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State Bank of India (SBI) on Saturday reported a 35 per cent decline in net profit at Rs 9,163 crore for the October-December quarter of the current...

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Ex-minister T. Rajaiah quits BRS party

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Senior BRS party leader and former deputy chief minister T Rajaiah on Saturday submitted his resignation from the party. Rajaiah, who is aiming to contest the Warangal Lok Sabha seat, said the lack of response from the party high command was the reason for his decision to resign from the party. Rajaiah's exit comes at a time when the party is gearing up for the upcoming general elections. The development is likely to have a significant impact on the party's election preparedness and the selection of the party candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha seats.



GHMC Mayor meets CM Revanth

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi called on Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy at his residence here on Saturday. During the meeting, she had brought many issues related to the GHMC to the notice of the Chief Minister and urged him to extend support for resolving all the issues.



Batti Vikramarka's wife wants for Khammam Lok Sabha seat

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's wife Mallu Nandini on Saturday submitted an application for seeking the allotment of Khammam Lok Sabha seat on behalf of the Congress party. Accompanied by a large number of supporters and party activists, Mallu Nandini came to the Gandhi Bhavan.



LK Advani to be conferred Bharat Ratna, announces PM Modi

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Former Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani will be conferred the Bharat Ratna, announced Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday. A BJP stalwart, Advani is also the founding member of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).

Born on November 8, 1927, 96-year-old Advani served as the 7th Deputy Prime Minister of India from 2002 to 2004. He is the longest serving Minister of Home Affairs serving from 1998 to 2004. He is also the longest serving Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. **Continued on pg 02**



Only strong regional parties can stop BJP, says KTR

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : BRS party working president K Tarakarama Rao today said only regional political parties have the power to stop the BJP from retaining power at the Centre after the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Using his twitter handle, KTR said he agrees with West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee's comments about the Congress party that if the Congress party has money, it should contest and win in Varanasi and that the Congress party has no chance of retaining its 40 MP seats this time.



Kavitha threatens protest if Priyanka invited to govt programs in State

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : BRS party MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha today lashed out at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for wasting public money for the Congress party's programmes. She threatened to raise protest if Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi was invited to govern-

ment functions in Telangana. "In what capacity will Priyanka Gandhi be invited for official functions," she asked and demanded to know whether the Congress was spending on the camp politics of Jharkhand State MLAs or whether it was spending government funds? Stating

that there was a lack of social outlook in Revanth Reddy's regime, she demanded that the process of conducting caste enumeration should be initiated immediately to provide 42 per cent reservation to BCs in local bodies.

Nobody can destroy BRS party: Vinod Kumar

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (NSS) : Former Karimnagar MP Boyinapalli Vinod Kumar today said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy were talking about the complete destruction of the BRS party in Telangana and added that when it was not possible with their masters like Chandrababu Naidu and YS Rajasekhara Reddy, how could they do it now? He made these while addressing a huzurabad assembly constituency gratitude meeting held in Huzurabad to town. Karimnagar MLA and former minister Gangula Kamalakar and ZP Chairman Kanumalla Vijaya attended the gratitude meeting organized by MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, Boyinapalli Vinod Kumar said that the BRS party had a history of giving up posts for the sake of Telangana state and added their party's two MPs in parliament fought for separate Telangana state.



Revanth is most barbaric, uncultured & uncivilised CM : Harish Rao

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Former minister and MLA Harish Rao today said Bhadrachalam constituents wanted the victory of their party candidate in the last assembly elections. Addressing the Bhadrachalam constituency-level meeting at Telangana Bhavan here, he said, "I bow my head and thank all the people and workers for making Bhadrachalam MLA win. Like Ugadi chutney, our victories and losses are there. Defeat is just a speed breaker.



Shabbir Ali takes charge as Advisor to TS Govt at the Secretariat

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Advisor to the Telangana Government (SC, ST, BC & Minorities) Mohammed Ali Shabbir assured that the Congress Government is committed to fulfilling all the promises made to various sections of society. Shabbir Ali assumed office as the Advisor to the Telangana Government in a simple ceremony at the Dr B R Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat on Saturday. The event saw the presence of several eminent personalities, including Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas

Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao, Special Representative of Telangana Govt in Delhi Dr Mallu Ravi, senior leaders of the Congress party, heads of religious and social organizations, family members and others who extended their greetings on his appointment. Addressing the media, Shabbir Ali expressed gratitude to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for appointing him as the Advisor to the Government and entrusting him with the responsibility of overseeing the welfare of four significant communities - SC, ST, BC.

TSRTC welcomes ad agency manager's arrest

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : The management of Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) today welcomed the arrest of V Sunil, manager of 'Go Rural India', in a case of cheating the corporation to the tune of Rs 21.73 crore due under an advertising contract in its buses. It warned that action would be taken as per law against companies that violate contracts and evade dues.

Police station shootout : Thane court sends BJP MLA to 11 days' police custody

Thane (Maharashtra), Feb 3 (IANS) : An Ulhasnagar court has remanded Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Kalyan East MLA Ganpat Kalu Gaikwad to 11 days' police custody in connection with the shootout incident at Hill Lines Police Station, here on Saturday. Gaikwad, who pumped six bullets into Shiv Sena Kalyan chief Mahesh Gaekwad and his associate Rahul Patil, was presented before Magistrate A.A. Nikam on Saturday evening amid tight security.

"Well Baby Show" held at Railway Hospital

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : South Central Railway Women's Welfare Organization (SCRWWO) organized a 'Well Baby Show' today at Central Railway Hospital, Lallaguda, Secunderabad. R. Srilatha Dhananjeyulu, Vice President, SCRWWO, gave away prizes to healthy baby contest children, who were adjudged as winners of the show. Doctor's and staff of the Central Railway Hospital were amongst those present on the occasion. As many as 70 toddlers of the age group from six months to three years took part in the "Well Baby Show". Doctors examined the babies according to the age group for their nutritional status, general health, growth pattern, immunization status and family welfare status of the parents to decide the first, second and third prizes. Apart from these, prizes were also given in different age groups for 'Well Dressed', 'Social Active' and 'Lucky Child' babies. On the occasion, R. Srilatha Dhananjeyulu, congratulated the

parents for their active participation in the "Well Baby Show" and said the show was organized with an aim to educate them about proper health, nutrition habits for the children and adoption of family planning. SCRWWO donated 20 wheel chairs and 10 RO water purifiers to the hospital for the benefit of Railway employees and their attendants who visit Railway Hospital. Dr. Nirmala Rajaram thanked Srilatha Dhananjeyulu, SCRWWO vice-president, for coming forward and extending support and sponsor and doing their yeoman service to the railway fraternity. Manjulika Mishra, Secretary, and other members of SCRWWO, Dr. C.K. Venkateswarlu, Principal Chief Medical Director, Dr. Nirmala Rajaram, Medical Director, and other Doctors were also present on the occasion.



It is heartening to note that T-Hub has bagged the best award : "District Collector Anurag Jayanthi

Rajanna Sircilla, Feb 3 (TIM Bureau) : It is heartening to note that the Telangana Diagnostic Hub at Rajanna Sircilla district headquarters has been ranked first in the best services category in the state for providing the best and transparent services in the state," said Rajanna Sircilla District Collector Anurag Jayanthi. Rajanna Sircilla Tea Hub has been ranked first in the best services category for conducting 2,54,410 medical tests for a total of 79,365 patients in the year 2023 and was received by T-Hub Coordinator Ramprasad Memento on

January 26. The district collector expressed happiness that the tea hub has been ranked first in the state. The Collector congratulated the staff for their efforts in this regard. He suggested that the staff should perform their duties in the same spirit. Government General Hospital Superintendent Dr.C.H. Santhosh Kumar, District Hospital Superintendent Dr. Muralidhar Rao, Doctors Dr. Manish, Dr. Vimala, Dr. Swetha, Dr. Kranthi Rekha, Coordinator Ramprasad, Staff Harika, Janardhan, Satyanarayana, Swetha, Lakshminarayana and others were present.

DEMAND NOTICE
Date: 01-02-2024

60 Days' Notice to Borrower/Mortgagor/Guarantor

To: 1) Mr. Thota Kiran Kumar (Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208, 2) Mrs. Thota Rajya Lakshmi (Co-Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208, 3) Mr. Thota Sambiah (Mortgagor & Co-Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208, 4) Mrs. Thota Vijaya Lakshmi (Co-Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208, 5) Ms. Thota Swapna (Co-Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208, 6) Mr. Thota Uday Kumar (Co-Borrower), D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208.

Dear Sir / Madam,

NOTICE U/S 13(2) of the SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002

Reg: Account Nos. 13787016000468 & 13786511000435 relating to credit facilities availed by Thota Kiran Kumar (Borrower), Mrs. Thota Rajya Lakshmi (Co-Borrower), Mr. Thota Sambiah (Mortgagor & Co-borrower), Ms. Thota Vijaya Lakshmi (Co-borrower), Ms. Thota Swapna (Co-borrower), Mr. Thota Uday Kumar (Co-borrower) Resident of D.No: 20-471, College Road, Garimilla, Macherali, Telangana-504208 has availed the following credit facilities from our B/O Mancharial (878800), Punjab National Bank (E-Obc).

S. No.	Facility	Limit Sanctioned	Principal O/s. as on 30-01-2024	Recorded Interest as on 30-01-2024	Total Outstanding Balance as on 30-01-2024	Rate of Interest
1	Term Loan-Mortgage Loan	Rs 40,00,000	Rs 26,95,549.86	0.00	Rs 26,95,549.86	10.90 %
2	Term Loan-Vehicle Loan	Rs 20,00,000	Rs. 8,29,929.58	0.00	Rs. 8,29,929.58	9.15%
Total Dues Payable as on 30-01-2024 (As the case may be)					Rs.35,25,479.44	

Due to non-payment of installment/ interest/ principal debt, the accounts has/have been classified as Non-Performing Asset on 30.01.2024 as per Reserve Bank of India guidelines.

The amount due to the Bank as on 30.01.2024 is Rs. 35,25,479.44 (Rupees Thirty Five Lacs Twenty Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Nine and Forty Four Paise only) with further interest, penal interest, charges from 31-01-2024 less amount already paid, until payment in full (hereinafter referred to as "secured debt").

To secure the outstanding under the above said facilities, you have, inter alia, created security interest in respect of the following properties/assets:

S.No.1: Facility: Term Loan- Mortgage & Security; - E.M. of all the part and parcel of House bearing No.: 20-471, Municipal Block No.: 20, in sy no 63, admeasuring 423.95 Sq.yds, equal to 354.50 Sq.mts R.C.C. House situated at Garimilla shivar, code no: 83 within the limits of Mancharial Municipality, Mandal Mancharial, the schedule property is situated within the jurisdiction of the SRO Mancharial and bounded by: East: 9'-0" Feet Road, West: Plot of Ch. Sri Ramulu, North: Plot of Venkat Rama Rao (present House of Govindu), South: Land of Vendor (Present house of Sriniwas) Property standing in the name of Sri Thota Sambiah, S/o. Mallaiah.

S.No. 2. TIL Vehicle: Hypothecation of Innova Crysta 2.4 Z 7 Seater BS IV WITH, ENGINE NO: 2GDA147783, CHASIS NO: MBJAB3EM025175781117, REG NO: TS 19 B 0099.

We hereby call upon you to pay the amount of Rs. 35,25,479.44 (Rupees Thirty Five Lacs Twenty Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Nine and Forty Four Paise only) with further interest, penal interest, charges from 31-01-2024 less amount already paid, until payment in full within 60 days (Sixty Days) from the date of this notice. In default, besides exercising other rights of the Bank as available under Law, the Bank is intending to exercise any or all of the powers as provided under section 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act"). The details of the secured assets intended to be enforced by the Bank, in the event of non-payment of secured debt by you are as mentioned S.No.1&2.

Your attention is hereby drawn invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to you to redeem the secured assets.

Please take notice that in terms of section 13(1) of the said Act, you shall not, after receipt of this notice, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of business) any of the secured assets above referred to, without prior written consent of the Bank.

You are also put on notice that any contravention of this statutory injunction/restraint, as provided under the said Act, is an offence. If for any reason, the secured assets are sold or leased out in the ordinary course of business, the sale proceeds or income realized shall be deposited/remitted with/to the Bank. You will have to render proper account of such realization / income.

*We reserve our rights to enforce other secured assets.

Please comply with this demand under this notice and avoid all unpleasantness. In case of non-compliance, further needful action will be resorted to, holding you liable for all costs and consequences.

*This notice is issued without prejudice to the bank taking legal action before DRT/Court, as the case may be.

Date: 01-02-2024, Place: Secunderabad. Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank

LK Advani to be conferred Bharat Ratna, announces PM Modi

Continued From pg 01
He was the prime ministerial candidate of the BJP during the 2009 general election. The Prime Minister took to his personal X handle to announce the highest civilian award for LK

Advani and informed that he also congratulated the party veteran on being conferred with the nation's highest civilian honour. "I am very happy to share that LK Advani will be conferred the Bharat Ratna. I also spoke to him and congratulated him on being conferred this honour..," PM Narendra Modi tweeted.

CM Revanth to chair Cabinet meeting today

Hyderabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : The State Cabinet meeting led by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy will be held at 3.30 PM at Secretariat here on Sunday. The Cabinet is expected to discuss various issues, including allocations to be made for implementation of six guarantees, launch of the Rs 500 LPG cylinder and 200 units free power supply schemes. The meeting is likely to discuss about the Assembly Budget sessions, including the proposal to introduce an vote on account Budget instead of a full budget this year.

Copper laddu once a week in the month of February

District Collector Anurag Jayanthi clarifies. Additional Collector Poojari Gowthami inspected the functioning of the Potugal Anganwadi Centre.



