-old book 'Delay, Deny Defend'had shot to the top of Amazon's insurance law category. US companies meanwhile are scrambling to ramp up security for their top brass; and healthcare insurers have gone in to a huddle on how to clean up.

Insurers play dirty

Healthcare in the US, possibly the most expensive in the world, is intertwined with a web of complex insurance schemes promoted by the private sector. There's certainly no welfarism here; it is a for-profit insurance industry. The unabashed push to keep profits booming leads to the three-stage system – to first delay claims, then to deny them, and then finally defend the denial. No wonder there is so much resentment and hatred towards the insurance industry. In a first response on Friday, UnitedHealth Group CEO Andrew Witty admitted the US health is "not perfect". In a guest article in the New York Times, Witty said: No one

JSW gets back Rs 4k cr assets in Rs 47k cr Bhushan Steel case

NEW DELHI. In another significant action, Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it restituted properties worth Rs 4,025 crore to JSW, a successful resolution applicant of the erstwhile Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd, under corporate insolvency resolution process of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

The assets were attached by ED in 2019 after a money laundering probe revealed that the erstwhile promoters of Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd (BPSL) cheated banks and siphoned off funds to the tune of Rs 47,204 crore for private investments. A PMLA case was based on an FIR registered by CBI."The accounts were fudged to show fake expenses/purchases/capital assets, and thereby, bank funds were taken out in the form of cash. The cash

was brought into the books of various beneficially owned companies (held through employees/dummy directors), and the same, was utilised for investments in the form of shares and immovable properties," ED said.

The agency said after establishing money trail of the laundered proceeds of crime, it attached properties, including land, building and machinery, worth Rs 4,025 crore. Promoter Sanjay Singal was arrested on Nov 22, 2019, and a chargesheet was filed against him and the company in Jan 2020. A special court had taken cognisance of the case immediately, but trial is still pending for more than four years due to repeated adjournments sought by the accused.Further, ED attached assets

worth Rs 427 crore held by various shell companies linked to the accused. A supplementary chargesheet is likely to be filed by the agency soon to begin the process of restitution of the remaining assets.

The creditor banks had initiated corporate resolution under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, and JSW was the applicant seeking assets for an amount of about Rs 19,350 crore, as against the outstanding loans of Rs 47,204 crore. Through an affidavit filed before Supreme Court, ED urged the apex court that it may direct handing over the attached assets to JSW and consider the same as restitution under PMLA. SC accepted the ED affidavit, and on Dec 11, ordered restitution of assets to JSW.

Can't let big biz into banking yet,' says banker Kundapur Vaman Kamath

MUMBAI. Kundapur Vaman Kamath, the veteran banker who led the rapid growth of ICICI Bank and helmed it for nearly two decades from its inception and make the largest private sector lender within few years, has spoken against allowing corporate houses into banking space, saying the regulator has to be satisfied that they will not misuse public deposits through the backdoor.Kamath, who also headed New Development Bank, the developmental bank floated by the He also spoke against the calls for BRICS groups as its first chairman, said the Reserve Bank needs to take extra care when it comes to digital lenders, saying there are more than enough signs of rash behaviour by them."The primary regulatory purpose of banking is to ensure the safety of depositors' money. So, a little more time is still needed for corporates to be allowed into the banking sector. Because before letting corporates into the banking space, the RBI has to ensure that they will not use the deposits they collect from the public for their (corporates') own funding needs. The regulator must first feel comfort in their presence and behaviours," Kamath, the chairman of Jio Financial Services, the yet-to-beoperational financial services arm of

Reliance Industries, said while talking at the Lalit Doshi memorial lecture here over the weekend.On a question on fintech turning themselves as banks, he warned that there are signs of rash behaviour by some of them."I am seeing some signs of rash behaviour by some digital lenders. I'm being very frank about it...on the part of digitally-driven enterprises, I think, the RBI will have to manage with great care," he said.

privatisation of more state-run banks. "If the state-run banks have return 15-20% on their equity (RoE) why should they be

noted allowed to thrive? Where is the room for privatisation with such good return? But of course he said they need to be given more operational freedom.

Kamath said most public sector banks are self-sufficient now when it comes to capital and can match their private peers on technological capabilities. Early in the year, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said privatisation of public sector undertakings was very much on the table and the government was committed to do it but the timing will be decided later by the Cabinet.

