

THE INDIAN MAIL

ENGLISH DAILY

TUESDAY, 30 January 2024

VOLUME : 14 ISSUE : 153 PAGES : 12 ₹ 4

PUBLISHED FROM HYDERABAD, VIJAYAWADA



Jasprit Bumrah reprimanded for breaching ICC Code of Conduct during Hyderabad Test

India's fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been handed an official reprimand for breaching Level 1 of the

12



realme will continue to strengthen its roots in India market : Top executive

Global consumer electronics brand realme, which has significantly made its mark in the Indian market over the past...

07



People won't believe KTR talk : Bandi

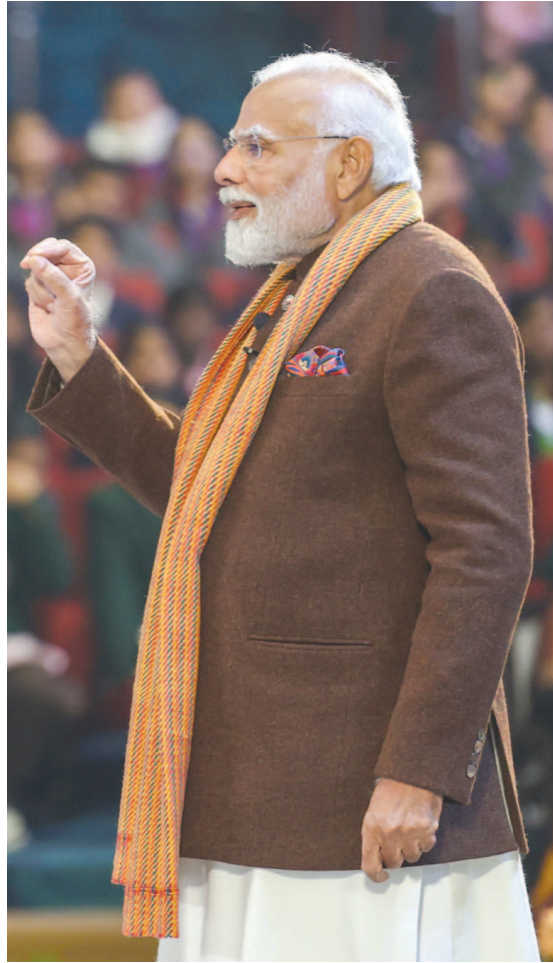
BJP national general secretary Bandi Sanjay Kumar has said the people of the State were not in a position to believe the BRS party working president KTR.

02

I have shut all doors and windows of disappointment : PM Modi

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that he has shut all the doors and windows of disappointment. "I have shut all doors and windows of disappointment in my life," the PM Modi said this while interacting with students, teachers and parents during the 7th edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC). Modi said that the role of the teachers is important in mitigating the impact of added pressure from external factors upon students. He suggested making oneself capable of handling pressure and preparing for it as a part of life. "The students must prepare themselves mentally," Modi said. He also suggested assessing stress levels and moving forward by gradually incrementing it so that the student's ability is not hampered by it. "Students, families and teachers must collectively address the issue of external stress while evolving the process rather than implementing a systematic theory.

Continued on pg 02



Congress terms KTR's allegations against Revanth Reddy as baseless

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Congress party on Monday dismissed as baseless allegation by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader, KT Rama Rao, that Revanth Reddy became the Telangana Chief Minister under the 'Delhi Management Quota'. AICC Communication Coor-

dinator in-charge Sujatha Paul on Monday reacted to the remarks made by KT Rama Rao during his visit to Sircilla constituency on Sunday. "We reject the baseless accusations made by KTR regarding Revanth Reddy's alleged involvement in bribery to secure political positions. KTR is not in his senses. The people of

Telangana know what is what, who is who, and whom to vote for in the upcoming elections," Sujatha Paul said. Sujatha Paul mentioned that AICC General Secretary and former incharge TPCC Manikyam Tagore consistently upheld the principles of the party, and any insinuation of bribery is unfounded.



ECI announces elections for 56 Rajya Sabha seats in 15 States

New Delhi, Jan 29 : The Election Commission of India on Monday announced the schedule of elections for 56 Rajya Sabha seats in 15 states. Three seats each in Telangana and AP will fall vacant in April. The notification will be issued on February 8 while the last date of making nominations will be on Feb 15.

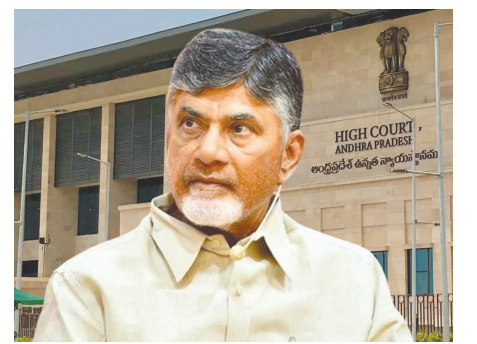
Human Rights Commission notice to TS govt over reports of cop dragging girl student by hair

Hyderabad, Jan 29 : The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) sent notice to the Telangana government over media reports of lady police officials dragging a girl student by her hair in the Ranga Reddy district on Monday. The NHRC sought a detailed report within four weeks, including action taken against the responsible police officials. It has taken suo motu cognizance of a media report on a video clip showing lady police officials dragging a protesting student by her hair during an agitation on January 24.

SC refuses to cancel anticipatory bail of Chandrababu Naidu in Amaravati Inner Ring Road case

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Monday disposed of a plea filed by the Andhra Pradesh government challenging grant of anticipatory bail to Telugu Desam Party supremo and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu in the Amaravati Inner Ring Road case. "We are not inclined to issue notice in the present special leave petition," a bench presided over by Justice Sanjiv Khanna told senior advocate Ranjit Kumar, who appeared

on behalf of the state government. The bench, also comprising Justice Dipankar Datta, took note of the fact that the apex court in November 2022 dismissed another appeal filed by the state government against grant of anticipatory bail to other

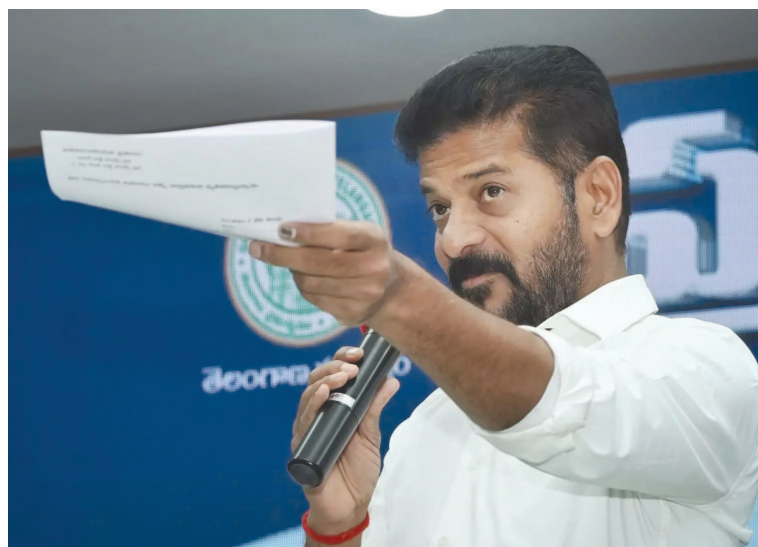


co-accused in the same FIR. However, the apex court clarified that the observations made by the Andhra Pradesh High Court would not affect the investigation and the investigating agency would be free to investigate the case, uninfluenced by the observations made in the impugned order of the High Court.

CM Revanth to launch a Mega Food Park in Khammam District next month

Khammam, Jan 29 (NSS) : Minister for Agriculture Tummala Nageswara Rao has informed that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy will inaugurate a mega food park at Buggapadu village of Satthupalli mandal in Khammam district next month. Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, who inspected the mega

food park at Buggapadu village on Monday, said the food park has been established to store all the crops grown in the area and in future, the demand for crops will be grown by setting up the processing units which ultimately benefit the farmers. He said that instead of bringing palm oil seeds from other countries.



Muralidhar Rao slams Rahul Gandhi

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : BJP leader Muralidhar Rao alleged that Rahul Gandhi's 'Jodo Yatra' was not the Yatra to unite people a 'Todo Yatra' to divide them. He was speaking to the media today. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Rahul Gandhi's film was not ready for release in theatres and added that it was limited to hotels and virtual meetings. Muralidhar Rao said the

INDIA alliance had not held a single public meeting so far. "Moreover, They did not come to a consensus on any issue and by the time Rahul Gandhi entered West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee had made it clear that there was no alliance. She is not even giving a response to Congress leaders," he said. He said that In states like Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, the alliance had failed.



The Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri addressing a Curtain Raiser Press Conference on India Energy Week, in New Delhi on January 29, 2024.

Former Minister Narsa Reddy passes away

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : Former minister and Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) former president Narsa Reddy passed away at his residence in



Banjara Hills here on Monday. He was 92 years old. He had been suffering from an age-related problem for some time.



Telangana competing with countries of its size : D. Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : Investment opportunities in Telangana State were showcased in a round table conference held today at T-Hub to 12-member delegates from the Nordics, Estonia and Western Europe. Some of the prominent ones of the 12-member delegation were JAB Holdings (they own all the large coffee brands like

Peets Coffee, Krispy Kreme and Pret), Whitestone Capital, Metaplanet holding (Founder of Skype) and Bjella Investments from Norway. The combined holdings of just these 4 Family offices are over \$100B in assets under management. The round table was the initiative of the Government of Telangana, NAR Infra Pvt. Ltd and Prasad Vanga, CEO and Founder of Ant-

hill Venture, a Speed Scaling Ecosystem that invests in, and scales, early-stage companies in Media, Urban Tech and Health Tech. Prasad Vanga is a successful entrepreneur, angel investor and business transformation coach. Anthill Ventures has invited the delegation to Hyderabad, and Parvathi Reddy seized the opportunity to get the government involved and showcase

Telangana as an investment potential state. Being an entrepreneur herself and having a lot of work in the state herself, she understands the governance and ease of doing business here, the skilled workforce available, the infrastructure, the safety, and the liveability all included make Hyderabad and Telangana a great place to do business. She has taken it upon herself to showcase Telangana as the best destination for opportunities and investments. The delegation was convinced by the Government of Telangana to come to Hyderabad over other cities because of our innovative outlook and a strong focus on entrepreneurship said N. Parvathi Reddy, one of the panel speakers and Co-Founder and Executive Director at NAR Infra Pvt. Ltd. an industry leader in the infrastructure sector in India.

Harish Rao lashes out at Komatireddy

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : Former minister Harish Rao has strongly condemned the insult of Yadadri Bhongir ZP Chairman Eliminaty Sandeep Reddy by State Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy in an official function held in Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri district.