Rajanna Sircilla, Feb 3 (TIM Bureau) : Rajanna Sircilla District Collector Anurag Jayanthi suggested that the distribution of ragi laddus in the district has been taken up on an experimental basis in the month of February-2024 to increase the attendance percentage at anganwadi centres. "This month, ragi laddoos will be distributed to students, children suffering from malnutrition, pregnant women and lactating mothers suffering from anemia. Based on the feedback this month, he said that he would consider continuing earlier. The additional collector who inspected the functioning of the "Potugal Anganwadi Centre."Rajanna Sircilla District Additional Collector Poojari Gowthami visited the Anganwadi Centre at Pothugal village in Mustabad mandal on Saturday. He expressed satisfaction at their progress. Special arrangements are being made to make special ragi laddoos for children suffering from malnutrition, pregnant women suffering from anemia and lactating mothers. Officials from the state office are also likely to attend the event. On this occasion, P. Lakshmirajam briefed the District Welfare Officer about the steps to be taken. CdpOs, A CDPOs, Supervisors, Anganwadi Teachers and Abhiyan staff participated in the programme.

DEMAND NOTICE
Date: 01/12/2023

ANNEXURE-2
DEMAND NOTICE [SECTION 13(2)] TO BORROWER/ GUARANTOR/ MORTGAGOR

Ref: 7700-BR/2752/DN/2023/MS

THIS DEMAND NOTICE IS ISSUED SUPERSEDING ALL PREVIOUS DEMAND NOTICES IF ANY

To: Chepuri Ranamma, W/o. Chepuri Mallaiah (Late), Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505. Goli Manjularani, W/o. Goli Ravinder, Residing at Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505.

Below are the Legal Heirs of Late Sri Chepuri Mallaiah S/o Chepuri Narsaiah

Chepuri Srikanth, S/o. Chepuri Mallaiah, Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505. Chepuri Prashanth, S/o. Chepuri Mallaiah, Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505.

Dear Sir,

Sub: Notice issued under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Canara Bank, ARM Branch, Hyderabad (hereinafter referred to as "the secured creditor"), appointed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, (hereinafter referred as "the Act") do hereby issue this notice to you as under:

That Smt. Chepuri Ranamma, W/o. Chepuri Mallaiah (Late) (hereinafter referred to as "the Borrower") 1) Mr. Chepuri Mallaiah (Late), S/o. Chepuri Narsaiah (hereinafter referred to as "the Borrower") 2) has availed credit facility/ facilities stated in the Schedule A hereunder and has entered into the security agreement/s in favour of the secured creditor. While availing the said financial assistance, you have expressly undertaken to repay the loan amount/s in accordance with the terms and conditions of the above mentioned agreements.

That Smt. Goli Manjularani, W/o. Goli Ravinder (hereinafter referred to as "the Guarantor") has guaranteed the payment on demand of all moneys and discharge all obligations and liabilities owing or incurred to the secured creditor by the Borrower for credit facilities up to the limit of Rs.27,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakhs Only) with interest thereon.

You (the person mentioned in schedule B) are also entered in to agreements against the secured assets which are detailed in Schedule B hereunder.

However, from November, 2011, the operation and conduct of the said financial assistance/ credit facilities have become irregular. On the file of recovery suit before Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad has issued the recovery certificate for Rs.47,10,102/- in terms of the final order dated 10/10/2017, it is ordered that the applicant certificate holder bank is entitled to recover a sum of Rs.27,87,893/- along with cost expenses and future interest @ 19.50% p.a. from the date of filing of the O.A.I.e.04.06.2014 (i.e. from 04.06.2014 to 10/10/2017 is Rs.47,10,102/-) till the date of realization in full, jointly and severally from the certificate debtors. It is further stated that the Borrower/ Guarantor having failed to keep up with the terms of the above said agreement in clearing the dues of the secured creditor within the time given, and have been evasive in settling the dues. The operation and conduct of the above said financial assistance / credit facility/ies having come to a standstill and as a consequence of the default committed in repayment of principal debt/ installment and interest thereon, the secured creditor was constrained to classify the debt as Non-Performing Asset (NPA) as on 30/11/2012 in accordance with the directives/guidelines relating to asset classification issued by the Reserve Bank of India.

The secured creditor through this notice brings to your attention that the Borrower has failed and neglected to repay the said dues/ outstanding liabilities and hence hereby demand you under Section 13(2) of the Act, by issuing this notice to discharge in full the liabilities of the Borrower as stated in Schedule C hereunder to the secured creditor within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice. Further, it is brought to your notice that you are also liable to pay future interest at the rate of 19.50% per annum together with all costs, charges, expenses and incidental expenses with respect to the proceedings undertaken by the secured creditor in recovering its dues.

Please take note of the fact that if you fail to repay to the secured creditor the aforesaid sum of Rs.47,10,102/- (Rupees Forty Seven Lakhs Ten Thousand One Hundred Two Rupees Only) together with further interest and incidental expenses and costs as stated above in terms of this notice under Section 13(2) of the Act, the secured creditor will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under sub-section (4)(a) and (b) of Section 13, the extract of which is given here below to convey the seriousness of this issue:

13(4)- In case the Borrower/ Guarantor fails to discharge liability in full within the period specified in sub-section (2), the secured creditor may take recourse to one or more of the following measures to recover his secured debt, namely:

(a) Take possession of the secured assets of the Borrower/Guarantor including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset;

(b) Take over the management of the business of the Borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset.

Provided that the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale shall be exercised only where the substantial part of the business of the Borrower is held as security for the debt;

Provided further that where the management of whole of the business or part of the business is severable, the secured creditor shall take over the management of such business of the borrower which is relatable to the security for the debt; and under other applicable provisions of the said Act.

Your attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. You are also put on notice that in terms of section 13(13) the Borrower/Guarantor shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise the said secured assets detailed in Schedule B hereunder without obtaining written consent of the secured creditor. It is further brought to your notice that any contravention of this statutory injunction/ restraint, as provided under the said Act, is an offence and if for any reason, the secured assets are sold or leased out in the ordinary course of business, the sale proceeds or income realized shall be deposited with the secured creditor. In this regard you shall have to render proper accounts of such realization / income. This notice of Demand is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which the secured creditor may have including further demands for the sums found due and payable by you.

This is without prejudice to any other rights available to the secured creditor under the Act and/or any other law in force.

Please comply with the demand under this notice and avoid all unpleasantness. In case of Non-compliance, further needful action will be resorted to, holding you liable for all costs and consequence.

SCHEDULE-A
[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Sl No	Loan No	Nature of Loan/ Limit	Date of sanction	Amount
1.	30451570000479	Synd Nivas	21/08/2008	Rs.27,00,000/-

SCHEDULE-B
[Details of security assets]

Name of Title holder: Smt. CH Ranamma

1) All that part of semi-finished residential house in Plot No.14, Survey No.119 & 129, admeasuring 150 sq.yds. in Sri Sai ROWA Colony Peerzadiguda Village & Grampanchayat, Ghatkesar Mandal Ranga Reddy Dist., Telangana. Bounded by: North: Plot No.13, South: 30'wide road, East: Plot No.9, West: 25' wide Road.

SCHEDULE-C
[Details of liability as on 10/10/2017]

Sl No	Loan No	Nature of Loan/ Limit	Liability with Interest as on Date 10/10/2017 As per the orders of Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad in OA 1757/2017 consequently RC issued vide No. 2688/2017	Rate of Interest
1.	30451570000479	Synd Nivas	4710102/-	19.50%

Date: 01.12.2023, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

DEMAND NOTICE
Date: 01/12/2023

ANNEXURE -3A
CANARA BANK NOTICE TO LEGAL HEIR TO THE DECEASED BORROWER

Ref: 7700-BR/2752/CHEPURI/DN/2023-24/MS

To: Chepuri Ranamma, Legal Heir and W/o. Chepuri Mallaiah (Late), Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505. Chepuri Srikanth, Legal Heir and S/o. Chepuri Mallaiah, Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505. Chepuri Prashanth, Legal Heir and S/o. Chepuri Mallaiah, Plot No.30, Kammaguda Village, Near St. Paul High School, Turkayamjala, Hayathnagar (M), R R District-501505.

Dear Sir,

Sub: Notice issued under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act").

The undersigned, being the Authorized Officer of Canara Bank, ARM Branch, Hyderabad, appointed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, hereinafter referred as "the Act" do hereby issue this notice to you as under:

You are aware that Smt. Chepuri Ranamma, W/o. Chepuri Mallaiah (hereinafter referred to as "the Borrower") 1) Mr. Chepuri Mallaiah (Late), S/o. Chepuri Narsaiah (hereinafter referred to as "the Borrower") 2) (more fully described in "Schedule A" hereunder) has/have availed credit facility/ facilities stated in the "Schedule B" hereunder and have entered into security agreement/s in favour of Canara Bank (secured creditor) by securing the Properties mentioned in Schedule C. In terms of the said agreement he/she/it had availed the financial assistance with an express undertaking that they shall repay the said amounts in accordance with the terms and conditions of the above said agreements.

We observe that Sri Chepuri Mallaiah, S/o. Chepuri Narsaiah is deceased.

You are aware that after the death of the borrower, as his/her legal heir, you are liable for the payment on demand of all moneys and discharge all obligations and liabilities owing or incurred to our bank by the Borrower for credit facilities up to the limit of Rs.27,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Only) with interest thereon.

It is brought to your attention by means of this notice that the Borrower has failed to keep up with the terms of the Loan Agreement dated 21/08/2008 and the operation and conduct of the said financial assistance/ credit facilities have become irregular and even after repeated requests the Borrower/legal heir had failed to clear the liabilities. As a result of this the Bank is now constrained to classify the debt as Non-Performing Asset (NPA).

Bank has filed recovery suit before Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad and consequently issued the recovery certificate for an amount of Rs.47,10,102/- in terms of the final order dated 10/10/2017, it is ordered that the applicant certificate holder bank is entitled to recover a sum of Rs.27,87,893/- along with cost expenses and future interest @ 19.50% p.a. from the date of filing of the O.A.I.e.04.06.2014 (i.e. from 04.06.2014 to 10/10/2017 is Rs.47,10,102/-) till the date of realization in full, jointly and severally from the certificate debtors.

Therefore, the bank hereby calls upon you as the legal heir, exercising its right under section 13(2) read with Section 13(11) of the Act, by issuing this notice to discharge in full the liabilities of the borrower as stated in Schedule "D" hereunder to the bank within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice. Further, you are also liable to pay future interest at the rate mentioned in Schedule "D", together with all incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. with respect to the proceedings undertaken by the bank in recovering its dues from the said borrower.

Please take note of the fact that if you fail to repay to the bank the aforesaid sum of Rs.47,10,102/- (Rupees Forty Seven Lakhs Ten Thousand One Hundred Two Rupees Only) together with further interest from 10/10/2017 and incidental expenses and costs as stated above in terms of this notice under section 13(2) of the Act, the bank will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under sub-section (4)(a) and (4)(b) of Section 13, the extract of which is given here below to convey the seriousness of this issue:

Section 13(4): In case the borrower fails to discharge his liability in full within the period specified in subsection (2), the secured creditor may take recourse to one or more of the following measures to recover his secured debt, namely:

(a) Take possession of the secured assets of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset;

(b) Take over the management of the business of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset.

Provided that the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale shall be exercised only where the substantial part of the business of the Borrower is held as security for the debt;

Provided further that where the management of whole of the business or part of the business is severable, the secured creditor shall take over the management of such business of the borrower which is relatable to the security for the debt; and under other applicable provisions of the said Act.

Your attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets. You are also put on notice that in terms of Section 13(13) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise the said secured assets detailed in Schedule "C" hereunder without obtaining written consent of the bank. It is further brought to your notice that any contravention of this statutory injunction/ restraint, as provided under the said Act, is an offence and if for any reason, the secured assets are sold or leased out in the ordinary course of business, the sale proceeds or income realized shall be deposited with the bank. In this regard you shall have to render proper accounts of such realization / income.

This notice of Demand is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which the bank may have including further demands for the sums found due and payable by the borrower to us.

This is without prejudice to any other rights available to us under the Act and/or any other law in force.

Please comply with the demand under this notice and avoid all unpleasantness. In case of Non-compliance, further needful action will be resorted to, holding you liable for all costs and consequence.

SCHEDULE-A
[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Sl No	Loan No	Nature of Loan/ Limit	Date of sanction	Amount
1.	30451570000479	Synd Nivas	21/08/2008	Rs.27,00,000/-

SCHEDULE-B
[Details of security assets]

Name of Title holder: Smt. CH Ranamma

1) All that part of semi-finished residential house in Plot No.14, Survey No.119 & 129, admeasuring 150 sq.yds. in Sri Sai ROWA Colony Peerzadiguda Village & Grampanchayat, Ghatkesar Mandal Ranga Reddy Dist., Telangana. Bounded by: North: Plot No.13, South: 30'wide road, East: Plot No.9, West: 25' wide Road.

SCHEDULE-C
[Details of liability as on 10/10/2017]

Sl No	Loan No	Nature of Loan/ Limit	Liability with Interest as on Date 10/10/2017 As per the orders of Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad in OA 1757/2017 consequently RC issued vide No. 2688/2017	Rate of Interest
1.	30451570000479	Synd Nivas	4710102/-	19.50%

Date: 01.12.2023, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

'Hurt' by Nitish's move to join NDA, JD-U's former office bearer quits party

Patna, Feb 3 (IANS) : Former Patna district chief of the JD-U, Paltan Singh, resigned from the primary membership of the party on Saturday. Singh said that he was "hurt as Nitish Kumar made multiple U-turns in the last 10 years".

"Workers like me are extremely hurt by the frequent 'Paltimar' of Nitish Kumar. I have been associated with the party since 1986 and served in the Samata Party and then the JD-U due to ideological similarity. I am associated with Nitish Kumar since he was the MP from Barh Lok Sabha constituency," he said.

"My service to the party ended here.



20,000 people attend Indian Air Force's Surya Kiran Aerobatic team display in Bikaner

Jaipur, Feb 3 (IANS) : In a historic and breathtaking display, the Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT) of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was treated to around 20,000 people, including school children, in Rajasthan's Bikaner to a spectacular aerial show. As part of showcasing the prowess of the IAF and its contribution in nation building, an "Air Awareness Campaign" was organised by it on Saturday. The unique nine aircraft formation aerobatics team of the IAF, SKAT, performed a thrilling display, flying in various formations and performing aerobatic manoeuvres during the campaign. At present, the team is led by Group Captain G.S. Dhillon, a fighter pilot of the IAF. The show was conducted with the dual intention of motivating the youth to join the armed forces and showcasing the attributes of indomitable spirit and discipline in the IAF. The air display by SKAT was witnessed by a large crowd at 11:30 a.m. The profile was specifically crafted and curated to keep the audience enthralled throughout the duration of the display.