But he batted for more banks and more so



more large banks which could happen either through amalgamation or rapid growth, which is a must if the economy has to double from what it is today.

The first step to reach the target of an \$8 trillion economy (over the next decade or so) would be to have a lot of large banks. Our banks need to bulk up and the size of banks that we have today will have to expand dramatically. The good news is that our banks are having an RoE upwards of 15 percent and this is good enough to grow at a healthy rate and meet the size of bulking up," he said. It can be noted that while for the public sector banks the RoE

chart over their private sector peers, with SBI leading it with 20.8%. But private sector banks lead in return on assets (RoAs) with 1.70-2.40%, which for public sector ones is only 0.70-1.13%. Return on equity (RoE) of private players is much lower at than their public counterparts. The RoE of state-owned banks was in the range of 13.50-21% in Q1FY25 compared to 13.50-17.70% range for private banks.

Among state-owned banks, Indian Bank had the highest RoA of 1.20% in the first quarter, followed by State Bank of India at 1.10%. Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India and Canara Bank reported RoAs of over 1 percent.

Like RoA, RoE is also a measure of a bank's ability to churn profits. While RoA weighs profits against the assets of a bank, RoE indicates how a bank or company has utilised shareholders' funds to generate profits.State Bank of India reported the highest RoE of 20.98% in Q1FY25, followed by 20.88% by Canara Bank, 19.76% by Indian Bank, and 17.45% by Bank of Baroda. In the private bank space, ICICI Bank reported an RoE of 17.70% in the April-June quarter, and Axis Bank,

NEWS BOX

AUS vs IND: Travis Head continues to punish India, scores 9th hundred in Brisbane

New Delhi. Travis Head continued to punish the Indian team as he scored his 9th Test hundred during the match at the Gabba in Brisbane on Sunday, December 15. Head carried his form from his knock during the Adelaide Test, where he scored 140 off 141 balls to set up the win for his side. Head had come on to bat with Australia in a spot of bother at 75 for 3 after Marnus Labuschagne fell to Nitish Kumar Reddy in the 34th over. The Aussie batter would start off his innings with a fantastic shot to get a boundary off Reddy and followed it up with another one against Jasprit Bumrah. Head would ensure that he got Australia to a safe spot at lunch and would launch his counterattack after the break.The southpaw once again got a boundary off Bumrah before turning his attention towards Ravindra Jadeja. Head



would hammer Jadeja for 2 consecutive boundaries in the 55th over and started to be in the groove and looking set for another big knock. Head got to his fifty in just 71 balls and started to free himself even more and started to toy with the Indian bowling. Head, after putting his feud behind with Siraj, started to dominate the Indian pacer, much to the delight of the Brisbane crowd. A couple of boundaries saw Head enter the 90's. Bumrah came back into the attack but Head continued to go on his merry way and scored his hundred in 115 balls. Head scored 13 boundaries in his knock on Sunday. Head's incredible run against India continuesWith his hundred against India, Head continued his fine form against Rohit Sharma and his men in the longest format of the game. This was Head's 3rd Test hundred against India and his knock on Sunday also saw him go past 1000 runs against the side with an average of more than 51. In his last 7 innings against India, Head has scored more than

AUS vs IND: Gritty Steve Smith bounces back, ends 25innings wait for Test hundred

New Delhi. Star Australia batter Steve Smith bounced back to form during Day 2 of the third Test against Australia at the Gabba, Brisbane. Smith played a magnificent innings of 101 (188) with the help of 12 fours as he brought an end to his long drought of a Test century. It was the first hundred for the Australia star after 25 innings with his last one coming at Lord's during the Ashes 2023. Smith didn't have a memorable start to his innings as he played and missed deliveries outside the off stump and was beaten on several occasions. The former Australia skipper also had his pads targeted by the Indian bowlers and survived a couple of close lbw calls. However, the right-handed batter managed to stay at the crease and weathered the storm. He battled through menacing spells against Jasprit Bumrah and Akash Deep who challenged both of his inside and outside edges. Despite facing some challenging spells, Smith continued to motor along and gradually moved towards



his half-century.