Sharmila meets Vivekananda Reddy's daughter Sunitha

Amaravati, Jan 29 (IANS) : Andhra Pradesh Congress chief Y.S. Sharmila on Monday called on her cousin Y.S. Sunitha Reddy amid speculation that she will be joining the Congress party. On her first visit to home district YSR Kadapa after taking charge as the president of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC), Sharmila met Sunitha Reddy. During the meeting that lasted for two hours, they discussed various issues. After the meeting they together went to the samadhi of Sharmila's father and former Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy. Sunitha Reddy is the daughter of former minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy, who was murdered a few weeks before the 2019 elections. She has been fighting a legal battle

to get justice in the case in which some family members have also been named as accused by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The meeting assumed significance amid reports that Sunitha Reddy is keen to join the Congress party. Sunitha is reported to be planning to politically take on the relatives named in her father's murder case. Kadapa MP Y.S. Avinash Reddy of YSRC and his father Y.S. Bhaskar Reddy were named as accused in the case. Bhaskar Reddy was recently released on bail but Sunitha has challenged the bail in the Supreme Court. It may be recalled that Sharmila had last year stated that Vivekananda Reddy was not murdered for his property as he had already written the entire property in the name of his daughter. Sharmila, sister of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, had also slammed those making allegations against the slain former minister and former MP. "Vivekananda Reddy was a people's man. People of

I have shut all doors and windows of disappointment : PM Modi

Continued From pg 01
The families of students should discuss different ways that work for each of them," Modi said. "The competition is very important for the growth. But this competition among the friends should be a healthy one," Modi said. He pointed out that often the seeds of unhealthy competition are planted in the family situations leading to perverse competition among the siblings. PM Modi asked the parents to avoid comparison among the children. He said that doing well in exams is not a zero-sum game and competition is with oneself as good performance by a friend does not restrict the field to do well. "This tendency may give rise to a tendency to befriend those who will not be an inspiring

company," Modi said. He also asked the parents not to compare their children with other children. He also asked them not to make the achievement of their children their visiting card. Throwing light on the role of teachers in motivating students, the Prime Minister underlined that music has the capability to relieve the stress of students who not only belong to one class but the entire school. Modi emphasised gradually expanding the student-teacher association right from the first day of class to the time of the exam and said that it would completely eliminate stress during exams. He also urged the teachers to become more accessible to students rather than associating with them on the basis of subjects taught.

People will teach a lesson to Congress in LS Polls : Gellu

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : BRS Party's Students' unit president Gellu Srinivas Yadav today took serious exception to the provocative comments of Congress leader Madhu Yashki Goud on Sunday that they would raid the farm house of former chief minister Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhara Rao at Erravelli village. Speaking to media persons at Telangana Bhavan today, Gellu Srinivas Yadav ridiculed the Congress leaders for making foolish allegations every day against the BRS supremo KCR instead of applying their minds to implement the promises they made to the people on the eve of assembly elections. Gellu warned Madhu Yashki Goud of dire consequences if they dared to touch the KCR's farm house. He also warned the Congress party leaders that the BRS soldiers would not keep quiet and would cut the raiders into pieces if they come near the KCR's farm house. He also warned that the people of the State would teach a fitting lesson to the ruling party in the ensuing Lok Sabha elections. Stating that instead of diverting their attention towards delivering good rule to the people and implement election-eve promises, the BRS leader said the ruling party has been making useless allegations and planning to evade fulfilment of their promises.

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA
Z.O, H.No.4-3-448 To 460 & 465 to 488,
1st Floor, Vinootha Pittie's Majesty, Gopal
Bagh, Near Bank Street, Koti, Hyderabad.
Head Office: Lokmangal, 1501, Shivaji Nagar, Pune-5.

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule 8(1)) (For Immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sec. 13(2) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 13.11.2023, calling upon the borrowers Mr. Paridam Narsing Rao and Mrs. Paridam Namadato to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.19,52,464/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Fifty Two Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Four only) plus unapplied interest of Rs.38,960/- (Rupees Thirty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty only) up to 11-11-2023 and interest thereon @ 11.70% (including 2% penal interest) w.e.f.12.11.2023 along with other cost and expenses. The borrowers having failed to repay the total amount due, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on 23-01-2024. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank of Maharashtra for an amount hereinafter mentioned.

The details of the properties mortgaged to the Bank and taken possession by the Bank are as follows:

PROPERTY DETAILS:
Equitable Mortgage of Flat bearing No.110 in First Floor of SESHAIHA RATHNAM HEIGHTS, plinth area of 1125 Sq. Feet including common area and one car parking space together with undivided share of land admeasuring 44 Sq. Yards out of 2671 Sq. Yards of Plot Nos.5 part, 6 part, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, in survey No. 15 situated at Ward No.5, Block No.5, Ganesh Nagar, Sahelganagar Khurd Village, Hayathnagar Revenue Mandal, Rang Reddy District, under L.B. Nagar Municipal circle of GHMC in the name of Mr. Paridam Narsing Rao and is bounded by: Boundaries for entire Land: North: Gas Godown, South: Plot No.5 Part and 6 Part belonging to Vendor, East: Neighbours Land, West: 30' wide road leading to N.H.9. Boundaries for Flat: North: Open to Sky, South: Open to Sky, East: Open to Sky, West: Corridor.

Place: Hyderabad
Date: 23-01-2024
Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised officer
Bank of Maharashtra

Possession Notice (For Immovable Property) Rule 8-(1)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, a Demand Notice was issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the Borrower/Co-Borrowers mentioned herein below to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Rules. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IIFL HFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act. If the borrower clears the dues of the "IIFL HFL" together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred, at any time before the date fixed for sale or transfer, the secured assets shall not be sold or transferred by "IIFL HFL" and no further step shall be taken by "IIFL HFL" for transfer or sale of the secured assets.

Name of the Borrower (s) / Co-Borrower(s)	Description of the Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.)	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession
Mr. Shiva Kumar Medipuri, Mrs. Yala Rajitha, Poultry Shed, (Prospect No. IL1024792)	All that piece and parcel of: H No 5-54, Godal Village, Balmoor Mandal, Nagarkurnool District-509401. Area Admeasuring (In Sq. ft.): Property Type: Land Area, Carpet Area, Built Up Area Property Area: 3198.00, 500.00, 632.00. Bounded By: North: 4 Ft. Serri, South: 12 Ft Road, East: 12 Ft Road, West: 12 Ft Road	Rs 9,17,943/- (Rupees Nine Lakh Seventeen Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty Three Only)	16-Nov-2023	27-Jan-2024

For further details please contact to Authorised Officer at Branch Office: D.No.5-9-22/B/501, 5th Floor, My Home Sarovar Plaza, Secretariat Road, Hyderabad-500004 or Corporate Office: Plot No. 88, Phase-IV, Udyog Vinay, Gurgaon, Haryana.

Place: Nagarkurnool, Date: 30-01-2024
Sd/- Authorised Officer, For IIFL Home Finance Ltd.

HAYATHNAGAR BRANCH:
Plot No.1, Sy.No.275 P Bagh, Arunodaya Nagar, Hayathnagar - Khalsa, Telangana-500070

ABRIDGED VEHICLE E-AUCTION NOTICE

In view of the default committed by the Borrowers mentioned below, Bank has repossessed/ seized the Hypothecated Motor Vehicle mentioned below in exercise of the powers conferred under Hypothecation Agreement executed by the parties and same is being auctioned on "AS IS WHERE IS & AS IS WHAT IS BASIS".

Sr. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower:	Total Dues	Description of the Vehicle	Reserve Price	EMD
1	Mr. Baddu Sundaralah & Mrs. Baddu Yashoda, R/o. Plot No.12, Thrishakthi Nagar, Ibrahimpatnam, K.V. Rangareddy, Telangana-501506. A/c No.: 54330600004423	Total Dues: Rs.13.44 Lakhs as on 22.01.2024 Together with further interest thereon at contractual rate due Legal and other expenses. (Less Recovery if any)	Reg No.: TS 07 JL 5019 Chassis No.: MEXBPGPBMG013717 Engine No.: DTB072686 Model: SKODA SLAVIA 1.0L TSI 85KW MT AMBITION BSVI Colour: Candy White MFG Month/Year: 07/2022	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 1,00,000/-

A/C Name: New Intermediary Account, A/C No.: 54330015181219, IFSC Code: BARB0HAYATH (Fifth Letter- ZERO), Name of Bank & Branch: Bank of Baroda, Hayathnagar Branch.

Vehicle Auction through Online mode: <https://bob.auctiontiger.net/> Date/ Day/ Time of E-Auction: 01.03.2024, Friday, 12.00 PM to 4.00 PM Last date of submission of BID: 29.02.2024, Thursday, before 4.00 P.M. The intending purchasers/bidders may inspect the Vehicle on or before 27.02.2024 during the time 10.30 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. (At parking Yard: Sai Siddhi Carriers, Plot No.30, 31, Laxmi Nagar Colony, Mansoorabad, L.B. Nagar, Hyderabad-500068). For online Auction process please contact the Authorized Officer on Tel No.7993316547.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE:
1) Bank of Baroda reserves the right to accept/ reject any or all of the offer(s) or Bid (s) so received without assigning any reason thereof. 2) Bank of Baroda reserves the right to accept/ reject/ Postpone/ Cancel the E-auction without assigning any reason therefor. 3) To the best of knowledge and inform on or behalf of the Auctioned Officer, there is no encumbrance on the vehicle. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of vehicle & to inspect & satisfy themselves. (FOR DETAILED TERM AND CONDITIONS PLEASE REFER TO <https://bob.auctiontiger.net/>)

Date: 29.01.2024, Place: Hyderabad
Sd/- Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

Bank of Baroda launches a Comprehensive Current Account Package with Seven New Current Account Products to Cater to Diverse Business Segments

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (TIM Bureau) : Bank of Baroda (Bank), one of India's leading public sector banks, today announced the launch of a comprehensive Current Account Package with seven new differentiated Current Account products. Each current account product has been specially curated to meet the specific business banking needs of different business segments, empowering customers and giving a boost to

their businesses. The new Current Account package was unveiled at an event at the Bank's Corporate Office by the MD & CEO, Shri Debadatta Chand in the presence of the Bank's Executive Directors, CVO and Ms. Shafali Verma, Indian Cricketer and the Bank's Brand Endorser. The newly launched bob Current Accounts are: bob Lite (aimed at individuals/sole proprietorships/small businesses), bob Women



Power (for women entrepreneurs), bob Smart (aimed at businesses largely conducting digital transactions), bob Gold (for medium-sized businesses) and bob Platinum, bob Rhodium, and bob Diamond (for large businesses having high transactional requirements).