The team performed many challenging manoeuvres which require absolute precision, synchronisation and a very high degree of professional competence. Apart from the SKAT display, the audience also witnessed a mesmerising and thrilling display of the sky diving team of the IAF -- Akash Ganga and Low Level Aerobatics by Tejas and Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft. SKAT was formed in 1996 and the motto of the Squadron is "Sadaiva

Sarvottam" meaning "Always The Best". After initially flying Kiran Mark-II aircraft, SKAT was re-equipped with Hawk Mk-132 aircraft in the year 2015. The team has carried out more than 600 air displays across India as well as in China, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore and the UAE, said Colonel Amitabh Sharma, PRO (Defence), Jaipur.



Headmaster of govt school gunned down on outskirts of Patna

Patna, Feb 3 (IANS) : The headmaster of a government school was gunned down in a village on the outskirts of Patna on Saturday. The deceased has been identified as Mahesh Prasad, a native of Mamrejpur village under Naubatpur police station.

"The victim was the headmaster of the government high school in Shaharrampur. While returning home on his bike at around 6 p.m., he was gunned down by two bike-borne assailants in Rustamganj village. The victim died on the spot," said Vikram Sihag, SDPO of Phulwari Sharif, Patna. "We have sent the body for postmortem and the matter is under investigation. The reason behind the murder is yet to be ascertained. The police are taking the statements of the victim's family members to find some clues. We are also scanning the CCTV footage from the area to identify the attackers," Sihag said.

Practice of employing manpower from outside state should be minimised: Goa minister



Panaji, Feb 3 (IANS) : Goa Industries Minister Mauvin Godinho on Saturday said that the practice of employing manpower from outside the state has to be minimised so that locals can get more employment opportunities. He was speaking after inaugurating an industrial plant at Industrial Estate, Verna in South Goa. Godinho stressed upon the upskilling of Goan youths for the jobs in the industrial sector. He said that Goa need industrial growth for generating more employment avenues but at the same time "we have to see that our environment do not suffer in this bargain.

Gratifying to note Rs 2.7 lakh crore saved through DBT: IBA chief

Chennai, Feb 3 (IANS) : Indian banks have played a key role in implementing the social schemes of the Central government and also in achieving a savings of Rs 2.7 lakh crore through Direct Bank Transfer (DBT) mode, said A.K. Goel, Chairman, Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and Managing Director & CEO, Punjab National Bank. Reacting to the Interim Budget for 2024-25 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Parliament on Saturday, Goel said: "It is gratifying to note that Direct Benefit Transfers of Rs 34 lakh crore facilitated through banks to the beneficiaries has led to the saving of Rs. 2.7 lakh crore."



K'taka govt to facilitate online registration of marriage, to amend Hindu Marriage Registration Act

Bengaluru, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Congress government in Karnataka decided during a Cabinet meeting on Saturday to amend the provisions of the Hindu Marriage Registration (Karnataka) (Amendment) Rules, 2024 and facilitate online registration of marriages in the state. The move is likely to stir controversy in the state as Hindu organisations had earlier objected

to the proposal, claiming that it will encourage 'Love-Jihad' in the state. The Cabinet led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah gave its consent for the amendment of the law in this regard, as stated by Law Minister H.K. Patil after the meeting. Action will be taken as per the announcement of Siddaramaiah made in this regard during the budget presentation last year. Siddaramaiah had made an announcement in July last year on couples entering into wedlock. "You need not visit the sub-registrar's office to get the registration of your marriage done. A provision for online registration of marriages will be made," he had said. He also proposed to enable couples to submit applications to register their marriages in gram panchayats. The government has also enabled registration of marriages through

the Kaveri 2.0 software application. The marriages can also be registered at the Babu Seva centres and Grama One centres. "Until now, the marriage registrations were done at only sub-registrar offices. To bring flexibility in the process the provision of online submission of applications will be provided," Siddaramaiah had announced. However, Hindu organisations had objected to the proposal of the Congress government. Sri Ram Sena founder Pramod Muthalik had stated that the number of love-jihad cases will rise following the government's decision. Suryanarayan, the Co-convenor of All India Bajrang Dal, said the government should not implement this proposal and continue the earlier method of marriage registration.

Assam woman trampled to death by herd of elephants

Guwahati, Feb 3 (IANS) : A 31-year-old woman was trampled to death by a herd of wild elephants in Assam's Chirang district, officials said on Saturday. The woman, identified as Jonali Kalita, and her husband had gone to the Manas National Park's perimeter to gather wood when they unintentionally stumbled upon a herd of elephants on Wednesday night, according to park officials. The officials said that Kalita was trampled to death, but her husband was able to flee. A group of forest guards arrived and discovered her body. Police also arrived on the scene and took possession of

the body. According to police, the body was given to the district government hospital for a post-mortem examination. In the last year, Assam forest officials, among other people, have lost their lives to elephant attacks. Forest officials stated that there have been instances where wild elephants who have ventured outside of forest regions in quest of food, have attacked people. As a precaution, people who live close to forested regions occasionally erect electrical fences, which has also resulted in the deaths of a few elephants.



Nitish is past, Tejashwi is the future: Shivanand Tiwari

Patna, Feb 3 (IANS) : RJD national Vice-President Shivanand Tiwari claimed on Saturday that Nitish Kumar is the past, while Tejashwi Yadav is the future leader of Bihar. "Nitish Kumar always targeted the ruling of Lalu Prasad and Rabri Devi. He used to say that women could not step out of their homes before 2005," the veteran RJD leader said. "Talking about what happened in Bihar 20 years ago will take you nowhere. The people of Bihar want to know why they did not get jobs in the 17 years of Nitish's tenure," he said. The Mahagathbandhan government was formed 17 months ago, after which Nitish Kumar adopted the vision of Tejashwi Yadav and started working on giving jobs to the common people. How could such a miracle happen? It was due to Tejashwi Yadav and the people of Bihar know that," Tiwari said.



Snow blankets Dalai Lama's abode in Himachal

Dharamsala, Feb 3 (IANS) : McLeodganj, the abode of the Dalai Lama in Himachal Pradesh, was marooned in a blanket of snow Saturday, weather officials said. However, lower areas like Dharamsala saw rain. The majestic Dhauladhar ranges of the Himalayas, forming the backdrop to the Tibetan spiritual leader's official palace, have been experiencing heavy snow, a Met Official said. McLeodganj has been receiving some of the heaviest snowfall in many years. The weather official said McLeodganj and its nearby areas like Naddi and Bhagsu have experienced more than one foot of snow. "McLeodganj is like a wonderland," remarked tourist Shubham Gill from Punjab's Amritsar, adding: "This is the season's first snowfall, but after

many years in His Holiness' abode." Lobsang Yangtso, Senior Environmental Researcher with The Tibet Network, a global coalition of Tibet groups, remarked with a post on X: "Finally a nice snowfall at Dharamsala. This year's snowfall came late and local are worried of summer water security, farming and tourism. Weather patterns are changing." Tibetan government-in-exile member of Parliament Tenzin Jigdal considered the first snowfall of Dharamsala auspicious as they are preparing for the Tibetan New Year or Losar. McLeodganj is the headquarters of the Tibetan government-in-exile and the town and its suburbs support around 16,000 exiled Tibetans and an equal number of Indians. According to the Met department, Dharamsala's minimum temperature fell to minus 1.9 degree.

OPINIONmail



SITHARAMAN'S INTERIM BUDGET
2024-25 IS FOCUSED AND FUTURE-CENTRIC

The interim budget presented on February 1 is a hopeful document, pinning its faith on the continued buoyancy of the Indian economy. At the outset, the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, should be complimented for presenting the shortest and a crisp budget speech, instead of a meandering one of at least one and a half hours. Following tradition of desisting from major announcements and changes in an interim budget, the finance minister principally laid a vote of account for carrying on government expenses. But even within that limitations, the budget statement makes some clear points. Her speech shows the Indian economy in robust health. She could assume higher earnings for the government even without any hikes in rates, and a revenue buoyancy such that her borrowings targets next year were anticipated to be lower than the current year even in absolute terms. Secondly, even within the constraints of an interim budget, she has proposed an ambitious research and development fund, with long term lending to start ups and other research and technology based units, for as long as fifty years. These are virtually grants for such activities rather than loans.

Supposedly, in the current environment of far reaching technology and research products, the government is seeking to place India at the forefront of such activities. It is not only the traditional manufacturing growth than the prime minister had been talking about for some years now, the government is setting itself targets and objectives of even more sophisticated AI and technology driven growth.

Coming to the hard core of the budget proposals, the finance minister has kept her entire tax structure unchanged, leaving the rates where they were, kept the capital expenditure at an ambitious level, and yet anticipates the fiscal deficit to come down significantly. Fiscal deficit in the 2023-24 fiscal year has been bettered at 5.8% of GDP, against the budgeted level of 5.9%. This is set to go down to 5.1% of GDP in 2024-25.

With lower estimated borrowing requirements, the finance minister said that both gross and net borrowing for the next financial year, 2024-25 would be Rs14.13 lakh crore and Rs11.75 lakh crore next year. These would be lower than such borrowings in the current year. This could be singularly novel development.

In response to these announcements, the bonds markets in India have softened as with the prospects of lower government borrowings from the market, the interest rates could be expected to remain softer.

This could be possible only if the economy maintains a high growth traction yielding ever larger revenues to allow the government increase capital expenditure and at the same time peg the government deficit at a much lower level 5.1% of GDP.

With this underlying assumption of a high growth rate, the finance minister has announced a jump in public capital expenditure by over 11% to Rs 11,11,111 crore. It was immediately clear if the FM's fascination with "eleven" had some mystical qualities for self fulfilment. Giving the budget mathematics, it is roughly true that the FM's wishes could be easily fulfilled if Indian economy could hit a double digit growth rate, close to that magic figure of 11 or thereabouts. That is a tall claim, but neighbouring China had for sometime grown by double digit.

Going by the recent trends, it is not a very unreasonable expectation as India continued to grow fast even when the rest of the globe economy was showing signs of slowing down, particularly our large neighbour, China. As for the other features of the current interim budget, the finance minister has stuck to the anticipated political script. By way of her idiom for the budget, Ms Nirmala Sitharaman has tried to appease the vote banks. She has kept four segments of the population in sight for special attention, whatever that could mean in practice. The budget aims to address the development needs of four broad segments of population: the poor, the youth, women and farmers. All governments work towards the development of the poor and bring relief to them. Years back, Ms Indira Gandhi had brought to the fore this issue with her "Garibi hatao" programme. Till today, the poor is still there high on government's populist menu. No exception is the current government.

(By Anjan Roy)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail



TRIBALS OF JHARKHAND ARE
RARING TO AVENGE HEMANT'S HUMILIATION

In the middle class residential areas of Kolkata and people are seen animatedly discussing the strained relation between Mamata Banerjee and Rahul Gandhi and also trying to decode the reasons for Mamata's obstinacy towards Congress, especially her intransigent attitude towards Rahul. Her outright denial of the relevance of the Congress in Bengal and refusal to have any kind of relation with it has raised many improbable questions.

More than her decision to go alone to the Lok Sabha election, as according to her, the Congress has not been adopting a frank attitude on the issue of seat sharing, Kolkata denizens are astonished at her choosing the time to severe relation with Congress, when Narendra Modi has turned

more aggressive against the opposition parties and steadily moving ahead to finish off the INDIA bloc. They find virtually no tenability of her move.

The people question Mamata's political wisdom on her pledge to continue to be a member of the INDIA bloc, but at the same time her decision to oppose the Congress in the election. They argue that being a senior politician she would have ignored the problems being created by the state Congress chief Adhir Choudhary in the greater interest of defeating the rightist forces led by RSS.

They have a valid point since she has a very cordial relation with Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and she could have taken up this matter with them directly and candidly told them to caution Adhir. Instead, she chose to abandon the

old party and allow Rahul to walk through the streets of districts alone. They point out that in case she would have accompanied Rahul in the Yatra, a strong message would have gone across the country. This would have been also a sign of warning for the RSS and Modi and must have acted as deterrent.

The alleged attack on Rahul's car has simply widened the chasm between Mamata and Congress. Mamata's bete noire Adhir Choudhary has come out with the allegation that Rahul's vehicle was attacked in Malda's Harishchandrapur area as the yatra re-entered West Bengal from Bihar. "The rear window pane of the vehicle Rahul Gandhi was travelling in was smashed after being pelted with stones," he said. (IPA Service)

Union Ayush Minister
Shri Sarbananda
Sonowal inaugurates
Rashtriya Arogya Mela



National Arogya Fairs showcase the Rich legacy of Indian Traditional Medicine Systems of diversity, innovation and healthcare delivery in Ayush Sector, stated by Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ayush and Shipping, Port Waterways while inaugurating the National Arogya Fair organized by Shri Puran Chandra Gupta Smarak Trust in association with Ministry of Ayush. Shri Sonowal also added that National Arogya Fair is important and contributes in making Ayush sector surge forward and 'Har din Har Ghar Ayush' campaign is built to impart the benefits of Indian traditional medicine systems to the people.

The Minister further informed "out of the targeted 12500 Ayush Health and Wellness Centres, more than 9000 Health and Wellness Centres have been established. It has been only a little more than 9 years since the establishment of the Ministry of Ayush in the country.