Smith shifted gears in the third session He brought up his 42nd fifty off 128 balls and

got involved in a massive stand with Travis Head for the fourth wicket. After reaching his half-century, Smith quickly shifted his gears and began dealing in boundaries. He went in to tea on 65 and came out in an all-out attacking approach after the break. Smith cut Nitish Reddy for a boundary on just his third ball after tea and made his intentions clear. Having got into his groove, the right-handed batter gave glimpses of his vintage self as boundaries began flowing from his willow. He added 31 runs off just 14 balls in the third session to move into the 80s. He finally reached his landmark in the 82nd over with a single against Akash Deep towards fine leg and celebrated his landmark. Smith was finally dismissed on 101 as Rohit Sharma took a brilliant catch in the slips.

Real Madrid held to high-scoring draw at Rayo Vallecano in La Liga

Kylian Mbappé, who is nursing a left-thigh injury.

BARCELONA. Real Madrid was held at Rayo Vallecano to 3-3 in a thrilling derby on Saturday, missing a chance to overtake Barcelona at the top of La Liga.

Rayo set a fast pace and stunned the powerhouse with two headed goals from Unai López and Abdul Mumin to lead 2-0 by the 36th minute.Federico Valverde struck with a powerful shot from well outside the area to pull one back for Madrid then Jude Bellingham headed the visitors level from a pass by Rodrygo just before halftime.

Madrid looked on course to completing a comeback win when Rodrygo put them in front for the first time with a deflected shot in the 56th.But Rayo midfield leader Isi Palazón stretched out a boot to steer Florian Lejeune's shot past Thibaut Courtois in the 64th.Madrid was without striker Kylian Mbappé, who is nursing a left-thigh injury.



Vinícius Júnior went on as a second-half substitute. Goalie Augusto Batalla saved the Brazilian's best effort in the final period.

Madrid remained second, one point behind Barcelona.Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti

admitted his team dropped its guard in defense when his players left López and Mumin unchecked to turn in crosses. But he said he was "satisfied" with his team's reaction, especially given the injuries to

defensive starters Dani Carvajal, Eder Militao, and Ferland Mendy.

He also looked to last season, when his team drew twice with Rayo."Last year we didn't win here, we drew, and we won the league anyway," Ancelotti said. "We are playing well and on the right path. So, we had a draw. We need to look toward the next games."Madrid, as the Champions League titleholder, next travels to Qatar to play the Intercontinental Cup final against Mexican club Pachuca."We have a great chance to win a title on Wednesday, which would put the cherry on top of a great year," Ancelotti

Bellingham took his league scoring run to six games in a row. Vinícius will miss the next game at home against Sevilla after picking up his fifth yellow card, this time for protesting.Rayo was in 13th place. The modest club has also held Atletico Madrid to 1-1 and forced Barcelona to rally for a 2-1 thanks to a late goal."Before the game we talked about all our recent games with Real Madrid when we had been close to winning, so we knew that if they weren't on their game then we could get a good result," Rayo coach Íñigo Pérez said.

Should have attacked Travis Head with Jasprit Bumrah early: Harbhajan Singh

. ■ The Mohammed Siraj vs Travis Head battle continued as the Australian batter picked his catch on Day 3 of the 2nd Test in Adelaide. Moreover, Siraj had to battle with boos for the 2nd straight day by the hostile Adelaide crowd.

New Delhi Harbhajan Singh feels that India missed a trick by not having Jasprit Bumrah attack Travis Head early on and allowing him to score a hundred during the Gabba Test on Sunday, December 15. Head continued to torment India with the bat as he scored his 9th Test hundred on Day 2 at the Gabba. This was Head's second consecutive century in the series after his Adelaide heroics and many slammed Rohit Sharma's captaincy for not being able to contain the southpaw. Harbhajan, while

talking to the broadcasters, said that India's tactics could have been better when he came on to bat as the visitors didn't attack him India allowed Head to be comfortable much. The former spinner feels that Head should have been made to face Bumrah for



'I think India could have done better when he walked in. They didn't attack too much. Should have brought in Jasprit Bumrah straight away. He faced Nitish and Jadeja. You had to go back to your main bowler. Bumrah should have bowled early on. Who

knows what would have happened. Atleast 2 or 3 overs," said Harbhajan.

Matthew Hayden also commented on the

tactics by India and felt that they allowed Head to get comfortable early on and allowed him to get to 20 runs very quickly. Hayden pointed out how Virat Kohli was able to do the same during the Perth Test, where he ended up scoring his 30th Test hundred."I just felt that they missed a trick early up with Travis Head. Similarly actually to the way that Australia did to Virat Kohli when he was able to quite easily get into that 20 zone where great players become really comfortable. I felt like they could have and did have an opportunity to really go

harder at Travis Head," said Hayden. Head would continue his fine form against India in the longest format of the game as he would go past the 1000-run landmark against them during his knock on Sunday. Head scored his hundred in just 115 balls.