Sitharaman, team giving finishing touches as Interim Budget enters last lap

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The preparation of the Interim Budget 2024 has entered the last lap with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her team of top Finance Ministry officials giving the final touches to the document as North Block has been put in lock-down mode to ensure complete secrecy after the 'halwa ceremony'. According to sources, there is a lot of back and forth with the team of PMO officials headed by P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, and the Finance Ministry officials. These discussions ensure that the thrust of the schemes drawn up by the Prime Minister with his close understanding of the ground realities, are

adequately presented in the fine-print of the budget. Finance Secretary TV Somanathan, a Tamil Nadu cadre officer who served as additional secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) before joining the Finance Ministry, is a key link between the two teams. The top members of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's team spearheading the budget-making exercise in the ministry include Sanjay Malhotra, the Revenue Secretary, Ajay Seth, Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs, Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management, Vivek Joshi, Secretary of the Department of Financial Services and V Anantha Nageswaran, the Chief Economic Advisor. During the printing of the Union

Budget in North Block, most officials have to stay put in the office with no communication with the outside world during the days ahead of the budget. It is only after the budget is presented on Feb 1 that they will be allowed to go home. The last week is the culmination of a 6-month budget preparation exercise in which all the ministries such as agriculture, rural development, industry, power, highways and ports prepare their estimates and present them to the Finance Ministry. The Finance Minister assisted by her team then goes through the proposals and puts them together in close consultation with the PMO taking into account the overall fiscal deficit and the relative allocations that have to be made with the government policies aimed at pushing



growth and inclusive development. Sitharaman is poised to present the interim budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 on February 1, making her only the second finance minister of the country to present a budget in Parliament for the sixth time in a row after Morarji Desai. The full budget for 2023-24 will be presented after the formation of the new government following the 2024 general elections. An Interim Budget is presented by a government that is in its last year in office ahead of the Lok Sabha elec-

tions. The need for an interim budget arises because a fresh approval is required from Parliament to withdraw money from the Consolidated Fund of India to run the government as the existing 2023-24 Budget is valid only till March 31 this year. Since the Lok Sabha elections are being held in April-May this year, funds will be required to run the country till the new government takes over.



Goa CM Sawant to present Budget on Feb 8

Panaji, Jan 29 (IANS) : Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced on Monday that the state budget for this year will be presented on February 8. "I will present the Budget on February 8," Sawant told reporters after the Business Advisory Committee meeting here. Sawant also said that a pro-people budget will be tabled this year. The Chief Minister had earlier said that he has discussed the issue with many stakeholders and has invited suggestions from various sectors. "We have taken suggestions from various stakeholders. This will be a pro-people budget," Sawant said.



Shiv Sena (UBT) accuses Election Commission of 'not valuing voters, polls, democracy'

Mumbai, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) on Monday criticised the Election Commission (EC) for 'not valuing voters, polls and democracy' anymore as the country marked the National Voters' Day. SS-UBT leader and MLA Aditya Thackeray targeted the EC on various grounds, including the toppling of the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi regime headed by his father, Uddhav Thackeray in June 2022. "So today, the EC celebrates National Voters' Day. Does the

EC actually want us to believe that they value voters, election and democracy anymore?" Aditya wondered. He said that municipal elections have not been held in over 20 cities of Maharashtra, and "unelected administrators, appointed by an unconstitutional regime run these cities" where nearly half of Maharashtra's 120 million population live. "Over 40 gaddars (traitors) have formed a government that totally violates the basis of our Constitution and democratic values. They should have resigned, contested and been in the assembly if

elected, but today they know that the EC is totally compromised," Thackeray Jr. said here in a major onslaught. He also referred to how Pune and Chandrapur Lok Sabha constituencies are without elected representatives to the Parliament for a year, and yet fearing the ruling political party's defeat, the EC has not held elections. "About the case of our political party with the EC, the least said the better of the institute that is a fraud today. Do we really observe National Voters' Day or must the EC take measures that restore democracy in Maharashtra, the state that sends the second highest number of MPs to the Parliament?" he questioned. "Do we pretend to be a democracy anymore or bring facts to light and ask the Entirely Compromised (EC) commission to work on restoring democracy in our state? When will voters be heard?" he asked. Aditya Thackeray's detailed social media post elicited huge response with a majority supporting his stance.



Kerala HC rules probe agencies cannot seize passport, unless it was used for a crime

Kochi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Kerala High Court on Monday pointed out that probe agencies cannot seize or retain passports from accused persons unless the passport was used or suspected to have been used to commit a crime. "The passport of an individual is an important document and is issued under the provisions of the Passports Act, 1967. In the absence of any crime committed or suspected to have been committed with the said document, a passport cannot be seized or retained by the investigating agencies... The long retention of a passport, without even a condition in the bail order, will amount to impounding, which is opposed to law," said the court. The court went into an earlier apex court judgment which ruled that though the police may have the power to seize a passport under Section 102(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Bengal Gov promises to intervene after police deny permission to Rahul's Nyay Yatra event

Kolkata, Jan 29 (IANS) : West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose on Monday promised to intervene in the matter of denial of police permission for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's proposed public meeting in Siliguri in Darjeeling district on Sunday as a part of the party's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. "The matter is being looked into by the administration. If the administration fails to act, I will personally look into the matter."



All matters relating to Bengal school job case removed from bench of Justice Soumen Sen

Kolkata, Jan 29 (IANS) : In a sudden development on Monday, all cases relating to the multi-crore cash-for-school job case in West Bengal have been removed from the Calcutta High Court's division bench of Justice Soumen Sen and Justice Uday Kumar. The development came just hours after Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay of the same court on Monday afternoon accused Justice Sen of passing a "politically biased" order by dismiss-

ing his order on Monday directing a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe in a case of the fake caste certificates in admission for medical colleges and hospitals in the state. Justice Gangopadhyay did not stop at that and also accused Justice Sen of reportedly calling Justice Amrita Sinha to his chamber and giving her certain suggestions on the cases related to the school job cases in West Bengal which are being heard by her bench.

Kerala Police register FIR against Sabu Jacob over remarks against CPI-M Legislator

Kochi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Kerala Police on Monday registered an FIR against one of the state's leading industrialists, Sabu M Jacob, based on a complaint by a CPI-M activist for allegedly insulting local Legislator PV Sreenijin, during a speech he made recently. Jacob was booked under Section 153 of the IPC (can lead to a riot) on Monday. The complaint against Jacob stated that at a meeting last Sunday, he belittled Sreenijin while addressing Twenty20, the Ernakulam-based political outfit backed by his business empire Kitex



Group. Jacob is the chief coordinator of Twenty20 which rules four village councils in the district. Sreenijin and Jacob have been at loggerheads for a while. On Monday Sreenijin had filed a complaint on charges under the Scheduled Castes.

'One Nation One Election' committee meets ex-judges, politicians

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Chairman of the High-Level Committee (HLC) on 'One Nation One Election', Ram Nath Kovind, former President of India, held consultations with Justice U.U. Lalit, former Chief Justice of India; Justice Sanjib Banerjee, former Chief Justice of Madras High Court, and

Manan Kumar Mishra, Chairman of the Bar Council of India. The Government of India has constituted the committee 'One Nation, One Election' led by former president Ram Nath Kovind to examine the issue relating to holding of simultaneous elections in the country and make recommendations thereon. The Ministry of Law and Justice said

that Justice Sanjib Banerjee, Justice U.U. Lalit and Chairman of the Bar Council gave their considered opinion on the subject. As per the Terms of Reference, the Committee is required to make recommendations for the creation of an appropriate legal and administrative framework for holding simultaneous elections on a permanent basis.



BANK OF MAHARASHTRA
Z.O, H.No.4-3-448 To 460 & 465 to 468,
1st Floor, Vinoothna Pittie's Majesty, Gopal
Bagh, Near Bank Street, Koli, Hyderabad.
Head Office: Lokmangal, 1501, Shivaji Nagar, Pune-5.

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule 8(1)) (For immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sec. 13(2) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 13-11-2023, calling upon the borrowers Mr. Kunta Pedda Asha Reddy, Mrs. Kunta Pedda Bhargita and the guarantor Mr. Kuntawar Ravinder Reddy to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.8,56,849/- (Rupees Eight Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Nine only) plus unapplied interest of Rs.627/- (Rupees Six Hundred Twenty Seven only) up to 12-11-2023 and interest thereon @ 10.90% (including 2% penal interest) w.e.f. 8.11.2023 along with other cost and expenses.

The borrowers having failed to repay the total amount due, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on 24-01-2024. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank of Maharashtra for an amount hereinabove mentioned.

The details of the properties mortgaged to the Bank and taken possession by the Bank are as follows:
PROPERTY DETAILS: Equitable Mortgage of Residential Flat No.303, North East corner of second floor of the building known as 'SREE GANESH ENCLAVE' with built up area including common area 675.00 Sq.Ft. with the proportionate undivided share of land of 195 Sq. Ft. on entire Plot No. 48 and on Western part of Plot No.47 in Survey No.3 at Teachers' colony of village Dasnapur, Mandal Maivala, Dist. Adilabad, in the name of Mr. Kunta Pedda Asha Reddy S/o Kunta Kishta Reddy and is bounded as follows: North: Air Space over the Plot, South: 6' Wide Corridor, East: Air Space over the Plot, West: 4' Wide Corridor.

Place: Hyderabad Date: 24-01-2024 Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised officer Bank of Maharashtra

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA
Z.O, H.No.4-3-448 To 460 & 465 to 468,
1st Floor, Vinoothna Pittie's Majesty, Gopal
Bagh, Near Bank Street, Koli, Hyderabad.
Head Office: Lokmangal, 1501, Shivaji Nagar, Pune-5.

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule 8(1)) (For immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002(54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sec. 13(2) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 06-11-2023 calling upon the borrowers Mrs. Sangeetha Poliseti and Mr. Venkatesh Poliseti to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.19,44,033/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Forty Four Thousand and Thirty Three only) plus unapplied interest of Rs.53,066/- (Rupees Fifty Three Thousand Sixty Six only) up to 04-11-2023 and interest thereon @11.45% (including 2% penal interest) w.e.f. 04-11-2023 along with other cost and expenses.

The borrowers having failed to repay the total amount due, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on 25-01-2024. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank of Maharashtra for an amount hereinabove mentioned.

The details of the properties mortgaged to the Bank and taken possession by the Bank are as follows:
PROPERTY DETAILS: All that the part and parcel of residential flat bearing H.No. 1-6-116/2, Flat No.203, admeasuring 765 Sq. Ft. in first floor at Balaji Residency, Ward No.1, Block No.6, Kanyaka Parameshwari residential area, Suryapet Town, Suryapet Municipality, Suryapet Dist. 508213, to an extent of 478.39 Sq.Yards with undivided share of land of 18 Sq.Yards in the name of Mrs. Sangeetha Poliseti, W/o Mr. Venkatesh Poliseti and is bounded as follows: Boundaries (Apartment), North: Vasavi Kanyaka Parameshwari Temple, South: 45.5 feet wide road and Bokka Venkat Reddy House, East: Bokka Venkat Reddy House, West: Swamy Kamalakar House, Boundaries of Flat: North: Open to Sky, South: Lift and open to Sky, East: Open to Sky and balcony 2'6", West: 6'6" Corridor.