BIHAR OPERATION OF BJP SIGNIFIES
THE SAFFRON CAMP'S
INSECURITY ABOUT POLL PROSPECTS

Bihar chief minister and JD(U) leader, Nitish Kumar, has somersaulted again. After leaving the BJP and forming a Mahagathbandhan government with the RJD in August 2022, Nitish has now defected back to the side of the BJP. In India's parliamentary history, Nitish Kumar has created a notorious record of switching sides five times and being sworn in as chief minister, nine times. This latest U-turn has taken place in the most curious circumstances. Since July last year, Nitish was ostensibly engaged in putting together an anti-BJP opposition grouping. It was his initiative that led to the first opposition conclave in Patna in June 2023. But how is it that Nitish, the builder of opposition unity becomes a courtier of the BJP within a span of six months.



IN EUROPE, LIBERAL CENTRE IS GOING
EXTINCT BEFORE EU ELECTIONS IN JUNE

Even before this June's elections to the European parliament, the EU has lost its center. It seems the bloc can no longer count on the EU-wide liberal political group, known as Renew, as the needle of the scales. The most recent example was France's president Emmanuel Macron. He promised to beat the far right — only to pass an immigration law reliant on the Rassemblement National's support. Whether due to his neoliberal policies, his rhetoric now hybridized with far-right pro-

paganda, or outright complicity, Macron has paved the way for Marine Le Pen to succeed him as president. We could say the same about Renew's main Dutch affiliate (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD) with regard to that country's perennial anti-immigration candidate Geert Wilders.

(IPA Service)

CROSS-BORDER KILLINGS OF TERRORISTS
STRAIN INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS BEFORE POLLS

Pakistan has accused India, its long-standing enemy, of conducting unlawful killings within that country's borders. It claimed having "evidence" of links between "Indian agents" and the assassination of two terrorists. This accusation comes at a time when there is a growing worry that the re-

cent increase in the ongoing indirect conflict could jeopardize the fragile peace between the two countries that has held for the past three years. These accusations have grown more strident after reports last year about alleged Indian plots to hire people for murder in the United States and Canada. Analysts suggest that India is now more focused on using aggressive



tactics to deal with threats emanating from other countries. But there arises a question in one's mind. Are these, in any way, indicative of

which way the wind is blowing, especially with the 2024 Lok Sabha elections knocking on our door. (IPA Service)



Israeli army releases 114 Palestinians arrested in Gaza ground operation

Gaza, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Israeli army has released 114 Palestinians through the Kerem Shalom crossing in the southern Gaza Strip, who were arrested during the ground operation, the media reported.

A Palestinian security source at the border authority in Gaza told Xinhua news agency on Saturday that some of the released Palestinians were transferred to Najjar Hospital in Rafah city due to deterioration in their health condition.

During its ground operation in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army arrested hundreds of Palestinians and transferred them to unknown locations, according to Euro-Med Human Rights monitor as quoted by Xinhua news agency report.

Some of the detainees, who were met by Xinhua during their presence in the hospital, said they were "beaten, humiliated, and tortured" during their detention, an allegation that has not been verified.

Relatives pay last respects to 4 Indian victims of Australia beach tragedy

Sydney, Feb 3 (IANS) : Grieving relatives travelled from India on Saturday to bid final adieu to four of their family members who died last week on Phillip Island in one of the worst drowning tragedies in the Australian state of Victoria since 2005.

Siblings Jagjeet Shivam Anand, 23, and Suhani Anand, 20, along with Kriti Bedi, 20, and Reema Sondhi, 43, died after the tide turned at the unpatrolled Forrest Caves beach in Newhaven.

The four victims were cremated on Saturday after a service that combined Sikh and Hindu rites and was attended by about 200 mourners, including family members, The Sydney Morning Herald reported. Remembering his late nephew, niece, sister, and sister-in-law, Ankur Chhabra said his young relatives came to Australia for a better future, and "in a few seconds, we lost

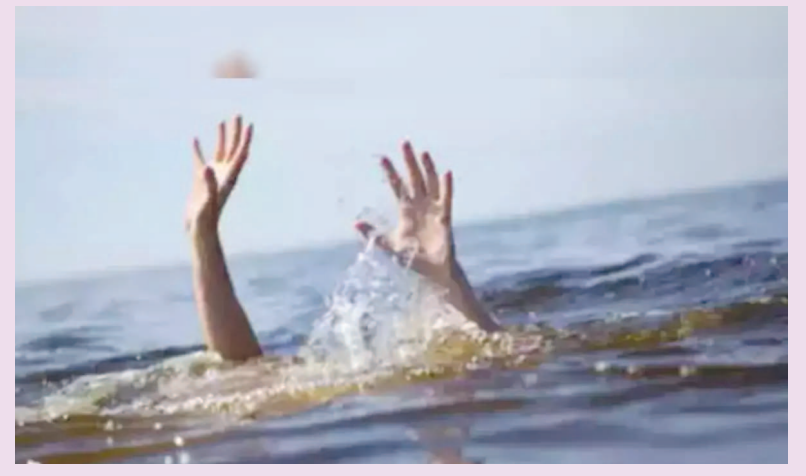
everybody". He recalled Jagjeet as a "golden-hearted boy", Suhani as "the most beautiful girl", Reema as the "bravest girl" and Kirti as "an animal lover". While Jagjeet was a dedicated aged care worker and sister Suhani was studying nursing, Kirti had arrived six months ago from Punjab to study psychology.

She stayed with Jagjeet and Suhani in Clyde alongside Chhabra, the report said.

Reema, a mother of two teens, was two weeks into her Australian holiday when the tragedy struck. Emergency services in the past have warned against swimming at the relatively remote Forrest Caves beach, which they say is a spot best suited to surfers.

Chhabra told The Herald that his family didn't see the warnings of dangerous waters at Forrest Caves, urging the authorities to improve safety signage.

"We have lost four family members, we don't want anyone else to lose their family members,"



Chhabra said. Along with Chhabra, other family and friends thanked the emergency services for trying to save their loved ones. They also praised the Indian High Commission and local MP Cassandra Fernando for helping the Indian family members enter the country for Saturday's service. Off-duty lifesavers surfing nearby had rushed to the drowning family's aid and pulled three people from the water unresponsive on January 24 at around 3.30 p.m. A rescue boat retrieved the fourth person after the Cape Woolamai Surf Lifesaving Club responded at about 3.40 p.m.

Three of the victims were pronounced dead at the scene, while

Suhani was airlifted to The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne in a critical condition where she succumbed to her injuries. The Indian High Commission condoled the deaths as a "heart-breaking tragedy" and assured all assistance to the family and friends of the deceased. "We all worked tirelessly to help those people," Ambulance Victoria manager Paul James had told the media after the tragedy. Liam Krige, Life Saving Victoria's general manager of operations, said at a press conference that 19 people have drowned in Victoria since December 1 -- two more than the same period last summer.



Indian-American pleads guilty to Bank Secrecy Act charges in \$1bn scheme

New York, Feb 3 (IANS) : An Indian-American man admitted that he failed to maintain an anti-money laundering programme in violation of the Bank Secrecy Act as part of a scheme to bring lucrative and high-risk international financial business to a small, unsophisticated credit union. Gyanendra Asre, 56, a certified anti-money laundering specialist from New York, is scheduled to be sentenced on May 3, a Department of Justice release stated on Saturday. According to court docu-

ments, from 2014 to 2016, Asre was a member of the supervisory board of the New York State Employees Federal Credit Union (NYSEFCU), a financial institution that was required to have an anti-money laundering program.

Through the NYSEFCU and other entities, Asre participated in a scheme that brought over \$1 billion in high-risk transactions, including millions of dollars of bulk cash transactions from a foreign bank to the NYSEFCU.

Experienced in international banking and trained in anti-money laun-

dering compliance and procedures, Asre represented to the NYSEFCU that he and his businesses would conduct appropriate anti-money laundering oversight as required by the Bank Secrecy Act.

Based on Asre's representations, the NYSEFCU -- a small credit union with a volunteer board that primarily served New York state public employees -- allowed Asre and his entities to conduct high-risk transactions through it. Contrary to his representations, Asre failed to implement and maintain an anti-money laundering program at the NYSEFCU. This failure caused the NYSEFCU to process the high-risk transactions without appropriate oversight and without ever filing a single Suspicious Activity Report, as required by law.

A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the US Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors. Asre's case was prosecuted by Acting Chief Margaret Moeser of the Criminal Division's Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Section (MLARS).



Greek farmers continue protests demanding govt pledged aid without delay

Athens, Feb 3 (IANS) : Greek farmers are planning protests across the country seeking sufficient financial aid pledged by the government with no delays.

According to official estimates, a storm in September caused extensive flooding, resulting in 15 fatalities and huge material damage amounting to about one billion euros (roughly \$1.08 billion). On Saturday, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis had announced an increase of up to 10,000 euros in the initial compensa-

tion approved by the government for damages caused by natural disasters last year, Greek national news agency AMNA reported. Acknowledging that farmers have received only 2,000 euros so far, the prime minister reaffirmed the commitment to provide complete compensation for the losses incurred in crops and produce. Representatives of farmers' associations gathered to discuss mobilisation plans at Palamas municipality in the Thessaly region, Xinhua news agency reported.

Three members of a family killed in fire in Vietnam

Hanoi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Three members of a family were killed in a fire in Vietnam's Hai Phong city on Saturday, the state media reported. The deceased were a 43-year-old woman and her daughter aged six and son aged eight, Vietnam News Agency reported. Another daughter, aged 16, who escaped through the back door of the house, suffered a face burn. The father was going to work when the incident happened, Xinhua news agency reported. The fire broke out at a rented one-floor house covering 60 square meters in Vinh Bao district. The case is being further investigated.

India pays up \$32M annual UN dues, getting place on 'honour roll'

United Nations, Feb 3 (IANS) : India has paid its annual dues of \$32.895 million to the UN's general budget, according to Stéphane Dujarric, the Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. At his daily briefing on Saturday, he thanked New Delhi for the contribution which earned it a place on UN's "honour roll". India is one of the only 36 countries among the UN's 193 members to have paid its annual assessment for the UN's general budget by the deadline on Saturday, according to the UN General Assembly's Committee on Contributions. New Delhi's total assessment for the general budget is \$36.18 million but it is given a credit of \$3.85 million, which is the credit from staff assessments -- deductions made from the salaries of UN employees who are Indian nationals in lieu of income taxes, and credited to India. India's contribution makes up 1.044 per cent of the total regular budget of the UN of the UN's budget of \$3.59 billion. The national contributions are calculated by a complex formula that is based on the size of the gross national income and offset by considerations of its "capacity to pay" based on low per capita income and external debt.



Russia has no intention to deploy nuclear weapons in other nations : Deputy FM

Moscow, Feb 3 (IANS) : Russia is not planning to deploy nuclear weapons in other countries, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said. Ryabkov affirmed Moscow's commitment to refrain from deploying nuclear weapons in countries beyond the existing stations in Belarus. This statement came on Saturday during a press conference held after the inaugural BRICS Sherpas and Sous-Sherpas meeting, Xinhua news agency reported. He said Moscow deployed tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus to counter "the increasingly aggressive.

US shuts down China-backed botnet targeting home office routers

Washington, Feb 3 (IANS) : The US government has shut down a Chinese government-backed botnet that hijacked "hundreds" of small office and home office routers in the US.

The hackers, known to the private sector as 'Volt Typhoon', used privately-owned small office/home office (SOHO) routers infected with the "KV Botnet" malware to conceal the People's Republic of China (PRC) origin of further hacking activities directed against US and other foreign victims. The vast majority of routers that comprised the KV Botnet were Cisco and NetGear routers that were vulnerable because they had reached "end of life" status, no longer supported through security patches or other software updates.

The court-authorized operation deleted the KV Botnet malware from the routers and took additional steps to sever their connection to the botnet, such as blocking communications with other devices used to control the botnet, the US Justice Department said in a statement.

"The Justice Department has disrupted a PRC-backed hacking group that attempted to target America's critical infrastructure utilising a botnet," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland.

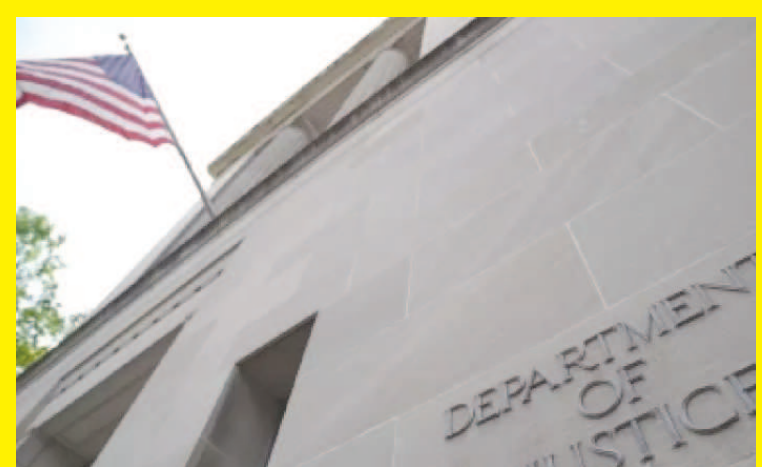
"In wiping out the KV Botnet from hundreds of

routers nationwide, the Department of Justice is using all its tools to disrupt national security threats -- in real time," said Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco. The operation did not impact the legitimate functions of, or collect content information from, hacked routers.

Additionally, the court-authorized steps to disconnect the routers from the KV Botnet and prevent

reinfection are temporary in nature.

"A router's owner can reverse these mitigation steps by restarting the router. However, a restart that is not accompanied by mitigation steps similar to those the court order authorised will make the router vulnerable to reinfection," said the Justice Department.





ED grills Rohit Pawar for second time in money-laundering case

Mumbai, Feb 3 (IANS) : Spelling trouble for the Nationalist Congress Party (SP), its MLA Rohit R. Pawar was grilled for the second time in a week by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged money-laundering case probe, here on Saturday. Rohit R. Pawar (38), the grandnephew of NCP President Sharad Pawar, entered the ED office at noon where the questioning was on for over eight hours. He was earlier questioned

on January 24. Rohit Pawar is the CEO of Baramati Agro Ltd, and his grand-aunt, Pratibha Sharad Pawar, along with other family members, were present at the NCP (SP) office nearby till late on Thursday evening. Rohit Pawar is being quizzed in connection with the probe into a money-laundering case arising out of the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam probed by the Mumbai Police in 2019.