Rohit Sharma's captaincy 'clueless': Fans, pundits slam poor Brisbane Test show

New Delhi India captain Rohit Sharma was once again criticised by fans on social media for his captaincy during Day 2 of the third Test against Australia at the Gabba, Brisbane. Notably, India began the day on a good note by taking three wickets early in the first session but were once again put under pressure by Travis Head. The Australian batter walked to crease with his team on 75/3 and continued from where he left off in the previous Test in Adelaide. Having been on the receiving end of many brilliant knocks from Head in the past one year, it was believed that India would come up with a plan to finally stop his massacre. However, much to everyone's surprise, India didn't seem proactive in their tactics to dismiss the southpaw. With many experts suggesting a short-ball barrage against the Australia star, India didn't go ahead with the plan and just employed a spread-out field against him.

As a result, Head managed to find easy gaps in the field and kept the scoreboard moving. The Indian bowlers weren't able to put pressure on the in-form batter, who was ably supported by Steve Smith at the other end. Smith and

Head's partnership once again brought Rohit Sharma's captaincy under the scanner as fans criticised his defensive approach.

Former India head coach and cricketer Ravi Shasri also criticised Rohit Sharma's ultradefensive fields against Travis Head on air calling it one of the 'worst set ups'. Shastri felt that with several wide open spaces, the bowlers weren't able to build pressure with singles being offered easily. David Warner also agreed with Shastri, mentioning that India should've attacked Head more.

Shastri also criticised Rohit for playing the waiting game and trying to contain someone of Head's calibre. Sanjay Bangar and Sunil Gavaskar also didn't seem too pleased with Rohit's strategies, as it seemed that he allowed Australian batters to take control of the game and couldn't do much to turn things in his favour. Head went on to register his second successive century and continued to pile on the misery on India as they went into tea on 234/3.

AUS vs IND: Why are Stormtroopers in attendance at the Gabba Test

Brisbane The third Test between India and Australia at the Gabba in Brisbane has been nothing short of electrifying, but it's not just the on-field drama that has grabbed attention. A group of fans dressed as Stormtroopers from the iconic Star Wars franchise—dubbed the "GabbaTroopers"—stole the spotlight, adding a unique flair to the action-packed game.Stormtroopers, the fictional soldiers serving the Galactic Empire in Star Wars, have been a recurring theme at the Gabba, with the GabbaTroopers paying homage to the franchise in a quirky yet entertaining way. Celebrating their seventh anniversary, the group added an

extra layer of excitement to the Test match. The stadium joined in the fun, playing iconic Star Wars soundtracks for the occasion, delighting fans both on and off the field.

The GabbaTroopers have a storied tradition of attending matches at the Gabba, including memorable moments like the 2017 Ashes Test between England and Australia, where an impressive 80 members of the group



showed up in full Stormtrooper uniform. Their latest appearance at the India-Australia Test underscores their commitment to making cricket matches even more entertaining for fans. While Day 1 of the Brisbane Test was washed out due to relentless rain, Day 2 made up for the lost action with high drama. India's Jasprit Bumrah started strongly, dismissing both Australian openers in Usman Khawaja and Nathan Mcsweeny in quick succession. The

intensity continued with a playful vet heated exchange between India's Mohammed Siraj and Australia's Marnus Labuschagne, highlighted by the pacer humorously swapping the stumps' bails, much to the crowd's amusement. Labuschagne was dismissed only a couple of balls later by Nitish Kumar Reddy off a stunning catch from a fiery Virat Kohli.

Australia stabilized with a crucial fourth-wicket partnership between Steve Smith and Travis Head, the hero of the Adelaide Test. With the

Border-Gavaskar Trophy on the line and a potential spot in the World Test Championship final at stake, the match is set to intensify. Through it all, the GabbaTroopers have been a joyful presence, bringing the spirit of Star Wars to cricket and witnessing every dramatic twist of this thrilling Test. Their infectious energy has added an extra dimension to an already riveting contest.