Place: Hyderabad Date: 25-01-2024 Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised officer Bank of Maharashtra

OPINIONmail



WITH BHARAT RATNA TO KARPOORI THAKUR, MODI EYES NITISH'S VOTE BASE

The richest, most crony capitalism-friendly prime minister of India Narendra Modi be stowing Bharat Ratna, although officially being awarded by the President, Draupadi Murmu, on the deprived socialist leader Karpoori Thakur has given rise to boisterous political chattering in Bihar. However, it has also put the political moves of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar under intense public scrutiny. If Modi had really desired to honour a leader who tirelessly fought to empower the poor, especially the extremely backward castes, he would have done it just after coming to power. But he chose to identify with persons who somehow proved to be catalysts in promoting his own political interest. No denying that Karpoori Thakur deserved this honour well before C. N. R. Rao (chemist and professor) – 2014, Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar (cricketer) – 2014 and Pranab Mukherjee (politician and former President of India) 2019 were accorded. Modi government has conferred Bharat Ratna on the socialist icon Karpoori Thakur, who implemented OBC quota in Bihar. Thakur's quota policy, implemented in 1978, included a sub-quota for MBCs, quotas for women and economically weaker sections in 1978. While Modi honouring Thakur has come too late and is too little, the prime minister ought to realise that Karpoori has a much taller status and he did not require this award for boosting his image. Thakur's stint as CM is remembered for his two important decisions. First, in 1970, he enforced the total prohibition of alcohol in the state; and second, he implemented the recommendations of the Mungeri Lal Commission on quota for backward classes. This panel was a harbinger of the Mandal Commission. The Commission also suggested separate sub-category called Most Backward Classes. This category also provided the template for the "ati pichhda" plank built by Nitish Kumar years later. Modi observed: "I am delighted that the Government of India has decided to confer the Bharat Ratna on the beacon of social justice, the great Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji and that too at a time when we are marking his birth centenary. This prestigious recognition is a testament to his enduring efforts as a champion for the marginalized and a stalwart of equality and empowerment." However, it cannot be denied that this delayed adulation is more politically motivated than a real sign of appreciation or acknowledgement on the government's behalf. Ironically, in his endeavour to identify himself with Thakur's socialist credentials, Modi remarked: "Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur's relentless pursuit of social justice created a positive impact in the lives of crores of people. He belonged to one of the most backward sections of society, the Nai Samaj. Overcoming numerous obstacles, he achieved a lot and worked for societal betterment." But a closer look at the complement would make it explicit that Modi has not been honest in his observation. Instead of underlining the fact that he empowered the extremely poor and women, Modi tried to generalise his achievement. The fact is Karpoori fiercely fought against the forces nursing rightist ideology propagated by the RSS and upper-caste landlords, who perpetrated worst kind of torture and repression on the poor, downtrodden, untouchables and proletariats. Karpoori Thakur became the chief minister of Bihar twice, but on both the occasions, RSS leaders manoeuvred to pull down his government. Following the announcement, politicians across party lines hailed the decision to give the socialist leader India's highest civilian honour. Nitish Kumar also greeted. But before expressing delight, they should have done some introspection and sought a reply why Modi announced this award at this crucial juncture, when the Lok Sabha election is just three months away. There is no denying that Modi was trying to play around with the emotions of EBC and poor people.

(By Arun Srivastava)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

Where the Muslim leadership erred

The unravelling of the Mandir-Masjid controversy over the years has exposed the amateur and impulsive handling of the issue, by the Muslim leadership. Had they acted wisely earlier, then it would not have been such a cakewalk for the Hindu chauvinists. Modern politics is not a game of chance, but agenda setting and narrative building most often lead it. These two essential components of any political party's strategy often translate in success for it. In India, the most obvious example of a political party using these techniques is the present day ruling party. The party is not new to agenda setting and narrative building, and in this exercise it is often helped by leading corporate consultants, who help it devise a plan, which could help it gain power. In its case the party has reaped huge benefits in electoral terms using these techniques, by increasing its parliamentary tally from just 2 in 1984 to finally 304 in 2014. The party, which was led by Vajpayee-Advani duo from 1984 to 2009, was not so savvy in using these techniques, but it was very adept in exploiting the emotional feelings of the large Hindu community. From 2009, onwards under Modi's leadership, these techniques were turned into a finesse, and every technique to reap maximum results was deployed, including those which could counter the Muslim leaders emotionally and push them into a corner. On the other hand the so-called Muslim leaders of the community have always indulged in knee-jerk reactions and pursuing a form of



politics which only ensures power for a selected few and does not allow the benefits of progress to trickle down to the masses. In fact what we saw on 22 January 2024, in Ayodhya is the culmination of a campaign, which had its roots in the Shah Bano case of 1985. The manner in which the Rajiv Gandhi-led government bowed to the pressure of the Muslim Personal Law Board and reversed the secular judgement of the Supreme Court of 1985 by passing the Muslim Women (Protection on Divorce Act), 1986, set

the ball in motion to get the locks of the Babri Masjid unlocked in 1986. Afterwards, the manner in which the Muslim leadership, both political and religious, manoeuvred the Babri Masjid case, reeks of their complete disconnect with the reality. I really wonder how many of these so-called Muslim leaders who were spearheading the Babri Masjid case, had ever visited Ayodhya or the disputed site, to get a first hand impression of the ground reality.



RAHUL EMERGES IRRESISTIBLE IN ASSAM, HIMANTA TRIES HARD TO RESIST

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi has just emerged irresistible in Assam even when the BJP leader and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma tried hard to resist him. BJP's men breached his personal security, attacked his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, state government passed orders to stop the yatra at several places including entering Guwahati, and FIR has been registered against him to disrupt the Yatra's progress, but all simply failed. People in crowds surging behind

him wherever he goes. Today is the 11th day of Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra launched from Manipur on January 14, and it has just re-entered Assam. After travelling through Assam and successfully facing the hurdles created by the BJP men and the BJP government, the Yatra proceeded towards Meghalaya, and then again re-entered Assam to complete its planned campaign in the state though a stretch of 833 km and 17 districts. It has already travelled also through Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. In the entire stretch of the Nyay

Yatra, large enthusiastic crowd welcomed Rahul and his team and remained companion to them in their respective areas in the yatra route. Participating people interacted freely, shared their miseries under the BJP and NDA's dominance, and expressed their hope to overcome it, promising support to the Congress leader's yatra and his promise to work for the people's struggle for justice until they get it (Nyay ka haq milne tak). The yatra is intended to spend three more days in Assam.

(IPA Service)

LOOKING FOR FIG LEAVES: ISRAEL AND HAMAS NEGOTIATE TERMS FOR A CEASEFIRE

If one listens to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Hamas leaders, there is only one conclusion: an end to the Gaza carnage is nowhere in sight. If anything, judging by their increasingly maximalist statements, Netanyahu and Hamas are determined to fight to the bitter end irrespective of the carnage in Gaza and the fate of more than 100 people held hostage by the group. Netanyahu's categorical rejection this weekend of an independent Palestinian state and insistence that Israel would retain control of Gaza and the occupied West Bank appeared designed to counter US pressure, pacify his ultra-nationalist coalition partners, and deprive Hamas of an incentive to compromise. Control of Gaza and the West Bank "is a necessary condition, and it conflicts with the idea of (Palestinian) sovereignty. What to do? I tell this truth to our American friends," Netanyahu said.

(IPA Service)



DONALD TRUMP IS POISED TO SEAL NOMINATION AS HE WINS NEW HAMPSHIRE

Former US President Donald Trump won New Hampshire on Wednesday, January 24. His rival, former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, went the way of businessman Vivek Ramaswamy, who is now Trump's shadow after failing in his quest to be the dark horse.



GERMANY'S NEW LEFT PARTY BSW STARTS WITH HUGE VOTING BASE OF 14 PER CENT

Germany is undergoing political turmoil with the far right AfD and other pro-fascist groups continuing their campaign to deport the immigrants and the coloured people from the country reminding the citizens of the Nazi era in 1930s. In this con-

text, a new party Bundnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW) will be founded on January 27 at a convention in Berlin attended by 450 delegates. This party led by the fiery member of German Parliament Sahra Wagenknecht is a split away group from the original Left party De Linke.. Already the BSW has created a

big furore among the German working people and the educated middle class. There is a big rush for becoming members' Latest opinion poll before the convention shows that 14 per cent of the German voters like BSW as against 3 per cent for the parent Party De Linke. This figure is quite when compared to the German Social Democrats coalition partners Green Party 8 per cent and Free Democrats 4 per cent. In fact BSW's voting intention figure equals that of the ruling Social Democrats. What is specially significant is that the new party BSW has been formed with the participation of 10 members of Parliament, belonging to the parent party and BSW has taken up seriously its campaign for its candidates for the European Parliament elections in June this year.



Maternal Covid infection may up respiratory distress in babies by 3x : Study

New York, Jan 29 (IANS) : Full-term babies born to mothers who were infected with Covid-19 during pregnancy had three times the risk of having respiratory distress compared with unexposed infants, even though they themselves were not infected with the virus, says a study. However, the risk was significantly lower when the mothers infected during pregnancy were previously vaccinated, revealed the findings,

published in the journal Nature Communications. The researchers found that in-utero exposure to SARS-CoV-2 sparked an "inflammatory cascade" in the infants, increasing the risk of a breathing disorder that most often strikes prematurely born infants. "We found unusually high rates of respiratory distress shortly after birth in the full-term babies born to mothers who had Covid-19 during pregnancy," said Dr. Karin Nielsen, Professor of paediatrics

in the division of paediatric infectious diseases at the David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California-Los Angeles. "The mothers had not been vaccinated prior to acquiring Covid, indicating that vaccination protects against this complication," Nielsen added. To trace how respiratory distress develops following in-utero exposure to SARS-Cov-2, the researchers conducted a study called proteomics that examines the structure and functions of proteins and how they affect cells. They found that whip-like structures called motile cilia that help clear mucus from the respiratory tract did not function normally in the exposed infants stricken with respiratory distress. In addition, the infants had higher production of antibodies called immunoglobulin E (IgE). Of the 221 mothers enrolled in the study, 151 (68 per cent) were unvaccinated prior to infection, with severe or critical Covid disease present in 23 women (16 per cent), compared with only three (4 per cent) of vaccinated mothers. The researchers found that 34 (17 per cent) of 199 exposed infants followed in the study had respira-

tory distress, which is a very high frequency, as in the general, unexposed population respiratory distress happens in 5 per cent to 6 per cent of babies only. Of babies with respiratory distress, 21 per cent were born to mothers with severe or critical Covid-19, while only 6 per cent of babies without respiratory distress were born to women with severe disease, a finding that was statistically significant. Of the 34 infants with respiratory distress, only five (16 per cent) were born to mothers vaccinated prior to infection, compared to 63 (41 per cent) without the breathing disorder, indicating that vaccination had a protective effect. According to the researchers, even one mRNA vaccine dose prior to infection significantly reduced the odds that a full term infant would develop respiratory distress. "Not only do our results show higher rates of respiratory distress in SEU (SARS-CoV-2 exposed uninfected) infants when compared to the general population," the researchers write.