Ex-MLAs, MPs no longer 'VIPs' in Uttar Pradesh

Lucknow, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Uttar Pradesh government has issued a clarification regarding the categorisation of 'Very Important Persons' (VIPs) for the purpose of forwarding complaints against public servants. Former MLAs, MPs and many other notable individuals will no longer enjoy VIP status when forwarding complaint letters against public servants, signalling a shift in the treatment of such grievances by the government. An order issued in this regard by the government specifies that only sitting MPs and MLAs as well as chairpersons of constitutional bodies will be considered VIPs in this context. "I am directed to clarify that sitting MPs and MLAs alone will be counted as VIPs. Additionally, sitting chairpersons of various constitutional bodies will also be counted as VIPs," special secretary, personnel, Rajesh Pratap Singh

said, adding that any person other than categorized as VIPs will need to submit an affidavit to verify the complainant while forwarding a complaint through letter. In 1997, the state government made provisions for the disposal of complaints received from various sources against government officers and employees. According to these rules as reiterated in the order, before initiating any action on the complaint letter received from a VIP, it is necessary to inform the VIP concerned and get verified that the complaint letter is signed by him/her only and he/she is satisfied about the charges levelled in the letter. In cases of complaints received from other sources, the rules mandate taking an affidavit from the complainant and adequate proof for verification of the complainant before any action on the grievance is launched. However, till now there was no categorisation of who will be counted as a VIP for the purpose of treatment of a complaint against a public servant because of which a lot of confusion prevailed while dis-



posing complaints that government used to receive through letters from sitting as well as ex-MPs, MLAs, former ministers, members of constitutional bodies and other notable persons. "The government has issued the clarification because a lot of internal correspondence often had to be made to seek clarity on whether a particular complaint received from a particular dignitary will be treated as one received from a VIP and disposed accordingly," said special secretary, personnel, Rajesh Pratap Singh. "Now, it has been clarified that only sitting MPs, MLAs and heads of constitutional bodies will be considered as VIPs for the disposal of complaint letters against govern-

ment officers and employees," he said. While the new changes do aim at doing away with ambiguity, placing current officeholders at the forefront of the process and reshaping the protocol for filing complaints against public servants, ironically the recent clarification itself has left some confusion and may need to further clarification. "In the new order, there is no clarity on whether sitting MLCs will be treated as VIPs or not," pointed out an official. "Also, the translation of the term 'Samvaidhanik nikayo' provided in the bracket in the order in Hindi is 'statutory body' which is not correct, and it should have been 'constitutional body'.

Delhi HC urges IIT to prioritise student well-being to combat suicides

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Expressing concern over the rising trend of student suicides, the Delhi High Court has called upon the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) to actively engage in counselling efforts and emphasise to students that academic success is not the sole measure of life's importance. The court addressed these concerns while handling a petition related to the alleged suicides of two IIT-Delhi students from a Scheduled Caste community last year. The parents of the deceased

students sought court directions for an FIR registration and an impartial investigation into alleged "caste-based atrocities" within the institution. While the police found no evidence of caste-based discrimination, they discovered that the students had been failing in multiple subjects and were under academic pressure. Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar expressed understanding for the parents' sentiments and strongly discouraged the mounting pressure on young minds to excel in every aspect of life. The court stressed the need for IIT faculty and staff to actively counsel, encourage, motivate, and invigorate students, stressing that while academic success is important, it is not the most crucial aspect of life. The court noted the importance of instilling values related to physical and mental health during students' formative years, promoting confidence to face life's challenges.



Interim Budget lacks roadmap to reduce inflation: Hooda

Chandigarh, Feb 3 (IANS) : Congress leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda on Saturday said only formalities have been completed in the name of the Interim Budget as it neither provided any relief to the taxpayer, nor it have any roadmap to reduce inflation. "In this Budget, the MSP (minimum support price) and other demands of the farmers have also been completely ignored. Homemakers, labourers, employees and business class also felt disappointed with the Budget," he said in a statement. Hooda said the government's fiscal deficit continued to increase in the past 10 years. "Till 2014, during the UPA government, it was only 4.8 per cent, which has now increased to 5.8 per cent. Also there has been a huge decline in the growth rate of the GDP. The average growth rate during the UPA government was around eight per cent.



Interim Budget aims at enriching the rich by squeezing the poor : CPI-M

Kolkata, Feb 3 (IANS) : The CPI-M leadership on Saturday termed the proposals of the Interim Budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as an attempt to "enrich the rich by squeezing the poor". As per the statement, although the revenue receipts in 2023-24 exceeded the budget estimates and grew by 13.3 per cent compared to the previous year the

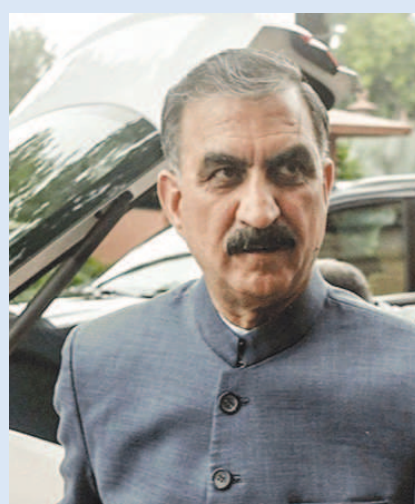
Union government expenditures have been squeezed below budget estimates in order to reduce the fiscal deficit. "These expenditures have grown by only 7 per cent, less than even the nominal growth of GDP, which is officially expected to be 8.9 per cent. This shortfall in expenditure has taken place despite the establishment expenditure of the government being higher than budgeted.

Interim Budget fails to meet expectations of people: Himachal CM

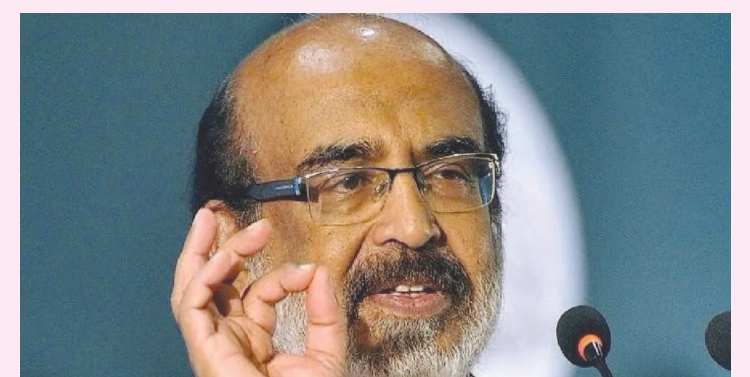
Shimla, Feb 3 (IANS) : Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu on Saturday said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the interim Union budget, failed to meet the expectations of the people. He said the budget is merely a financial web to trap the people in its luring promises. The focus of the budget is to woo the voters rather than to strengthen the economy. "Once again, the interests of Himachal Pradesh have been

ignored in the budget and not even a single penny has been provided, despite knowing well that the state has suffered a huge loss of lives and property during the recent disaster," the Chief Minister said. He said that there was no mention of expansion of the rail network for the state. "There is also no mention of any rapid mass transit system for hilly states like Himachal where metro rail cannot be started," he said. He said that though green and solar energy have been mentioned in the budget speech, there is no clear

roadmap as to how the green and the solar energy initiatives will be achieved. "No additional tax relief has been given to the middle class, though it plays an important role in the Indian economy. The budget has no mention of controlling inflation," he said. He said that the prices of LPG were already high and there has been no reduction in the prices of



diesel and petrol to provide relief to the common people. He said that there was nothing for the salaried, the poor and the middle class. "Only the capitalists and industrialists have been kept in mind in this budget.



It's only a summons, Kerala HC tells former state Finance Minister Isaac

Kochi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Veteran CPI-M leader and former Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac got a jolt from the Kerala High Court on Saturday as it, hearing his plea against fresh summons from the ED, orally remarked: "It is only a summons." Isaac filed a petition challenging the fresh summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the financial trans-

actions of the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) in relation to the masala bonds case. Counsel for Isaac said that the first summons was withdrawn by the ED pursuant to the orders of the court and now a second summons was issued. The court, after going through the petition, asked notice to be served to all the parties and posted the case for further hearing on February 9.

India a silver lining is 5G era as Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung report revenue slump

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) Marking 5G era's first record low year, Ericsson, Nokia and Samsung each announced a drop in overall 2023 sales in their earnings calls, citing macroeconomic challenges and a shrinking mobile network infrastructure market, as well as lower spending by operators. India was a silver lining, as the unprecedentedly quick rollouts boosted their

overall numbers. However, there was a slowdown among Indian operators during Q4 2023, as they plan to normalise their investments in 2024 following a capex-intensive 2023, reports market intelligence firm Counterpoint Research. For the year 2023, Ericsson generated nearly \$24.8 billion in revenue while its Finnish counterpart Nokia generated \$24.1 billion in revenue. Samsung's network division sales stood at \$2.9 billion. Due to the

changes in the business mix, its margin remained deflated. "Ericsson maintained its leadership in 5G Standalone deployments. Meanwhile, its cloud and network services business revenue remained unchanged YoY as the increase was offset in part by the decreased managed service revenues because of descope and contract exits," the report mentioned.



SBI records 35% fall in Q3 net profit at Rs 9,163 crore

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : State Bank of India (SBI) on Saturday reported a 35 per cent decline in net profit at Rs 9,163 crore for the October-December quarter of the current financial year.

SBI said that the drop in profit was due to a one-time exceptional item of Rs 7,100 crore for a provision towards higher pension costs and wage revisions of its staff. The country's largest bank had made a net profit of Rs 14,205 crore in the same quarter of the previous year.

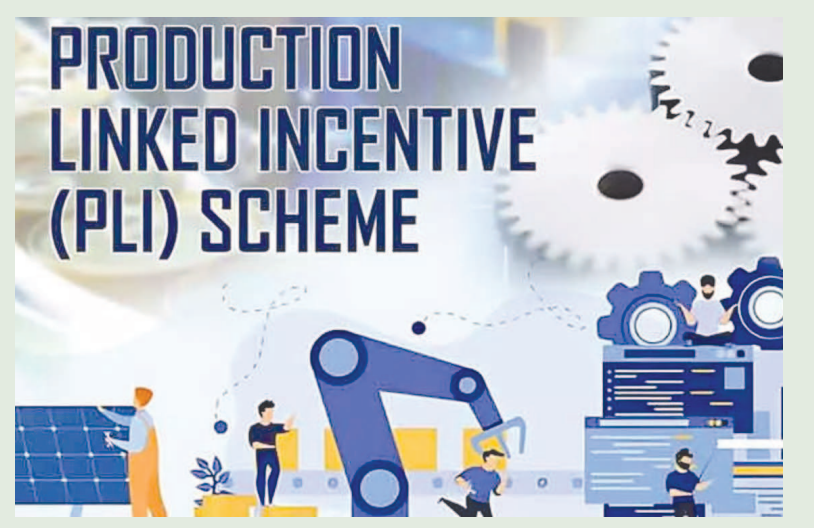
The bank said it has earned Rs 105,733.78 crore in interest income in Q3 FY24, which was up 22 per cent from Rs 86,616.04 crore reported in the year-ago period. The net interest income (NII) of the country's largest bank stood at Rs 39,815 crore for the quarter.

PLI scheme buoys manufacturing sector, turns it into growth driver

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : India's manufacturing sector has emerged as the main growth driver as the country continues to be a bright spot with an over 7 per cent GDP growth amid the global slowdown. The growth momentum in manufacturing which shot up to a robust 13.9 per

cent in the July-Sept quarter is being backed with the government's continuous process of economic reforms. The interim budget has expanded the highly successful production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to cover the toys, footwear and leather industries and enhanced the outlay for electronics, automo-

biles and pharmaceuticals to spur growth. The country has registered a phenomenal 22.24 per cent surge in electronics exports to cross the \$20 billion mark in the first nine months of the current financial year (2023-24), according to data compiled by the India Cellular and Electronics Association (FY24).



Tesla recalls more than 2 mn vehicles in US over warning lights issue

San Francisco, Feb 3 (IANS) : Elon Musk-run Tesla is recalling more than two million vehicles -- almost all of the cars it sold in the US -- due to incorrect font size on warning lights. According to a recall notice filed with the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the

recall of almost 2.2 million vehicles includes nearly all Tesla EV models, including Model S, Model X, 2017-2023 Model 3, Model Y, and 2024 Cybertruck vehicles. "An incorrect font size is displayed on the instrument panel for the



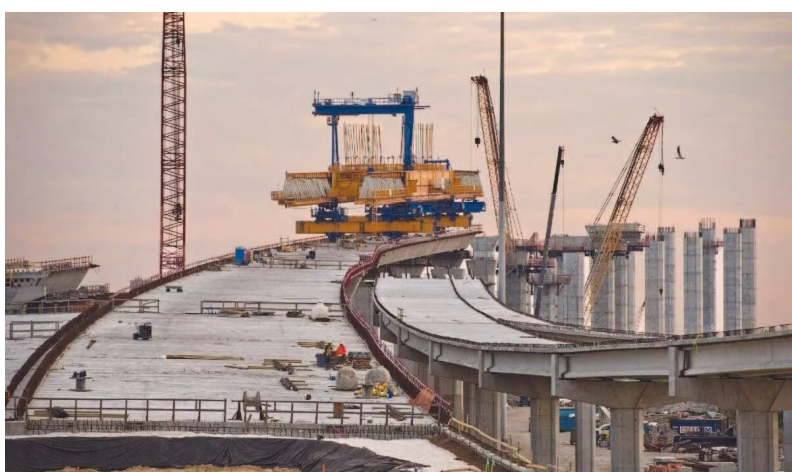
Brake, Park, and Antilock Brake System (ABS) warning lights. As such, these vehicles fail to comply with the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard number 105, 'Hydraulic and Electric Brake Systems' and 135, 'Light Vehicle Brake Systems'," the notice reads.