Lewis Hamilton bids emotional goodbye to Mercedes headquarters in Brackley

Lewis Hamilton bid an emotional farewell to Mercedes, thanking the Brackley and Brixworth teams for their support, as he prepared for his highly anticipated move to Ferrari. The farewell marked the end of a legendary era at Mercedes.

New Delhi. Seven-time Formula One World Champion Lewis Hamilton bid an emotional farewell to the Mercedes racing headquarters in Brackley and the engine builders in Brixworth, UK, as he prepares to embark on a new chapter with Ferrari. During his visit, Hamilton delivered a heartfelt speech, expressing gratitude for the team that powered his success and promising to return for future visits. Having concluded his

Mercedes journey with a fourth-place finish at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Hamilton's farewell has captured the attention of Formula 1 fans worldwide. At Brixworth, where the engines that drove him to all 105 of his F1 wins with McLaren and Mercedes were built, Hamilton had one final debrief with the team. He reminisced about the unforgettable memories they created together over the years, including his recordequalling seven world titles."I'm leaving; you guys are going to go and have so much more success moving forward because this is an incredible group of people; there's so much talent, there's so much passion here," Hamilton said."Anyone would be lucky to be working with you. I hope that when I do eventually stop racing, I can come back and visit you all, and I know we can always look back at these fond memories, and you know what a journey. There's no driver in the world



that has had this experience with the team. It makes it that much harder to let go, but I'm taking with me the greatest memories," he added. The farewell at Brixworth was marked by a heartwarming moment as Hamilton departed the facility in an AMG SL 63 Roadster. Team members and fans lined the streets, cheering and waving goodbye to their legendary driver, giving him a send-off befitting his iconic status. Hamilton, who turns 40 in January, is now gearing up for a

new chapter of his career with Ferrari, where he will partner Charles Leclerc. This move has been one of the most highly anticipated shifts in Formula 1 history. Fans are eager to see how Hamilton adapts to the Ferrari setup and whether he can add to his illustrious career achievements."I'm going to always be looking on the screens and seeing where you guys are. I'm always going to be wishing you all the absolute best. I believe in you, and I will continue to

believe in you, and when you do have that success, I will be so proud of you," he added. The first glimpse of Hamilton in Ferrari red will come during pre-season testing in Bahrain from February 26-28, 2025. The excitement will then culminate in the season opener in Australia, scheduled for March 14-16. While Hamilton's departure marks the end of an era for Mercedes, his legacy with the team remains unparalleled.



FILM

Kangana Ranaut Critiques Bollywood, Praises South Films: 'They Are Obsessed With Abs, Bikes And Babes' angana Ranaut has shared her views on the rising success of South Indian films compared to Bollywood at the box office. According to the actor, one of the main reasons behind this trend is that Hindi films -have increasingly lost touch with reality. Speaking at Agenda Aaj Tak, Kangana was asked about the massive popularity of Allu Arjun's Pushpa franchise and how it compares to the current situation in Bollywood. She remarked, "Pehele toh mujhe nahi lagta ke Bollywood or Hindi cinema ne mainstream hone ka theka liya hua hai (I don't think Bollywood can be dubbed as mainstream). They are not mainstream by any standard. Our films should be defined as the Indian film industry, one industry in which every type of audience is addressed." Kangana attributed the success of Pushpa 2 to the relatable character Allu Arjun portrays, a daily wage worker. She pointed out Bollywood's detachment from reality as a major issue. "People in Bollywood live in a bubble. And that is one of the biggest reasons I have a problem with them. Kyunki yeh log bubble se nikalna nahi chahte han (They don't want to come out of the bubble). All they need is to go to the gym, take

protein shakes, take injections. They don't have any

connection with reality," she said. The actor further

emphasized that such roles would rarely attract Bollywood stars. "Inko chaiyeh six pack abs, hot

babe, beach, bike, item number bas bahut hai (They

want six pack abs, hot babe, beaches, bike and item

numbers. That's enough for them)... It is important

to have a reality check," she concluded. Pushpa: The

Rise became a pan-India phenomenon upon its

release in 2021, grossing over ?136 crore in Telugu

and ?106 crore in its Hindi-dubbed version, making

installment, Pushpa 3: The Rampage.

it Allu Arjun's highest-grossing film. Its songs and dialogues resonated with audiences across the

Hindi-speaking regions. Now, the sequel, Pushpa 2: The Rule, continues Pushpa Raj's journey,

showing his rise from a daily wage earner to the leader of a red sanders smuggling syndicate.