South Korean ruling party lawmaker attacked on street

Seoul, Jan 29 (IANS) : South Korean ruling party lawmaker Bae Hyun-jin was attacked by an unidentified assailant on a street in Gangnam on Monday during which she sustained head injuries. A male pedestrian walked up to Bae and asked, "Are you the lawmaker Bae Hyun-jin?" and struck her in the back of the head with a rock the size of an adult man's fist, Yonhap news agency reported quoting the lawmaker's office as saying Bae was rushed to Soonchunhyang University Hos-

pital with her head bleeding. Bae remained conscious and her injury is not believed to be life threatening. The suspect was arrested by police. Bae, 40, is a former television news anchor who was elected to her first term in the National Assembly in 2020. She briefly served as a spokesperson for then President-elect Yoon Suk Yeol in 2022. The attack on Bae comes some three weeks after Lee Jae-myung, leader of the opposition Democratic Party, was stabbed in the neck during a visit to the southeastern city of Busan.

Hamas says ready to observe ceasefire in Gaza if ICJ issues such ruling

Gaza, Jan 29 (IANS) : Hamas has announced that the group is ready to observe a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip if the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issues a ruling calling for it as long as Israel reciprocates. "If the court issues a ceasefire decision, the Hamas movement will adhere to the ceasefire as long as Israel adheres to that," the group said

in a statement on Monday. In addition, it said that Hamas will release the Israeli prisoners detained by it if Israel releases the Palestinian prisoners detained by it, "noting that Israel must "end the siege that has been ongoing for 18 years on Gaza and allow the entry of all necessary aid for relief and reconstruction", Xinhua news agency reported. The ICJ is set to deliver a ruling on South Africa's case against Is-

rael on Monday in Hague. It will also rule on South Africa's demand for the court's urgent intervention to stop Israel's military operation in Gaza. On December 29, 2023, South Africa filed an application to the ICJ for proceedings against Israel, concerning alleged violations by Israel of its obligations under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide related to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.



British-Indian faces trial in Spain after 'Taliban' joke to blow up plane

London, Jan 29 (IANS) : British-Indian student Aditya Verma is facing trial in Spain after he was accused of public disorder for sending a message joking about blowing up a plane in which he was travelling along with his friends.

Verma, a student of economics at Bath University, was on his way to the island of Menorca with friends in July 2022 when he made the remarks on Snapchat, claiming that he is a member of the Taliban, the BBC reported.

Pakistan warns Ram Mandir consecration 'significant threat' to 'regional peace'

United Nations, Jan 29 (IANS) : Pakistan, in a letter to a UN official dealing with culture and civilisation, has warned that the consecration of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is a "significant threat" to "peace in the region". "Pakistan condemns in the strongest terms the construction and consecration of the 'Ram Temple' on the site of the demolished Babri Mosque in Ayodhya," the country's Permanent Representative Munir Akram wrote to Miguel Angel Moratinos, the Under-Secretary General

and High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilisations. Akram said in the letter, released on Monday, that the Mandir's construction and dedication was "a significant threat" to "the harmony and peace in the region" and called for Martinos's "urgent intervention for the protection of religious sites in India". Akram asserted that "other mosques, including the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi and the Shahi Eidgah Mosque in Mathura, face similar threats of desecration and destruction". He added: "The statements of some Chief Ministers of Indian



states have linked such actions to territorial claims against Pakistan." The mandates of the UN Alliance of Civilisations include promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue and understanding. A press release from Pakistan's UN Mission on Wednesday said that Akram raised the Ram Mandir during a meeting

of the ambassadors of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the group agreed to include it in the agenda for the next meeting. When it was discussed, the press release said that some Ambassadors mentioned the attacks on mosques in some European countries.

Japan to release 54,600 tons of Fukushima nuclear wastewater in fiscal 24

Tokyo, Jan 29 (IANS) : Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), operator of Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, has announced a plan to release around 54,600 tons of nuclear-contaminated water from the facility into the ocean in fiscal 2024. The volume is expected to be discharged into the Pacific

Ocean in seven rounds, starting from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, according to the plan announced Monday, Xinhua news agency reported. TEPCO is slated to finalise the discharge plan by the March 31 end of fiscal 2023, it said. Despite concerns and oppositions among local fishermen in Fukushima Prefecture as well as other countries.



One dead, four buried in landslide in Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 29 (IANS) : One man died and four others are feared dead following a landslide at a popular tourist destination in Malaysia's Pahang state on Monday, local media reported. Pahang Fire

and Rescue Department Assistant Director Ismail Abdul Ghani said authorities received a distress call at 2:51 a.m. local time, and search and rescue operation is on, Malay Mail reported.





Loudspeakers rules relaxed in Goa for cultural, religious events

Panaji, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Goa government has permitted the use of loudspeakers and public address systems beyond 10 p.m. and up to midnight for cultural and religious events. The Information and Publicity Department said, "The government has notified to permit the use of loudspeakers or public address systems during night hours, between 10.00 p.m. and 12.00 midnight in 2024 on cultural/religious festival occasions." The relaxation will be applicable during Carnival (last day) on February 13, Easter Eve on March 30, Ganesh Chaturthi (2nd day of idol immersion) on September 8, Ganesh Chaturthi (5th day of idol immersion) on September 11, Navaratri (second last day of Navaratri) on October 10, Navaratri (last day of Navaratri) on October 11, Diwali Eve on Oc-

tober 31, and Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve from December 24 to December 31, throughout the state of Goa on the following 'terms and conditions' for issuance of permission. "The permission will be granted only on a case-to-case basis, in response to a specific application made by the concerned village panchayat, municipal corporation/council or an individual in the state of Goa; the provisions of the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 shall be strictly complied with and the 'authority' concerned shall monitor the noise levels during the permitted festive occasions and on other occasions also, and take prompt remedial action in the event of any violation of the same and of above conditions," the Information and Publicity Department said.

After dynastic politics jibe, Lalu's daughter targets Nitish with posts on X

Patna, Jan 29 (IANS) : After Nitish Kumar, referred to as dynastic politics during a rally in Patna on Monday, Rohini Acharya, the second daughter of Lalu Prasad Yadav put up three posts targeting the Bihar Chief Minister on X on Thursday. Though Rohini Acharya deleted the posts after a couple of hours but it was good enough to show the point of view of the Lalu family on the ongoing tussle between them and Nitish Kumar. She said in the first post: "Some people declare themselves as socialist stalwarts but their ideology changes like the wind." Though Rohini Acharya did

not name anyone but it was clear who she was targeting. Nitish Kumar, during a rally held to mark the 100 birth anniversary of Karpoori Thakur on Wednesday said that he had not promoted any of the family members in politics just like Karpoori Thakur. In an obvious swipe at Lalu Prasad Yadav, he also said that "some people promote people of their own families and make them leaders." Reacting to this statement of Nitish Kumar, Rohini Acharya in the second post said, "Showing anger won't help as none of their own were qualified enough to carry forward their legacy. Their intentions are not right." In the third post she said that "some people do not do any introspec-



tion on their shortcomings, and fling mud on others." Following these posts, an angry-looking Nitish Kumar presided over the Cabinet meeting on Thursday. Rohini Acharya stayed in the Cabinet meeting for 15 minutes and did not interact with any leaders of the RJD, including her brother Tejashwi Yadav. Later in the day she deleted the posts.



Samrat Chaudhary leaves for Delhi to attend 'high-level' meeting

Patna Jan 29 (IANS) : Bihar unit Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Samrat Chaudhary on Monday left for Delhi to attend a "high-level" meeting, a source said, adding he was called to the meeting by Home Minister Amit Shah. According to a source, soon after getting the call to leave for Delhi, Chaudhary cancelled all his pre-scheduled programmes in Patna, and flew to the national capital.

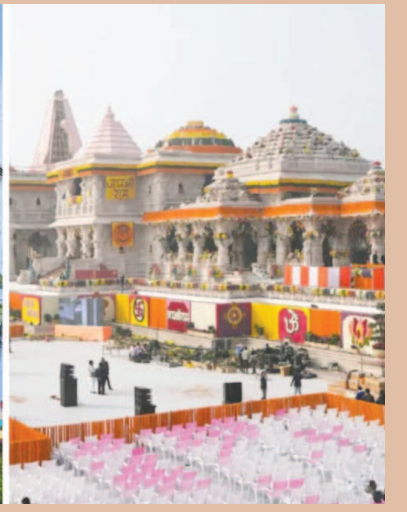
Bhopal woman files for divorce as husband takes her to Ayodhya, not Goa, for honeymoon

Bhopal, Jan 29 (IANS) : With the 'pran-pratishtha' ceremony in Ayodhya was conducted on January 22, and entry opened for general public from the next day, a large number devotees from across the country have been visiting the Ram temple - but one woman in Madhya Pradesh has taken umbrage at her husband's plans to follow suit. The woman, who was taken to Ayodhya by her husband, filed a divorce case

upon returning to home in Bhopal, on the grounds that he took her to Ayodhya after promising a trip to Goa for their honeymoon. The couple got married in August last year. Shail Awasthi, an advocate at a family court in Bhopal, said the couple left for Ayodhya a couple of days before the January 22 ceremony, but the woman was not kept in the loop. "This was the main crux of her petition. She was angry over being taken to Ayodhya instead of



Goa. I am counselling the couple currently," he added. In her divorce petition, the woman said her husband works in the IT sector and gets a good salary. She



is also employed and earns well, so going abroad for a honeymoon would not have been difficult for them, the petition states.