Savings rate down but healthy at 30%; uptick in housing loans drives credit growth

Chennai, Feb 3 (IANS) : India's household savings, a major contributor for the economic growth, is on the decline since FY12 and is currently averaging at about 30 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), said top economists. "The current savings rate is 30.2 per cent of GDP as of FY 22, the latest data available so far. The trend has been on decline since FY 12 when the savings rate was 34.6

per cent of GDP. The savings rate in the last decade averaged nearly 32 per cent of GDP," Sujan Hajra, Chief Economist & Executive Director, Anand Rathi Shares and Stock Brokers told IANS. Hajra said domestic savings contribute to the investment in the economy. The higher savings rate facilitates the investment environment to be reliant on domestic financing with marginal dependence on external financing.



Govt banks on big-ticket infra projects to put economy on growth track

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Big ticket infrastructure projects in the highways, railways and ports sector will continue to drive growth in the Indian economy as the government has stepped up the outlay for these investments in the interim budget for 2024-25. Government investments in large infrastruc-

ture projects create jobs and incomes that have a multiplier effect on the economy as the demand for products such as steel and cement also goes up which leads to more private investments and employment. With the creation of additional jobs, the demand for consumer goods also increases leading to a

further acceleration in the country's economic growth rate. To ramp up the virtuous cycle of investment and job creation the budget for 2023-24 had ramped up the capital expenditure outlay on infrastructure projects by 37.4 per cent to a whopping Rs10 lakh crore from Rs 7.28 lakh crore in 2022-23.

The interim budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday has further enhanced by 11.1 per cent the allocation for infrastructure projects to a whopping Rs 11.11 lakh crore to spur growth. The increase that comes on top of a large base of the previous year will result in massive investments to spur growth. The finance minister pointed out that this will also attract big investments from the private sector which will accelerate the growth momentum. Another positive development is that the government has cut the fiscal deficit and therefore will

need to borrow less from the market. This will leave banks with more funds to finance the investments of private sector companies that in turn will spur growth. The interim budget provides for a Rs 2.52 lakh crore capital expenditure for the Railways in 2024-25. The finance minister has announced the implementation of three major economic railway corridor programmes namely energy, mineral and cement corridors; port connectivity corridors; and high traffic density corridors. Sitharaman said that railway projects have been identified under the PM Gati Shakti Yojana for enabling multi-modal connectivity. These corridors will accelerate GDP growth by improving logistics efficiency and reducing logistics costs, she added.

More than 30,000 tech employees lose jobs globally in 1st month of 2024

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The year 2024 started off on a worse note for the tech employees, as more than 122 tech companies and startups laid off more than 30,000 workers in January itself, while the job cuts continue unabated. According to data compiled by layoff-tracking website Layoffs.fyi, 122 tech companies have shown the door to 31,751

employees (as of February 3). Tech companies, including startups, around the world fired more than 425,000 employees in 2022 and 2023, with more than 36,000 employees being sacked in India in the same time frame.





Newly announced recruitment panel of primary teachers challenged in Calcutta HC

Kolkata, Feb 3 (IANS) : The 2022 panel for recruitment of primary teachers in state-run schools which was announced by the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (WBBPE) on Saturday, has been challenged in Calcutta High Court. A group of 10 candidates have challenged the panel of 9,533 candidates announced on Wednesday in Calcutta High Court. The petition has been admitted by Justice Mantha and the matter is expected to come up for hearing on Saturday. Recently, all cases related

to the education sector have been transferred from the bench of Justice Abhijit Ganguly to that of Justice Mantha. In September 2022, WBBPE gave the notification for appointing a total of 11,758 primary teachers in the state-run school. In the notification, it was said that candidates with both Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) and Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed) will be eligible for the posts. However, SC then passed an order that the candidates with B.Ed degrees should not be considered for the posts of primary teachers. The ten applicants who

have filed the petition have both B.Ed and D.El.Ed certifications. However, since their scores in B.Ed. Examinations were higher than that in the D.El.Ed examination, they filled up the form mentioning their scores in the B.Ed examination. However, it has now become a reason for their names not appearing in the panel because of the apex court. These candidates have demanded that since they also have the D.El.Ed certification, their names should be included in the panel.

Akbar was not great at all: Rajasthan Education Minister

Jaipur, Feb 3 (IANS) : Rajasthan Education Minister Madan Dilawar on Saturday said that the Mughal Emperor was not great, alleging that the Emperor also gave the concept of Meena Bazaar who used to pick up women. "After all the things he (Akbar) has done, how can he be great? Akbar was not great at all," the minister said. He also alleged that in some school text books Chandrashekhar Azad and Bhagat Singh are being referred to as "terrorists". "If patriots are taught as terrorists, it will have an adverse effect on our children. Changes will be made to correct these things. All students will have to wear the same uniform now," the Education Minister said. He said that the government is not against hijab. "I have no objection to hijab. In our country, any person can wear any kind of dress but students will be allowed to enter schools only in the prescribed school uniform. But if any student has any objection, he or she can go to some other school."



Mamata likely to visit Delhi next week; secrecy over itinerary

Kolkata, Feb 3 (IANS) : West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to make a two-day trip to the national capital next week. Although a section of the party insiders confirmed the possibility of the tour, they said absolute secrecy is being maintained about the itinerary of her trip. Sources said the Chief Minister is likely to attend the first half of the second day of the budget session of the state Assembly on February 6, before leaving for Delhi the same afternoon. Although the party leadership has maintained secrecy on the proposed Delhi trip of the Chief Minister, sources said there is a possibility of her attending an important meeting in the national capital. However, party leaders are tight-lipped as to whether the meeting will be an internal one with the party MPs who are currently in Delhi for the Budget Session of the Parliament, or it will be with leaders of other political parties. The last time the Chief Minister went to the national capital was in December last year, when she had a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the pending central dues to the West Bengal government under various centrally-sponsored schemes.

K'taka BJP slams Cong MP for 'South India separate nation' remarks

Bengaluru, Feb 3 (IANS) : Karnataka BJP on Saturday slammed Congress MP D.K. Suresh over his "South India separate nation" remarks and for allegedly dividing India. "On one hand Rahul Gandhi is carrying out Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra and on the other hand MP and KPCC Chief D.K. Shivakumar's brother D.K. Suresh calls for Bharat Todo. This is the same mind set of Congress which led to partition," Karnataka LoP R. Ashoka said. He also asked the senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh that if an elected MP who has taken an oath to protect the sovereignty and integrity but India calls for dividing India isn't it a violation of his oath? "Congress President Kharge, isn't this an insult to Babasaheb Ambedkar's constitution?" he said. Congress MP D.K. Suresh has stirred a controversy saying that discrimination is done on the lines of north India and south India. "If this continues, the country will have to be divided," he had said. Suresh had said that the money for south India is allotted to north India. "Due to such favours, the South is facing financial difficulties. If this continues inevitably we will have to raise a voice to make South India a separate nation," Suresh said.



Delhi HC seeks report on allegations of discrimination against bachelor tenants in Dwarka housing society

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court has directed police to submit a report on allegations that a housing society in Dwarka attempted to compel bachelor tenants to vacate their flats. Justice Mini Pushkarna granted the police a four-week period to file a status report. The case revolves around a notice issued by the Bairwa Bharti Managing Committee in July 2022, calling for the evacuation of flats occupied by bachelor tenants and commercial offices in the Dwarka housing society. In August 2022, a district court had stayed the notice. Home Residency Infratech Private Ltd, a private company owning a flat in the society, later filed a contempt of court case in the Delhi High Court, alleging a violation of the district court order. Despite the stay order, the discrimination against bachelor tenants reportedly persisted.



Rajasthan Deputy CM inaugurates JLF in Jaipur

Jaipur, Feb 3 (IANS) : Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari on Saturday inaugurated the 17th edition of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) at Hotel Clarks Amer in Rajasthan. "This fest is very special from a tourism point of view and

the Tourism Department is also associated with it. Known and famous writers have been associated with this festival. We all are excited to listen to them," she said. In the first session titled 'Baal-O-Par: The Beating Heart of Poetry', legendary lyricist Gulzar recited songs and ghazals. Renowned

Urdu writer Rakshanda Jaleel also addressed the people on the occasion.

"This season, we are making a carbon free festival. If people support this campaign, then it will definitely be successful this time," JLF organiser Sanjoy K Roy said.



JU directs internal committee to probe suicide of visibly impaired student

Kolkata, Feb 3 (IANS) : Jadavpur University (JU) authorities have directed internal complaints committee (ICC) to probe the allegation against two students of the university of abetting the suicide of a fellow female student who was visibly impaired.

Already one of the two accused students has been directed by the university authorities not to enter the JU campus till the time the panel comes out with its fi-

nal probe report in the matter. The accused student is also visibly impaired.

As per the decision of the university authorities, the panel will give its preliminary report on the matter on February 12. The final report of the committee is expected to surface in a month from that.

West Bengal Human Right Commission (WBHRC) has already sought a report from the JU authorities, and according to the university insiders.

Assam to introduce bill in Assembly to promote tourism industry

Guwahati, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Assam government has decided to introduce Assam Tourism (Development and Registration) Bill in the upcoming session of the state Assembly this month, officials said on Saturday. A decision in this regard was taken in a state cabinet meeting held on Saturday night in presence of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. "This is for the first time such a bill to be introduced in Assam. It will be beneficial for

all stakeholders related to the tourism industry. The bill once converted into act will work as a regulatory tool for the betterment of the tourists and other people involved in the tourism business," Tourism Minister Jayanta Mallabarua told reporters. According to an official statement, all business and permitted activities related to tourism like hotels, heritage properties, homestay operators, service operations, travel agents will have to do a registration on a government designated portal. Moreover, an ad-



venture safety audit committee to be instituted for conducting the risk assessment of adventure sites and activities. The minister said that the proposed bill will bring benefits such as ensuring economic growth via development of tourism and growth of infrastructure tourism.

PMK General Body Meeting to decide on alliance for 2024 general elections

Chennai, Feb 3 (IANS) : Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), the political arm of the powerful Vanniyar community in Tamil Nadu, is likely to take a call on its alliance partners for the 2024 general elections later in the day on Saturday. The party General Body Meeting to be held today is likely to take the decision on the political alliance. There were rumours that the PMK had already finalised its seat sharing talks with the AIADMK but the PMK founder leader, Dr S Ramadoss categorically denied any such alliance.



TN gets 18th wildlife sanctuary in Erode district

Chennai, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Tamil Nadu government has declared a new reserve forest in the Bargur Hills in Erode district. The reserve forest named 'Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary' has a stretch of protected forests and links the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve with the Cauvery South Wildlife Sanctuary. This wildlife sanctuary spread across 80,114.80 hectares of land has been notified as the 18th wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu. Forest areas covering North Bargur (47,323.50 hectares), South Bargur (24,736.80), Thamarai karai (3,037.37), South Bargur Part 844 (2,521.28), Ennamangalam (2,269.37) and the Nagalur reserve forest area (226.48 hectares) fall under the sanctuary, while six tribal habitations and roads connecting these habitations have been excluded. It may be recalled that the Tamil Nadu government had first announced about setting up of the sanctuary in the state budget of 2023. A notification issued by the Environment, Climate Change and Forests Department dated January 30, 2024 said these forests occupy a prominent position in the Eastern Ghats as they merge with the Western Ghats at the Nilgiris. The vast landscape of the newly-announced sanctuary is home to diverse flora and fauna, making it an ideal habitat for various life forms. The landscape is interconnected to the Kollegal forests of Karnataka and the Nilgiris, creating one of the most diverse habitats in the region. The 18th wildlife sanctuary of the state is part of the corridor that connects the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR) to the Male Mahadeshwara Hills Tiger Reserve and the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary.



Hanuman flag removal controversy spreads to other parts of K'taka

Bengaluru, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Hanuman flag removal row, that became a flashpoint between the Congress government, BJP and Hindu organisations in Karnataka, is now gradually spreading to other regions of the state.

After the removal of a Hanuman flag from a public place in Mandya district, green flags have been installed at public places in several towns.

The local people in Chikkaballapur city have filed a complaint with authorities to remove the green flag hoisted on a flag post near Doddabhajame Mane area on Saturday. The civic authorities had visited the spot and directed the concerned to remove the flag.

The BJP leaders have demanded removal of a half moon and star structure installed on the famous Clock Tower in Kolar city.



Chandigarh mayoral poll row: AAP-Congress joint candidate petitions SC

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS): INDIA bloc's mayoral candidate Kuldeep Kumar has filed a petition before the Supreme Court after the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday refused to pass an interim order staying the results of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (CMC).

On Saturday, the Punjab and Haryana High Court issued notice on a plea filed by AAP and Congress Party's Joint Candidate Kuldeep Kumar accusing the Presiding Officer of resorting to fraud and

forgery in the counting process. The High Court sought response from the Chandigarh administration and CMC in the matter and asked respondents to file replies within three weeks.

However, it refused to pass an interim order staying the election results held a day earlier for the post of mayor.

In a major setback to the INDIA bloc's Congress-AAP alliance on Tuesday, the municipal corporation ruling BJP retained the mayoral seat for the ninth time in a row by winning the post with just four votes. The AAP-Congress alliance lost

the seat despite having the maximum councillors. Eight out of 36 votes were declared invalid by presiding authority Anil Masih, a nominated councillor, with no voting right. The BJP got 16 votes, while the AAP-Congress alliance had 12 votes despite having 20 councillors.

In his petition before the high court, the AAP-Congress joint candidate alleged complete departure of the practice and rules saying that the presiding officer refused to allow the nominees of parties to monitor the counting of votes.

Delhi minor death : 12-year-old died due to septicaemic shock, reveals autopsy report

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The post-mortem report of a 12-year-old boy, who died after nine days after being allegedly assaulted by some students of senior classes at his school in north Delhi, revealed that he died due to septicaemic shock as a result of an injury to the left knee due to blunt force trauma, police said on Saturday. According to police, on January 20, information was received from Deep Chand Bandhu Hospital in Ashok Vihar regarding the death of a minor during treatment.