Rashmika Mandanna reprises her role as Srivalli, Pushpa's wife, standing by him against his

estranged family. Fahadh Faasil returns as police officer Bhanwar Singh Shekawat, still

grappling with the humiliation he faced in the first film. The sequel ends with a setup for the next

Kajol Drops Throwback Pics From K3G Sets: 'They Just Don't Make Them Like They Used To'



aran Johar's Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham... is undoubtedly one of the classic films of all time. The movie, released on December 14, 2001, with an ensemble cast featuring Kajol, Shah Rukh Khan, Jaya Bachchan, Amitabh Bachchan, Kareena Kapoor, Hrithik Roshan and others, has etched a special place in millions of hearts. Today, as the movie completed 23 years since its release, Kajol dropped some mesmerising photos from the sets of the musical romance drama, leaving her fans in complete nostalgia.

On Instagram, Kajol walked down memory lane and posted a couple of photos clicked while filming Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham... The first photo featured Big B with his wife, portrayed by Jaya Bachchan in the film, alongside their on-screen sons and their loved counterparts. All six of them were seemingly grooving to the beats of the song, Bole Chudiyan, sung by Jatin-Lalit, while the candid moment was captured. The following two photos above of Vicional and did no with SPV in photos showed Kajol cuddled up with SRK in romantic poses while looking gorgeous as ever in a red saree. The superstar, on the other hand, looked handsome in an all-black outfit.

Alongside it, Kajol revealed her honest opinions about cinema and penned in the caption, "Life, love and laughter. They just don't make them like they used to anymore. 23 years and some fabulous memories later...." And we simply can't deny it. Such movies are for a lifetime. She even hashtagged the post with words like "23 years of K3G", "K3G" and "memories".

Within no time after Kajol made the post, her fans were left in nostalgia. Social media users started rooting for a Kajol and SRK reunion on-screen under the banner of Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. One user commented, "A movie that never gets tired of watching," while another said, "Fav movie since childhood!!!" A social media user wrote a meaningful note mentioning, "Absolutely... 23 years of this masterpiece K3G... @kajol You're too good there... Just watched it yesterday with the whole family... And coincidentally, you happened to be in Nagpur yesterday."

Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit: Kareena, Saif And Mrunal Thakur May Join Prabhas in Cop Thriller





fter the massive success of Kabir Singh and Animal, Sandeep Reddy Vanga is gearing up for his next ambitious project in Hindi cinema. Earlier this year, Pinkvilla had reported that Vanga is set to begin shooting for the Prabhas-led Spirit in the first quarter of 2025, aiming for a 2026 release. The preproduction work for this high-octane cop thriller is currently underway, including casting, and Pinkvilla has learned that Sandeep Reddy Vanga and producer Bhushan Kumar are in talks with Mrunal Thakur for the female lead.According to a source close to the development, discussions are ongoing with Mrunal Thakur to play the female lead opposite Prabhas in Spirit. The source revealed, "Spirit is the most ambitious and awaited films of Indian Cinema, and the makers are going all out to have the best and most talented actors of world cinema on board the film. While Prabhas is locked to play the role of a cop, the conversations are in progress with Mrunal Thakur, Saif Ali Khan, and Kareena Kapoor with the latter two for the negative turn."

The insider further shared that Spirit is set to redefine the cop-action genre in Indian cinema, promising a unique narrative. "It's a story like never before, in the template of a commercial Indian Film. There are good people and bad people in the tale, but with a lot of elements of grey that Vanga is known for. Every character has a purpose, and it's among the most ambitious films for Sandeep Reddy Vanga. The writing work and prep is going on in full swing, and the ones who have heard the narration inform that Vanga is going to reintroduce Prabhas like never before in Spirit," the source added. Bhushan Kumar is reportedly fully backing Vanga's vision for the

Additionally, fans can look forward to a unique dynamic between Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor, as the real-life couple will be playing a pair of antagonists in Spirit. The source added, "It's the first time that a real-life couple will be playing a negative role as a couple in a feature film. The two will also have a lot of action to do alongside Prabhas and other members. The paperwork for all the talents is yet to be done, as the discussions for monetary terms are underway."Produced by Bhushan Kumar and Sandeep Reddy Vanga, Spirit is set to hit the big screen in 2026. Once the project wraps, Vanga will shift his focus to his next venture, Animal Park with Ranbir Kapoor, scheduled to