Gujarat: Independent legislator Dharmendrasinh Vaghela resigns as MLA; likely to join BJP

Gandhinagar, Jan 29 (IANS) : Independent MLA Dharmendrasinh Vaghela who represents Vadodara's Waghodia constituency has resigned from his position of legislator/ member in the Gujarat Assembly. Vaghela's resignation came after a meeting with Speaker Shankarbhay Chaudahay on Monday. Vaghela is widely anticipated to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) soon. According to sources, before his resignation, he met Gujarat unit BJP president C.R. Paatil,

fuelling speculation about his imminent induction into the state's ruling party. During the 2022 state assembly elections, Vaghela sought a ticket from the BJP but was not selected. He then chose to contest the election as an independent candidate, securing a victory with a margin of 14,006 votes. His win was marked by defeating BJP's Ashvinbhai Natvarbhai Patel, highlighting his significant support base in the Waghodia constituency.



Enhancement in allocation of PM-Kisan, MGNREGS a possibility to provide relief to rural economy

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Although no large-scale measures or new programmes are expected in the interim budget, an enhancement in allocation of some existing ones like PM-Kisan and Mahatma

Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MGNREGS) is a possibility to provide relief to the rural economy. A possible enhancement of PM Kisan entitlement from Rs 6,000/year/farmer to Rs 9,000 could increase the outlay towards the scheme by Rs 250-300 billion in FY25, Acuite Ratings & amp; Research said.

Manipur state Cong chief, two BJP MLAs 'beaten up' by radical Meitei group cadres

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Three Manipur MLAs - including the state Congress President and two of the ruling BJP -- were reportedly "beaten up" and "compelled" to take an oath by members of radical Meitei group, Arambai Tenggol, at Kangla Fort in Imphal. Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a post on X, said: "The Indian National Congress strongly condemns the brutal physical assault on Manipur PCC President K. Meghachandra, in a meeting of all-party MLAs/MPs/ Ministers, under full security protection of state and central forces, at Kangla in Imphal yes-

terday. The PM, however, continues with his eloquent silence on the enormous tragedy that has overtaken Manipur." On Monday, Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Education, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Rajya Sabha member Leishemba Sanajaoba, and all 37 Meitei community MLAs, including ministers and opposition legislators, signed a resolution including six charters of demands put forth by Arambai Tenggol. Five Congress MLAs, including former Chief Minister and veteran party leader Okram Ibobi Singh and state Congress President Keisham

Meghachandra Singh, also attended the meeting with top leaders of the Arambai Tenggol, presided over by the group supremo Korounganba Khuman. While Chief Minister N. Biren Singh did not physically attend the meeting, he signed the resolution paper, as per sources. The demands include abrogation of the Suspension of Operation (SoO) signed between the Central and state governments and 23 Kuki militant outfits in 2008, implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC), replacement of Assam Rifles with other Central forces, removal of illegal



Kuki immigrants from the Scheduled Tribes list, relocating all Myanmarese refugees to Mizoram, and border fencing along the India-Myanmar border. Unprecedented security measures were taken with the deployment

of the huge contingent of central para-military and state security forces in and around the Kangla Fort, which served as the royal seat of the Manipur kingdom till 1891.



Court warns defence counsel against false pleas in Delhi riots case

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : In a hearing related to the 2020 northeast Delhi riots case, a court has cautioned a defence counsel against making false pleas or attempting to deliberately mislead the court. Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala of Karkardooma Courts was presiding over a rioting case against six accused when the incident occurred.

The court noted that while the accused Firoz Khan and five others, who were granted bail, were present in court, the advocate for the remaining five sought a passover, claiming that Khan's counsel, Mehmood Pracha, would be arriving shortly. However, it was later stated that Pracha was unwell but on the way to court. Expressing disapproval of such practices, the judge warned against making false pleas before the court or intentionally trying to keep the court in the dark. Despite the warning, the advocate offered to start cross-examination on behalf of the five accused, and the court agreed. The court deferred the cross-examination for Firoz Khan, stating that his counsel was unwell and said that the accused should consider alternate arrangements. Eventually, Pracha joined the proceedings during the cross-examination of the prosecution witness.

realme will continue to strengthen its roots in India market : Top executive

Colombo, Jan 29 (IANS) : Global consumer electronics brand realme, which has significantly made its mark in the Indian market over the past five years, will continue to strengthen its roots in the domestic market, a top company executive has said. With the launch of realme 12 Pro Series 5G, the company has taken an-

other step in catering to young consumers in India. With respect to the company's presence in India, realme vice president Chase Xu told IANS that they will continue to bolster the brand's presence in the country. Xu said realme has created 13,000 jobs, in addition to investing in the Indian tech landscape, collaborating along the lines of 'Make In

India'. Its R&D centre is situated in Gurugram and the company seeks to further strengthen its roots in the Indian market. The brand was officially established on May 4, 2018 by a young and strong team with rich smartphone industry experience. Currently, realme has more than 70 million users in India.



Aditya Birla Health Insurance Unveils 'Activ One'

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (TIM Bureau) : Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co. Limited ("ABHICL"), the health insurance arm of Aditya Birla Capital, India's leading, well-diversified financial services provider, announced the launch of 'Activ One,' a simplified and comprehensive health insurance plan that empowers its policyholders with tailor-made solutions to meet not just their health insurance needs but also enables them to be the healthiest version of themselves.

Loaded with industry leading features such as 100% HealthReturns™, Claim Protect, No Sub-Limits, Super Reload and Super Credit, Activ One is ABHICL's most comprehensive product yet, offering customers a one-stop-solution for their health

assurance and their health insurance needs. Commenting on the launch, Mr. Mayank Bathwal, CEO, Aditya Birla Health Insurance, said, "Activ One is a result of us being good at listening to our stakeholders - our customers, advisors, distributors and partners. Based on their inputs and insights, we developed Activ One, that addresses the needs of every consumer - across their different health or life stages, and at stages of battling chronic ailments. With seven variants built into one product, we are offering the Power of One, to all. At ABHI, our vision has always been to incentivize wellness, encouraging policyholders to embrace a healthier lifestyle and holistic well-being. Through Activ One, we want to ensure that our policyholders experience a simplified and comprehensive healthcare solution that is personalised, rewarding and worry-free."



Activ One stands out with its wide-ranging set of built-in features, including coverage for in-patient hospitalization and pre- and post-hospitalization expenses extending up to 90 and 180 days. For the first time Aditya Birla Health will offer coverage live-in partners (same or opposite sex) under the policy. This apart, the policy has chronic care cover which provides Day 1 cover (zero waiting period) to people with seven chronic conditions such as Asthma, High Blood Pressure, High Cholesterol, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Obesity and Coronary Artery Disease (PTCA done prior to 1 year).

Sensex jumps 1000 points as heavyweights surge

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : BSE Sensex jumped more than 1000 points on Monday led by buying in heavyweight stocks. BSE Sensex is trading at 71,799.42 points, up by 1098.75 points or 1.55%. Oil and gas stocks were best performers with ONGC up 7 per cent and Reliance Industries up 4 per cent. Hindustan Petroleum is up 4 per cent, BPCL is up 3 per cent. Among the energy stocks, Coal India is up 3 per cent, Castrol

is up 4 per cent. Among the infrastructure stocks, IRB is up 13 per cent, NBCC is up 8 per cent, NCC is up 7 per cent. Adani stocks are up in trade with Adani Power, Adani Ports, Adani Energy up 3 per cent. Among the Sensex stocks, Reliance is top gainer followed by L&T and Powergrid up 3 per cent. Two important events are due this week: the interim Budget and the Fed meeting on rate decision. But

these events are unlikely to impact the market in a big way, says V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services. The Budget will be a vote on account without major announcements capable of impacting the market, he said. Regarding the Fed decision, no rate cut is expected, but the commentary will be keenly watched. The turbulence in the Red Sea is turning out to be a serious issue. Brent crude has spiked to \$83, he added.



AU Small Finance Bank shares slump 9% on earnings miss

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : AU Small Finance Bank shares slumped by 9 per cent on Monday as brokerages said the bank's asset quality deteriorated further. AU Small Finance Bank was down 9 per cent at Rs 644 on BSE. Despite stable NIMs due to increased interest income on securitisation and higher fees including cards, AU SFB reported 14% miss on earnings with PAT at Rs 3.8 billion as provisions accelerated to Rs1.6 billion due to rising stress in its VF and now even seasoning card portfolio, Emkay Global Financial Services said in a report. Fresh slippages were elevated at 2.9% of loans (Rs 4 billion) due to which GNPA ratio jumped 7bps QoQ to 2% for the third quarter in a row, indicating rising stress.

The bank expects credit card book to break-even in FY25, but we believe rising asset-quality stress in cards for seasoned play-

ers like SBIC, RBL and so on indicates that stress could remain elevated for AU SFB as well, the report said. Separately, the bank has counterintuitively cut down its specific PCR to 66% amid rising stress. We believe the merger with Fincare prima-facie could be EPS/BVPS/RoA positive, but we reckon managing HR/tech integration and MFI portfolio management will be an arduous task. Separately, we believe rising asset-quality stress in the bank's card portfolio and VF portfolio could keep provisions elevated, the report said. Thus, we cut our earnings estimates by 7-10%. Factoring in RoA/RoE moderation, rising asset-quality risk, likely merger drag, and potential delay in the universal banking licence, we cut our TP further to Rs 625/share (earlier Rs 650), valuing the bank at 2.8x December-25E ABV, the report said.

Retail loans surge as RBI seeks to stem possible risks

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Indian commercial banks' retail lending has risen faster than loans to large businesses since the COVID-19 pandemic, S&P Global Market Intelligence data showed, underscoring the central bank's concerns about unsecured loans. Retail loans was the fastest-growing segment among the three biggest private sector lenders, and among their state-owned peers, since at least the fiscal year ended March 2021. For State Bank of India, the country's biggest lender by assets, retail loans grew 42.7% to 12.43 trillion rupees by September 30, 2023, from 8.71 trillion rupees as of March 31, 2021. Credit to corporates was up 19.4% over the same period. The bank's public sector and private sector peers -- such as Bank of Baroda Ltd, where retail loans increased 61% in the same period, and Axis Bank Ltd., where retain loans rose 57% -- showed a similar trend. The proportion of retail loans as a percentage of domestic loans has increased only slightly at the six banks in the S&P Global Market Intelligence sample, the data showed. HDFC Bank Ltd was an exception among the major banks as its retail loans jumped in the wake of its merger with parent Housing Development Finance Corp. Ltd, a home finance company.



Financial boost : SpiceJet secures Rs 160 cr through ECLGS

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Besides Rs 744 crores, SpiceJet has also secured Rs 160 crore through the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), now with a substantial bank balance of Rs 900 crore, airline source told IANS on Monday. Last week, SpiceJet had allotted shares and warrants amounting to a total of Rs 744 crore in the first tranche of its preferential issue. The decision was taken by the company's Board of Directors on January 25, marking a significant step in bolstering SpiceJet's financial position. The source further said that airline's CMD Ajay Singh will personally oversee all major expenditures. "Every rupee will be meticulously scrutinised, with no expenditure permitted without prior approvals. Singh has issued a stern directive of 'perform or perish', making it clear that underperformers will face significant challenges in the revitalised SpiceJet," said the sources. An airline official said that with fund infusion, the company will prioritise fleet upgrades, enhance on-time performance, and a customer-centric approach. "Additionally, a series of cost-cutting measures will be implemented to streamline operations and enhance efficiency. Company expects will raise substantial further capital in follow on rounds of financing," said the official.