Waqf Board case : Delhi HC refuses to stay summons issued to Amanatullah Khan by ED

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court on Saturday refused to stay the summons issued to AAP MLA and Waqf Board chief Amanatullah Khan by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a Rs 36 crore property case. On Tuesday, the court had refused to give immediate relief to Khan against the summons saying that relief cannot be sought at the last minute.

The court had also sought clarification on when the summons was initially issued. Khan has challenged the constitutional validity of Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and has also sought

a directive to quash the cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) and the ED.

The division bench of Justices Rekha Palli and Rajnish Bhatnagar, on Thursday, refused to issue notice on Khan's plea challenging the FIR registered by ACB, and the summons and investigation in the matter.

Due to non-availability of Khan's counsel, the court adjourned the matter for February 7.

"While adjourning the matter at the request of the counsel appearing for the petitioner, it is made clear that neither the court



has issued notice in the petition nor any interim order has been granted," the court said.

Special Judge Rakesh Syal, of the Rouse Avenue Courts, had recently taken cognisance of an ED charge sheet filed in the case. The ED had filed the charge sheet against Zeeshan Haider, his partnership firm Skypower, Javed Imam Siddiqui, Dawood Nasir, and Qausar Imam Siddiqui. Allegedly, a property worth Rs 36 crore was acquired with illicit funds, purportedly influenced by Khan, who reportedly handed over Rs 8 crore in cash.



SGPGIMS to provide free DNA testing for hepatitis

Lucknow, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) will be providing free DNA testing for hepatitis B and RNA testing for hepatitis C, at the Department of Hepatology, it was announced on Saturday. The cost of these tests would be borne by the Uttar Pradesh

Government through the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP).

The patients willing to avail these services need to register themselves in the hepatology OPD.

Officials said that the Centre has pledged to achieve country-wide elimination of hepatitis C by 2030.

A sweet victory for unmarried women of Rajasthan as Anganwadi positions open for them

Jaipur, Feb 3 (IANS) : When there is no condition of marriage for men to get employed in any government department, why should that be imposed on women who strive to become anganwadi workers? That was what piqued Madhu Charan (26) to launch a legal battle against the Rajasthan government over a rather strange constraint that has been in force in the state for more than two decades. An unmarried woman hailing from Gugdi in Pachpadra block of Balotra district, Madhu approached the Rajasthan High Court (HC) against the marriage clause for getting anganwadi job. On September 4 last year, the HC ruled in her favour and declared the condition of women being married as "il-

legal, illogical, arbitrary and unconstitutional".

"I fought in the HC for four-and-a-half years... This was not my fight alone, but of all the women in the state. This was to get justice for everyone," she told 101Reporters with a steely resolve.

"The HC has held in its judgment that depriving a woman of public employment on the basis of her unmarried status is a violation of the fundamental rights granted to a woman under Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India. The court termed it an attack on the dignity of women. Respecting the HC decision, the government should have immediately removed this condition. However, the department has not issued any order yet," she added.

Explaining how the case came about, Madhu's father Muldan

Charan said the Women and Child Development (WCD) Department had issued an advertisement in June 2019 to fill the vacant post of an anganwadi worker in their village. "My daughter tried to apply, but she was not allowed because she was unmarried. Subsequently, I sent her application by speed post to the office of the Child Development Project Officer [CDPO], Pachpadra, but even that was not considered."

"I am a small farmer, but I stand with my daughter on this issue. Even if we had to go to the Supreme Court, we would have definitely gone," he asserted. Even today, people of Rajasthan hesitate to send their girl children out of their villages for work. They think it is better for women to get employed in their villages itself. In line with this thought process, unmarried girls in the state have

been submitting memorandums to the department officials following the HC judgment, demanding that they be appointed in anganwadis. "A few months ago, we invited applications for anganwadi workers' posts for the villages in the Chitalwana block. Referring to the HC decision, many unmarried women then submitted a memorandum demanding that they be appointed to these posts. We have written to the Jaipur headquarters seeking their views," Ashok Bishnoi, Child Development Project Officer (CDPO), WCD Department, Jalore, told 101Reporters.

Stubborn first, somersault later Despite the HC ruling, the WCD Department initially cold-shouldered the matter. It sought the opinion of the government lawyer, who recently recommended that the government should appeal

against the ruling in the HC Division Bench.

Justifying the department's stand, Krishna Kumar Sharma, the WCD Department's Acting CDPO for Pachpadra block, told 101Reporters that the intention behind the condition of female applicants being married was to run the department smoothly. "Unmarried women will most likely shift to other places after marriage. The department then will have to make efforts to refill those posts," he maintained. Nevertheless, in a meeting held on January 23, it was decided to not appeal against the judg-



ment. Instead, the department will start allowing unmarried women to apply for the anganwadi worker posts. Mahesh Kumar, Law Officer, WCD Department, Jaipur, told 101Reporters that the issue was discussed at the pre-litigation committee meeting held under the chairmanship of the WCD Department secretary in Jaipur on January 23. "In the meeting, it was decided not to appeal. The government will now make new rules for this," he informed. The work on this front is likely to be completed soon.



Shimla gets season's first snowfall; tourists rush

Shimla, Feb 3 (IANS) : Himachal Pradesh's capital Shimla received the season's first snowfall on Saturday after a long gap, giving the resort a picturesque look. Towns in upper Shimla district were cut off with heavy snow cover piled on roads, officials said here. The season's first snowfall froze the 'Queen of Hills', as Shimla was fondly called by the erstwhile British rulers. As news of the snowfall spread, tourists started arriving in Shimla

and its nearby places like Kufri, Mashobra and Narkanda that too wrapped in a thick blanket of snow. Hills overlooking Manali like Gulaba, Solang and Kothi have been experiencing moderate snow since Saturday, according to a meteorological official here. Manali town, however, too got snowfall. Kothi, near Manali, got 50 cm snow, the highest in the state, followed by Koksar in Lahaul-Spiti district and Khadrula in Shimla district.

Court seeks ED's reply on Sanjay Singh's interim bail plea to attend Parliament session

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : A Delhi court on Saturday issued notice to the ED on an application by AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh seeking interim bail from February 4 to 10 to attend the ongoing Parliament session. Special Judge MK Nagpal of Rouse Avenue Court directed the ED to file its reply by February 3 on the application of the MP in the money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam. The Delhi High Court on Saturday reserved its judgment on Singh's bail plea. Singh had moved the High Court seeking bail on January 4 after Special Judge MK Nagpal of Rouse Avenue Court on December 22 dismissed his plea.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma reserved the order after hearing arguments from both the sides. The ED on Tuesday had claimed before the court that Singh was involved in creating a special purpose vehicle (SPV) Aralias Hospitality Pvt Ltd to launder "proceeds of crime" linked to the alleged liquor scam, a result of changes in the excise policy. In an affidavit, it alleged Singh's involvement in acquiring, concealing, and using proceeds of crime, and that he worked closely with individuals like Dinesh Arora and Amit Arora. The ED further claimed that Singh received illegal money or kickbacks from the alleged excise policy (2021-22) scam and participated in a conspiracy. Senior advocate Mohit Mathur, representing Singh, argued that his



client has been in custody for three months without a clear attribution of a role in the predicate offence. Singh's arrest, according to Mathur, relied on the statement of the ED's "star witness". Justice Sharma had earlier issued notice to the probe agency on Singh's bail plea. Denying him bail, the judge had said that the evidence demonstrated the accused's involvement in money laundering and that there were reasonable grounds to believe in the guilt based on the

connection to proceeds of crime from scheduled offences investigated by the CBI. The court also said that observations on the interpretation of Section 45 and 50 of the PMLA, made during the dismissal of bail applications for various accused, remained unaltered, and that reliance on a Supreme Court order granting bail to another accused in the case didn't provide contrary observations to establish parity.



United with Congress to save democracy, says CPI-M leader

Kolkata, Feb 3 (IANS) : CPI-M politburo member and the party's West Bengal state Secretary Mohd Salim on Saturday said that the Left Front, led by his party, has got united with the Congress for the sake of saving democracy. Salim, who attended the Nyay Yatra rally of Congress led by Rahul Gandhi in Murshidabad district, also criticised the attack on the rally both in Assam and West Bengal. "The manner in which the Nyay Yatra is facing hurdles

both in Assam and West Bengal, I have no words to condemn that," he said. Salim also launched a scathing attack against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her comments that it is because of the CPI-M that her Trinamool Congress's understanding with Congress got spoiled. "One thing is clear that Mamata Banerjee is trying to use CPI-M as a shield to break away from Congress and thus help the BJP. Since the beginning of the formation of INDIA. bloc, I had been

saying that while a lot of passengers got in the same train, nobody knew who would get down where and when. Now Mamata Banerjee is asking the train to halt so that she can get down. She is welcome to do that," he said. Incidentally, on Saturday only, while addressing an administrative review meeting in the adjacent Nadia district.

Sukhbir Badal bats for re-opening of borders with Pakistan

Attari (Punjab), Feb 3 (IANS) : Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Singh Badal on Saturday launched the party's 'Punjab Bachao Yatra' from near the zero line here, as he gave a clarion call for re-opening of the international border with Pakistan to facilitate trade between the two countries, besides demanding enhancement in compensation to farmers tilling land beyond the barbed wire fence in the Indian territory. Earlier, the SAD chief and the senior party leadership offered prayers at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib to seek divine blessings for the success of the party's 'Punjab Bachao Yatra' that formally started from Attari on Saturday.



'Bharat is a mindset, an approach', says Jaishankar

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said Bharat is a mindset which encapsulates all the changes that have been taking place in the country over the last few years. He made this point when asked about the mainstreaming of the name during an interview with NDTV Editor-in-Chief Sanjay Pugalia. "I consider Bharat a mindset, an approach," Jaishankar emphasised in the course of the interview that followed the publication of his book 'Why Bharat Matters' (Rupa). "What I think is, in terms of culture, self-confidence, delivery,

our way of thinking, if you count it all, then if we have to describe the concept in short, the word Bharat conveys the message," the minister and veteran diplomat said. The name Bharat, used in the Constitution to describe India, made headlines last year during the G20 Summit when the dinner invite to the foreign leaders attending the summit, sent in the name of Droupadi Murmu, described her as the 'President of Bharat'. Moving on to the issue of India's frayed relations with Canada, Jaishankar said that country's "politics gave space to separatism".



Delhi records 12.3 degrees Celsius minimum temp

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The national capital on Saturday recorded a minimum temperature at 12.3 degrees Celsius, four notches above the seasonal average, the India Meteorological (IMD) Department said. The IMD's forecast for the day showed that the maximum temperature is likely to hover around 19 degrees, with the minimum at around 12 degrees. This morning, Delhi and its neighbouring regions were enveloped by dense fog, causing low visibility and significant disruptions in road, rail, and air travel.

Lt General Kavita Sahai becomes first woman commandant of Army Medical Corps Centre and College, Lucknow

Lucknow, Feb 3 (IANS) : Lieutenant General Kavita Sahai has been appointed as the first woman commandant of Army Medical Corps Centre and College, Lucknow. She has succeeded Lt Gen V. Sabid Syed who retired from the service. A recipient of Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal, Lt Gen Sahai was currently posted as additional DGAFMS (HR) at the office of the Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS), Delhi. An alumna of the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, she was commissioned in AMC in 1986. Lt Gen Sahai did MD (pathology) and DNB (pathology) from AFMC. The general officer also did fellowship in onychopathology from AIIMS Delhi.



Gauhati High Court issues temporary ban on buffalo fights in Assam

Guwahati, Feb 3 (IANS) : Gauhati High Court has issued a ban on buffalo fighting across Assam after the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) filed a petition in this regard. In an order issued on Saturday, the High Court directed all district administrations in

Assam to put a temporary ban on buffalo fights which are arranged as an essential Bihu-time custom across the state. In addition, the Gauhati High Court ordered the Assam government to submit an action-taken

report to the court regarding the issue. The court has ordered that the report be filed by February 6. During the Bhogali Bihu celebrations in January, buffalo fights were arranged in Assam.

China challenging US influence in Middle East

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : The International Court of Justice has asked Israel to take measures to prevent any acts that would constitute a genocide in Gaza. China supported the UN court's interim and non-binding ruling in the case brought by South Africa. Israel has rejected the latter's allegations.

Since the war started with Hamas attacks on Israel over three months ago, at least 1,200 Israelis and more than 26,000 Palestinians have been killed; more than 130 hostages remain in Gaza; and most Gazans are internally displaced.

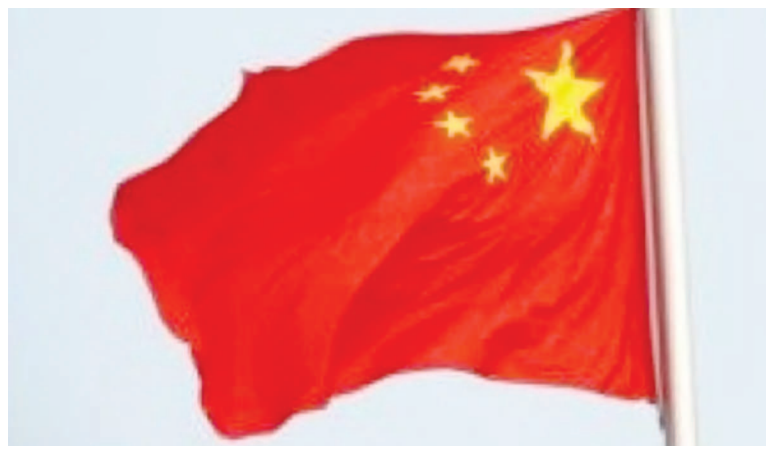
Analysts say China's statements on and diplomatic visits to the Middle East show it is challenging US influence in the region, in line with Beijing's geopolitical and economic interests.

"China has taken a pro-Palestine, anti-Israel stance," Galia Lavi, an Israeli expert on China at the Institute for National Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv, said.

China reiterated support for the two-state solution and called for a cease-fire and the freeing of hostages, without mentioning Hamas, in its "position paper" on the war, late last year.