Satya Nadella to visit India in Feb, discuss new opportunities with AI

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella will visit India on February 7 and 8 as part of his annual visit to the country and might meet AI startups and discuss new opportunities with AI. "Satya Nadella, Chairman and CEO, Microsoft, will address India's developer community and technologists on discovering new opportunities with AI," the company said in a statement. The president of Microsoft India and South Asia, Puneet Chandok, stated in an internal email a few weeks ago that Nadella's visit reaffirms Microsoft's dedication to using technology to increase opportunities in the country. In June last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his US visit -- met with notable US and Indian tech executives, including Nadella, Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai, and Apple CEO Tim Cook.

Zerodha's Kite app goes down for 4th time in 4 straight months

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Brokerage firm Zerodha's trading app Kite on Monday suffered another technical glitch, marking the fourth straight month the platform has faced such issues. Several users took to the X platform complaining about the issue and demanding compensation for the "loss". "As expected.. These (intentional) glitches will happen again and again to make sure retail investors lose money in their trades. Discount brokers let you save on brokerage while manipulating their platforms from time to time.



Leading tribal body asks Centre to impose President's Rule in Manipur

Imphal, Jan 29 (IANS) : After ruling and opposition MLAs jointly assured 'Arambai Tenggol', a powerful radical Meitei organisation, to urge the Central government to resolve the Manipur crisis, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), an apex body of tribals, has once again asked the Centre to promulgate President's Rule in the state. The ITLF said that the imposition of President's Rule is the only way the Central government can prevent total anarchy in Manipur. "If President's Rule is not imposed now, then when," the influential tribal body asked. Senior ITLF leader and spokesman Ginza Vualzong claimed that Manipur police

and central security forces remained mute spectators as Arambai Tenggol leader Korounganba Khuman arrived at the venue at Kangla Fort in Imphal City in a police vehicle, and the group (Arambai Tenggol) proceeded to conduct an oath-taking ceremony for the MLAs. "All these happened even as a special team from the Union Home Ministry is camping in the city. Why did the world's largest democracy allow this," Vualzong asked in a statement. It added: "For the first time in history, the group was able to order state lawmakers, including the Chief Minister, to attend the meeting it had called and made the MLAs endorse their demands." The ITLF urged the Central government to take action against Arambai Tenggol leader

Korounganba Khuman for allegedly "posting pictures and videos of himself holding assault rifles, and publicly giving speeches before armed men calling for attacks on tribals". On Wednesday, Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Education, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Rajya Sabha member Leishemba Sanajaoba, and 37 Meitei community MLAs, including ministers and opposition legislators, signed a resolution including six charters of demands put forth by Arambai Tenggol. Except Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, all the 36 Meitei MLAs along with the Union Minister and the Rajya Sabha member attended the Kangla Fort meeting with the 55-unit commanders of Arambai Tenggol, presided over by the group supremo Korounganba

Khuman. A source close to the Chief Minister said that Singh did not physically attend the Kangla Fort meeting, but he signed the resolution paper. Former Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader Okram Ibobi Singh and state Congress President Keisham Meghachandra Singh also attended the meeting. The demands include abrogation of the Suspension of Operation (SoO) signed between the Central and state governments and 23 Kuki militant outfits in 2008, implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC), replacement of Assam Rifles with other Central forces, removal of illegal Kuki immigrants from the Scheduled Tribes list, relocating all Myanmar refugees to Mizoram and border fencing along the India-Myanmar border. The



Arambai Tenggol had called the vital meeting after the militants, in their stepped-up attacks in the last couple of days, killed many persons, including two Manipur Police commandos, four villagers and a village defence volunteer. Meanwhile, a three-member Central team led by Advisor to the Home Ministry, A.K. Mishra, which arrived in Manipur on Monday evening, left Imphal for Delhi on Thurs-

day after holding a series of meetings with government officials, leaders of various organisations, and elected representatives. Officials said that Mishra, accompanied by two Joint Directors in the Intelligence Bureau, Mandeep Singh Tuli and Rajesh Kumble, also held a meeting with the leaders of the Arambai Tenggol and other tribal leaders.



Police nabs interstate arms trafficking kingpin 'Langda' after two-month hunt

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The kingpin of an interstate arms trafficking syndicate and associate of Himanshu a.k.a Bhau, who used to supply firearms and ammunition to criminals in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, was arrested after a massive hunt for two months, a Delhi Police Special Cell officer said on Monday. The accused identified as Intzar Rana a.k.a Langda is a habitual criminal and is involved in more than 21 heinous criminal cases, including murder, attempt to murder, theft, robbery, riots, registered in Delhi, UP and Haryana, the officer said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Alok Kumar said that concerted efforts are being made in pursuance of a drive launched against illegal arms sup-

pliers in Delhi from different parts of the country including Sendhwa, Khargone, Dhar & Burhanpur (MP) and Munger (Bihar). "A police team had information about the illegal activities of an arms syndicate led by Rana. Manual surveillance was mounted to develop information about Rana. Teams were sent to various places in UP, MP and Haryana to track his movements," said the DCP. On January 20 after receiving specific information, Rana was nabbed near the Paper Market DDA park circle, Ghazipur, after a brief scuffle. "One semi-automatic sophisticated pistol and three live cartridges were recovered from his possession," said the DCP.

Gogi Gang's extortion racket busted, 10 nabbed in multi-state raids

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : After a series of raids in multiple states, Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested eight persons and apprehended two juveniles belonging to the infamous Gogi Gang, who were running an extortion racket in the national capital and its peripherals, the police said on Monday. The arrested accused have been identified as Deepak Pahal a.k.a Boxer, Narender Yadav, Manish a.k.a Sunny Kakran, Manmohan a.k.a Gaurav, Navprabhat Chaudhary, Devraj Dabas, Azad a.k.a Pahalwan and Khushboo a.k.a Golu. On November 30, 2023, Gaurav Tyagi had filed a complaint, reporting an incident where unidentified individuals opened fire within the premises of his residence in Wazirabad village in Delhi. The police also found an empty cartridge and a note near the main gate of the house. The note, attributed to members of the Gogi Gang namely Deepak Boxer, Sunny Kakran and Anuj Jaat, demanded an extortion sum of

Rs 50 lakh. Additionally, the note conveyed explicit threats, stating that failure to comply with the demand would result in harm to a family member. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime), Sanjay Bhatia, said that on December 9, 2023, an information was received that the culprits involved in this case are in Sonipat, Haryana. A police team was sent to Sonipat to verify the facts and to nab the culprits. "Accordingly, on the basis of specific inputs, two juveniles were apprehended from Sonipat, who had fired inside the house of the victim in Wazirabad," said the DCP. On questioning, both the juveniles disclosed that they used to talk with Manmohan and Manish, who are lodged in Tihar Jail, and continuously received instructions from them. "The present target was given to them by Manmohan and Manish and they had written a chit on their instructions and fired the round. After the commission of the assignment, they reportedly handed over the weapon to a person named Devraj," the officer said. Accordingly, at their instance, Devraj was also apprehended from Puth Khurd, Delhi, and the



weapon used in the crime along with two live cartridges were recovered from his possession. "During further investigation, it was revealed that the extortion and threat messages were being sent by Narender Yadav, a resident of Noida, from an online number. "Accordingly, on the basis of technical inputs, he was also arrested and a SIM Card of Dubai, which was used for sending extortion messages, was recovered from his possession," the DCP said. The DCP also said the juveniles told police that on the instruction of Sunny and Gaurav, a person named Vikash had given the weapon and a motorcycle to them and also shown the house of the target. "With technical analysis, the person was identified as Navprabhat who was using a fake identity in the name of Vikash to hide himself.

Trust to set schedule for states to send devotees to Ayodhya



Ayodhya, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has decided to send invites to state governments for scheduling their visits, a move aimed at controlling the rush of devotees at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. The Trust will also invite Non Resident Indians (NRIs) to Ayodhya to pay obeisance to Ram Lalla, once the rush normalises. "A specific schedule will be prepared for every state to send their people to Ayodhya. This will check the unexpected rush of people to Ayodhya and regulate their movement," a Trust member said. According to the Trust, state governments willing to send people of their respective states to Ayodhya will be allotted a date and time for it.

AISHE: Enrolments in HEIs increased from 4.14 cr in 2020-21 to 4.33 cr in 2021-22

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22 has revealed that the total enrolment in higher education institutions (HEIs) has increased to nearly 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 4.14 crore in 2020-21. Among disciplines at the undergraduate (UG) level, enrolment was highest in Arts with 34.2 per cent, followed by Science (14.8 per cent), Commerce (13.3 per cent), and Engineering & Technology with 11.8 per cent. At the postgraduate (PG) level, the maximum number of students enrolled in Social Science (21.1 per cent) followed by Science with 14.7 per cent. The Ph.D. enrolment

in 2021-22 increased by 81.2 per cent to 2.12 lakh compared to 1.17 lakh in 2014-15. Female Ph.D. enrolment has doubled to 0.99 lakh in 2021-22 from 0.48 lakh in 2014-15. There has been an increase of around 91 lakh in the enrolment in higher education from 3.42 crore (26.5 per cent) in 2014-15. The Union Ministry of Education has released the AISHE report on Monday evening. According to the report, the female enrolment in 2021-22 increased to 2.07 crore from 2.01 crore in 2020-21. The enrolment of SC category students was 66.23 lakh in 2021-22 as compared to 46.07 lakh in 2014-15, an increase of 44 per cent. The enrolment of SC category female students increased to 31.71 lakh in 2021-22 from 29.01



lakh in 2020-21 and 21.02 lakh in 2014-15. There has been an increase of 51 per cent since 2014-15. The enrolment of ST category students has increased to 27.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 16.41 lakh in 2014-15 -- an increase of 65.2 per cent. The enrolment of OBC students has also increased to 1.63 crore in 2021-22 from 1.13 crore in 2014-15. OBC female students' enrolment has increased to 78.19 lakh in 2021-22 from 52.36 lakh in 2014-15. The Minority student

enrolment has increased to 30.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 21.8 lakh in 2014-15 an increase of 38 per cent. The Gender Parity Index (GPI), the ratio of female gross enrolment ratio (GER) to male GER, is 1.01 in 2021-22. The GPI has continued to be above 1 since 2017-18 that is female GER continues to be more than male GER for the fifth consecutive year.