"China has misunderstood the Arab world and the conflict. Arab countries have condemned Hamas either by taking its name or condemning its actions," Lavi said. China's 2016 "Arab policy paper" says the country supports the establishment of an independent state of Palestine with full sovereignty, based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

"China has always supported the Palestinian cause," the Palestinian Ambassador to Denmark Manuel Hassassian said, adding that with



China emerging as a superpower, its stakes in geopolitics will naturally rise. China, along with Russia, is seen as taking on Israel's biggest ally, the US, at the UN Security Council, which failed to pass some war-related resolutions because of vetoes by the three.

The 2023 Chinese statement asks the UNSC to demand a cease-fire, oppose the "forced transfer" and displacement of Palestinians, release of the hostages, prepare the international community to support the post-war reconstruction of Gaza, build diplomatic mediation and "support the good offices of the UN secretary-general".

"China is talking a lot about the

war but the humanitarian aid it is giving Gaza is \$4 million. In comparison, Japan has pledged \$65 million and the US \$100 million," Lavi said. Brokering role

China enjoys goodwill in the Middle East, especially since it got Iran and Saudi Arabia to talk, Hemant Adlakha, associate professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, said. Last year, China brokered the Iran-Saudi peace deal in March and hosted the first trilateral meeting in Beijing in December.



Indo-Canadian driver arrested after 406 kg of meth found inside truck

Toronto, Feb 3 (IANS) : A 29-year-old Indo-Canadian driver has been arrested after border officials found 406.2 kilograms of what's believed to be methamphetamine from large suitcases inside his commercial truck, police said.

Komalpreet Sidhu from Winnipeg was arrested by the Manitoba Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on January 14 and is expected to appear in court today, the CBC news channel reported.

He faces two charges, importation of methamphetamine and

possession of a controlled substance for trafficking in what has been described by the officials as the largest narcotic seizure ever made in the Prairies.

The truck, which was en route to Winnipeg, was searched at the Boissevain port of entry, Ken McGregor of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) said at a news conference in Winnipeg on Saturday.

He said 200 individually wrapped packages were discovered inside suitcases in the truck and would be eventually destroyed.

Trump runs low on cash for campaign as legal fees drain him, Biden flush with funds

Washington, Feb 3 (IANS) : Former President Donald Trump is literally roughing it out in the 2024 presidential race, despite being a front runner for the GOP nomination, as he is facing a cash crunch with legal fees draining him out and as he tries desperately to lock down the Republican nomination spending monies to eliminate Nikki Haley from the competition.

Trump has spent more than he has earned through his donations or self-financing schemes.

As a potential 2024 Trump-Biden general election rematch looms large, President Joe

Biden appears money-flush.

Trump's campaign and super PAC both spent more than they raised in their most recent finance reports, while Biden built up more reserves, media reports claimed. Campaign finance records filed Saturday show the main super PAC supporting Trump's campaign, MAGA Inc., spent more than it raised in the last six months of 2023 - primarily by transferring back \$30 million to Save America, the main vehicle for paying the former president's prodigious legal fees.

Similarly, Trump's official campaign blew through more cash than it took in over the last three months of the year, NBC reported

after perusing the campaign records of both candidates.

That suggests that Trump's recent threats to blackball Republican donors who don't give money to him are about more than just loyalty: He also needs the money, media reports said.

President Biden's campaign in comparison ended the year with \$46 million in cash, far more than the \$33 million Trump's campaign held before the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. Flash to the future, the main super PAC backing Biden, held a little bit more in the bank than MAGA Inc., \$24 million to \$23.3 million, at the end of the year.

Democrats claimed on Saturday



night that Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are stockpiling money for campaign purposes, rather than legal fights like Trump, and are in an advantageous position.

"While Donald Trump lights money on fire paying the tab on his various expenses, Team Biden-Harris, powered by grassroots donors, is hard at work talking to the voters who

will decide this election and building the campaign infrastructure to win in November," Biden's campaign spokesman TJ Ducklo said in a statement.

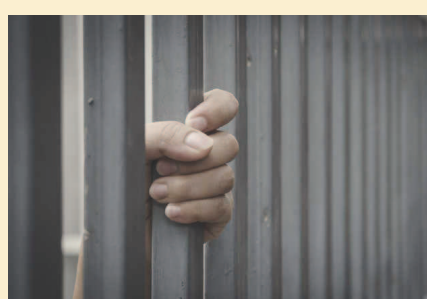
Biden administration notifies Congress of sale of drones to India

Washington, Feb 3 (IANS) : The Joe Biden administration notified the US Congress on Saturday of the proposed sale of 31 MQ-9B HALE armed drones, clearing a period of informal review that had raised concerns of the deal being in some kind of jeopardy.

Congress now has 30 days to either greenlight the deal by doing nothing, or reject it through a congressional vote. There is no attempt to put a "hold" on it yet, but as a person familiar with the development said, "The clock starts now." The formal notification goes to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The notification by

the US State Department's Defense Security Cooperation Agency has come amidst reports that some lawmakers had tried to link the deal's clearance to India's wholehearted cooperation with a US investigation into allegations that an Indian businessman Nikhil Gupta, tried to arrange a murder-for-hire hit on a US-based Khalistani activist. Gupta is in custody of Czech authorities in Prague on an extradition request from the US.

The \$3 billion deal was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden in June 2023 along with joint production of GE jet engines in India. There were a slew of other announcements, but these two were clearly the most significant. The Sea Guardian deal, especially, had been in the making for several years with talks starting during President Donald Trump's administration. Of the 31 MQ-9B UAVs, 15 Sea Guardians are meant for the Indian Navy, and eight each for the Indian Air Force and Indian Army. India is currently using two of these armed drones in a company-owned, company-operated lease agreement.



Indian-origin army man jailed for sex attempt on minor in Singapore

Singapore, Feb 3 (IANS) : A 50-year-old Indian-origin warrant officer with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) was sentenced to 10 months in jail on Saturday for attempting to have sex with a 15-year-old in 2021. Subramaniam Thaburan Rangasamy pleaded guilty last month to one count of sexually penetrating the minor who is now 17, The Straits Times newspaper reported. Two other charges were taken into consideration during sentencing even as Subramaniam was suspended from all duties following his arrest. A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman told the Daily that SAF will take further actions after court hearings, which may include discharging Subramaniam from service.

The incident happened on December 6, 2021, when the victim was supposed to have an online meeting with her school counsellor in the morning. The Secondary 3 student was walking down from the fifth floor of the carpark when she fell and hit a door, and Subramaniam helped her to her feet.

Some diabetes drugs may lower risk of kidney stones : Study

New York, Feb 3 (IANS) : While Type 2 diabetes is associated with increased risk of kidney stones, some forms of treatment for this condition may also have the benefit of lowering risk of kidney stones, according to a study.

Researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital in the US found that there was an association between the use of sodium-glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors and a lower risk of developing kidney stones. The study, reported in JAMA Internal Medicine, included data from three nationwide databases in the US of patients with Type 2 diabetes who were seen in routine clinical practice. The team analysed information from 716,406 adults with Type

2 diabetes who had started taking an SGLT2 inhibitor or two other classes of diabetes medications known as GLP1 receptor agonists or dipeptidyl peptidase 4 (DPP4) inhibitors. Patients who began taking SGLT2 inhibitors had a 30 per cent lower risk of developing kidney stones than those taking GLP1 agonists and about a 25 per cent lower risk than those taking DPP4 inhibitors. The findings were consistent across sex, race/ethnicity, history of chronic kidney disease and obesity.

"Our findings could help inform clinical decision making for patients with diabetes who are at risk for developing kidney stones," said corresponding author Julie Paik, of the Division of Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacoeconomics at Brigham and Women's Hospital.





2nd Test: Yashasvi Jaiswal's 209, Jasprit Bumrah's 6-45 put India in pole position

Visakhapatnam, Feb 3 (IANS) : Yashasvi Jaiswal converted his century into a maiden double-hundred while Jasprit Bumrah produced a masterclass in reverse-swing bowling as the duo put India in pole position on Day Two of the second Test against England at the Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium on Saturday. Playing in just his sixth Test match, Jaiswal began from an overnight score of 179 not out to hit a career-best 209 from 290 balls, laced with 19 fours and seven sixes. He led India's charge single-handedly, especially when the next best score

in the line-up was 34, before being dismissed by veteran fast-bowler James Anderson, as India made 396 in 112 overs. In reply, England raced to 114/1, with Zak Crawley making a quick 76, before they were bowled out for 253, giving India a 143-run lead. Bumrah took 6-45 in 15.5 overs, his best Test figures in India and also became the fastest bowler from his country to reach 150 scalps in the format. Wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav took three wickets on his return to Tests, while Axar Patel had a scalp to his name. Jaiswal (15 not out) and Rohit Sharma (13 not out)

hit six boundaries between themselves to make it 28/0 in five overs of their second innings at stumps, with India leading by 171 runs. Jaiswal mixed caution and aggression in equal measure and stood tall even as his teammates fell from the other end to become the third youngest Indian batter to score a double hundred in Test cricket, via a six and four off debutant England spinner Shoaib Bashir in the 102nd over. But Day Two's morning session left England happy as India's last four wickets fell for 32 runs.

Davis Cup: Ramkumar, Sriram Balaji win to give India 2-0 lead over Pakistan in Playoffs First Round

Islamabad, Feb 3 (IANS) : Ramkumar Ramanathan and N. Sriram Balaji won their respective matches in contrasting styles as India took a commanding 2-0 lead over Pakistan in the Davis Cup World Group I Playoffs, First Round encounter here on Saturday. Pakistan has chosen the grass courts of the Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad, hoping that its seasoned players Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi and Aqeel Khan will capitalise on that surface against the Indian singles players who prefer hard courts. The plan seemed to be working as Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi won the first set against Ramkumar

Ramanathan in a tiebreaker and went neck-and-neck with the higher-ranked Indian in the second. But in the end, those hopes did not materialise as Ramkumar fought back to win the next two sets and won the match. Sriram Balaji did not give his rival Aqeel Khan many chances, won the second singles in straight sets, and gave India a perfect start in the two-day tie. Ramkumar defeated Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi 6-7(3), 7-6(4), 6-0 in just over two hours and N Sriram Balaji made it 2-0 in favour of India when he overcame Aqeel Khan 7-5, 6-3 in one hour and 15 minutes.



Skarma Rinchen's journey from Ladakh village to ice hockey

Leh, Feb 3 (IANS) : Skarma Rinchen's ice hockey journey is truly inspiring, showcasing the transformative power of determination and hard work. Originating from Gya Meru, a semi-nomadic village in Ladakh, adds a unique dimension to the 20-year-old's story, considering Ladakh's challenging terrain and harsh winters. In 2017, during an ice

hockey training workshop in her village, Skarma saw an ice-skating boot for the first time but struggled to even stand on the blades. The following year, with some improvement, she developed a growing interest despite limited practice opportunities. Attending a 15-day workshop in Leh organized by the Women's Association changed her story. There, Skarma Rinchen met girls

from the Indian women's national ice hockey team and showed up to their practices regularly and eventually earned a chance to train alongside them.



Head released from Australia ODI and T20 squads, Bartlett to be rested for second ODI

Sydney, Feb 3 (IANS) : Australia opener Travis Head has been released from both the ODI and T20 squads to "refresh" after a strenuous Test summer, and pace bowler Xavier Bartlett has been rested for the second ODI against West Indies but is anticipated to return with vigor for the third game in Canberra. World Cup-winning quick Josh Hazlewood has been added to Australia's squad for the second ODI against the West Indies at the SCG. Bartlett's impressive performance in Melbourne, where he claimed 4 for 17, marked a memorable start to his international career. However, the management's decision to rest him for the second ODI is part of a calculated plan to manage his workload cautiously. A Cricket Australia statement said the decision formed part of his "ongoing management" after the 25-year-old Queenslanders missed the first half of the domestic season following his return from a back stress injury.

Greg Chappell recalls controversial 'underarm' ODI against NZ, says: It's not one of his better moments

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Former Australian captain Greg Chappell opened up about the infamous 'underarm' ODI against New Zealand in 1981. Reflecting on a decision that forever altered his legacy, Chappell revealed that the underarm incident was not solely motivated by on-field dynam-

ics but rather fueled by frustration with the subpar conditions at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) Chappell explained, "It's not one of the better moments I get to reflect on... the difficult part probably for people to understand is it had very little to do with what was going on on the field on that day."



Nikhat and Lovlina to spearhead India's challenge in 75th Strandja Memorial Tournament

New Delhi, Feb 3 (IANS) : Reigning world champions Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain are set to lead Indian challenge as the Boxing Federation of India named 19-member squad for the 75th Strandja Memorial Tournament to be held in Sofia, Bulgaria from February 3 to February 11. The Strandja Memorial Tournament is one of Europe's oldest international sports competitions. With the intense competition in presence

of around 300 boxers from 30 countries, the tournament will be a great preparation for the Paris Olympics. Besides Nikhat (50kg) and Lovlina (75kg), Asian Games bronze medallist Preeti (54kg), World Championships bronze medallist Manisha (60kg), Asian Championships bronze medallist Sakshi (57kg) and national champion Arundhati Choudhary (66kg) are also included in the squad to compete in the women's section of the prestigious tournament.



PGTI 2024: Chilean Matias Dominguez shoots 12-under 59 to win Pre-Qualifying III by a six-shot margin

Jamshedpur, Feb 3 (IANS) : Chile's Matias Dominguez created history with a sensational second round of 12-under 59 at Pre-Qualifying III of the PGTI Qualifying School 2024 being held at the Golmuri Golf Course here on Saturday. The 31-year-old Matias Dominguez (68-59) won Pre-Q III with a handsome six-stroke margin after

he totalled 15-under 127 as a result of his 59 on Saturday. Even though Preferred Lie was in application during Pre-Q III, Matias' round of 59 featuring an eagle and 10 birdies was a landmark moment in PGTI history as it happened to be the lowest number ever recorded on the tour.

Arati Patil qualifies for Para-Badminton World Championships 2024

Pune, Feb 3 (IANS) : Indian shuttler Arati Patil, has confirmed her berth at the upcoming BWF Para-Badminton World Championships 2024, to be held in Pattaya, Thailand from February 20 to 25.