Higher reaches receive light snowfall in J&K

Srinagar, Jan 29 (IANS) : Night temperature rose across J&K on Monday as higher reaches received light snowfall. Higher reaches like Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Zojila Pass, Pir Ki Gali on Mughal road, Sinthan Pass, etc., received light snowfall as clouds covered the sky in the plains of the UT. The Meteorological (MeT) Department has forecast snowfall in the plains between January 28 to January 31.

Srinagar recorded minus 0.5, Gulmarg minus 3.7 and Pahalgam minus 0.4 as the minimum temperature on Monday. Leh town in Ladakh region had minus 5 and Kargil minus 6.9 as the minimum temperature. Jammu city recorded 7, Katra 8.6, Batote 5.6, Baderwah minus 0.2 and Banihal 4.2 as the minimum temperature. The 40-day long period of harsh winter cold known as the 'Chillai Kalan' started on December 21 and will end on January 30.





'Not re-joining BJP', says Cong MLA Savadi after Shettar's return to saffron party

Bengaluru, Jan 29 (IANS) : Former Karnataka deputy chief minister and Congress MLA Laxman Savadi, who switched to the grand old party Congress from the BJP ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections, on Monday said that he was "very clear about not re-joining" the saffron party. Talking to the media after former Karnataka chief minister Jagadish Shettar re-joined the BJP less than a year after he switched to Congress, Savadi said he has not thought about joining the BJP. "I do not know why Shettar re-joined the BJP. Decisions are made at the personal levels. I would not comment on that. We are still friends and talk to each other," he said, adding: "Shettar will have to clarify his action and I would not react."



Mumbai woman alleges rape by Instagram friend; lodges police complaint

Mumbai, Jan 29 (IANS) : A Mumbai woman on Monday has alleged rape as she slept by an Instagram friend and narrated her ordeal that took place at the home of the accused's friend almost a fortnight ago.

Delhi HC refuses stay on defamation proceedings against BJP leader Sirsa

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court has refused to stay criminal proceedings against BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa in a defamation case filed by the former president of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, Manjit Singh G.K. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma upheld the trial court's order that maintained the summons issued to Sirsa by an ACMM court. The court noted that, at this

stage, it found no reasons to stay the proceedings in the defamation case. It said that the trial court had examined the issue of FIR registration and simultaneous proceedings for defamation related to a letter dated April 4, 2016. "...this Court finds that the learned ASJ has examined in detail, the issue of registration of FIR in relation to letter dated 04.04.2016 and simultaneous proceedings in the present complaint case



for commission of offence of defamation," the court said. The court clarified that its observations were prima facie and should not be construed as an opinion on the merits of the case. In the case, Singh alleged that Sirsa and other accused individuals defamed him regularly through social media posts, videos, and press conferences. The court stated that the offence of defamation in this case was not a one-time event in 2020, and there was no infirmity with the trial court's observations. "...at this stage, this Court does not find any reasons to stay the proceedings in the present complaint case," the court said.



Delhi Assembly Budget Session from Feb 15-20

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Delhi Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has approved the proposal to convene the Budget Session for the fiscal year 2024-25 in February, commencing from February 15 and ending on February 20, an official said on Monday. The Delhi government said that the file to convene this proposed budget session has been sent to the Lt Governor for his approval. During the preparation of the budget, the government sought suggestions from all stakeholders in Delhi, and "good recommendations" have been included, the official added. A Delhi government official said

that it will present the 'Outcome Budget' for the financial year 2023-24, showcasing the achievements and progress made in the previous fiscal year. According to the official, through the Outcome Budget, "complete transparency is provided to the people of Delhi regarding the public expenditure of the previous budget". In a way, the Outcome Budget serves as a report card of the performance of various departments based on the allocated funds in the previous fiscal year, the official added. This time, the Delhi government is presenting the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 in February

instead of March. "Similar to the previous fiscal year, there is an expectation that this year's budget will also be substantial," the official added. The Delhi government said that in the upcoming budget, it will address several significant issues, placing particular emphasis on education, health, electricity, water, roads, and infrastructure. The government has highlighted education and health as key priorities for the upcoming financial year, emphasising their importance for all residents of Delhi, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds, a statement read. An official said that the budget allocates special attention to crucial areas such as water, roads, urban development, and various developmental projects. These aspects have been identified as top priorities for the forthcoming fiscal year, reflecting the government's proactive approach towards addressing the diverse needs of the city and its residents, the official added.



Chirag Paswan keeping a close watch on Bihar's current political situation

Patna Jan 29 (IANS) : Amid the ongoing political uncertainty in Bihar, Lok Janshakti Party Ram Vilash (LJPR) President Chirag Paswan called a meeting of party workers on Monday evening. Speculation were rife in Bihar on Monday that Nitish Kumar would return to the BJP-led NDA soon after snapping ties with Lalu Prasad Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). Chirag Paswan is reportedly keeping an eye on the current political situation in Bihar. "I would not like to comment on the political situation of Bihar unless things are more clear. But one thing I must say is that whatever happens, it will take place in the interest of the state," Paswan said. "I have said in the past that the political situation would change after Kharmas and it is visible now. The next few hours will be extremely important," Paswan said.



UGC cautions 21 Bengal universities for not appointing ombudsmen

Kolkata, Jan 29 (IANS) : University Grants Commission (UGC) has cautioned that as many as 21 universities in West Bengal have defaulted in appointing ombudsmen meant for addressing the grievances of the students' there. Among the 21 universities, 17 are state-run while the remaining four are private operating universities. UGC has not disclosed the names of the universities. Sources said among 21 universities also include two iconic institutions: University of Calcutta and Jadavpur University (JU). However, the JU authorities have claimed that there might be some miscommunications regarding the name of the university appearing among the list of defaulters since an ombudsman has already been appointed by the university authorities within the specified date.



K'taka BJP chief says party focussing on LS polls; no plans for 'Operation Lotus'

Bengaluru, Jan 29 (IANS) : Karnataka unit BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra on Monday said the saffron party in the state has been focussing on the upcoming Lok Sabha elections while underlining there were no plans for 'Operation Lotus' in the state. Vijayendra said this while interacting with the media here when asked if the Bharatiya

Janata Party (BJP) would be "targetting" Congress MLA Laxman Savadi as well -- since former Karnataka chief minister Jagadish Shettar is back to the saffron camp after his less than a year's stint with the grand old party. Savadi, a former Karnataka deputy chief minister, switched to the Congress from the BJP last year before the 2023 Assembly polls. Savadi, however, said on

Thursday after Shettar's "home-coming" that he was "very clear about not re-joining the BJP". Meanwhile, Vijayendra, while talking on party's preparations for the upcoming general elections, said: "It would sound funny if I say that the BJP would win all 28 Lok Sabha seats in Karnataka. But there is a BJP wave in the state. We will welcome those who come to the party and agrees to the ideology of the BJP, and accepts Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. There is no question of outsiders and insiders. The high command will finalise the candidates for the Parliamentary elections." Answering a question on row over Mandya seat as both JD-S and Independent sitting MP Sumalatha Ambareesh are keen on contesting the upcoming Lok Sabha polls from there, Vijayendra said he had spoken to Sumalatha in this regard over phone and he will meet her soon.

Single judge vs division bench: SC takes suo motu cognisance of contradictory Calcutta HC orders

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognisance of the unprecedented differences arisen between a division bench and a single judge bench of the Calcutta High Court over a CBI probe into alleged irregularities pertaining to admissions in medical colleges in West Bengal. As per the causelist published on the website of the apex court, the five senior most judges of the Supreme Court will hear the suo motu matter in a special sitting on Monday. Initiated by the top court on its own motion, the case titled "In Re: Orders of Calcutta High Court and Ancillary Issues" will be heard by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B.R. Gavai, Surya Kant, and Aniruddha Bose.



Two women given 'triple talaq' outside Tis Hazari courtrooms, FIRs lodged

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Two cases of 'triple talaq' inside the premises and outside the Tis Hazari court rooms have been reported, police said on Monday. A police official further said that on Wednesday, two separate cases of triple talaq were registered at the Subzi Mandi Police Station, invoking the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019. In the first case, the complainant, Dr. T, a 27-year-old resident of Batla House alleged that on July 11, 2023, while attending court proceedings related to Maintenance and the Domestic Violence Act with her sister at Tis Hazari Court, her husband pronounced triple talaq outside the courtroom. Despite holding a Ph.D. in chemistry, Dr. T had not filed a divorce case against her husband. "After a thorough investigation, the case has been registered," Deputy Commissioner of Police, North, Manoj Kumar Meena said. The other case was of a 24-year-old complainant, a resident of Shradhanand Marg here, who got married on February 18, 2021, in Mumbai.

Vande Bharat train for J&K to be ready soon: ICF GM

Chennai, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Integral Coach Factory (ICF), the largest railway passenger coach maker in the world, will soon roll out Vande Bharat Express rake for Jammu and Kashmir, said a top official. Addressing the employees after unfurling the Tricolour B.G Mallya, General Manager, said, "ICF has two important projects in

hand. The first one is the Vande Metro project which will be a fully air conditioned inter-city train service. ICF is planning to roll out the first prototype of Vande Metro by March this year." "The next project is the Vande Bharat Express rake for Jammu and Kashmir, with suitable modifications to suit the challenging climatic conditions that prevail therein. We hope to turn out this rake shortly," Mallya said. According to him, last year ICF turned out the 50th Vande Bharat rake a big achievement, despite various challenges in the supply front.



Lalu has asked Nitish to clear his stand over INDIA alliance : Manoj Jha

Patna, Jan 29 (IANS) : RJD MP Manoj Jha on Monday said that RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav has asked the Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to clear his stand over INDIA alliance.

He said that in the last one week there have been several news stories on social and mainstream media which are creating confusion about Nitish Kumar's stand on INDIA alliance.

"As Nitish Kumar is Bihar's Chief Minister, he is the right person to resolve the confusion. It will be in the interest of common people of Bihar to get this confusion resolved," Jha said.

Reportedly, Nitish Kumar is in constant touch with the BJP and speculation is rife that he may dump the RJD and other alliance partners again in coming days.



Fake SIM card racket busted in Odisha, 4 held

Bhubaneswar, Jan 29 (IANS): With the arrest of four persons, the Keonjhar district police of Odisha claimed to have busted a fake sim card racket. All the accused persons arrested on Monday belonged to different places in Ghasipura and Ramchandrapur areas of the Keonjhar district. The police seized 538 SIM cards, 18 mobile phones, five biometric scanners, bank passbooks, ATM cards, identity cards and other incriminating materials from their possession. The Keonjhar Police ascertained during a probe that the miscreants were posing as POS (Point of Sale) agents of Airtel and Jio and activating multiple SIM cards in the names of people of Keonjhar district. Later, they sold these fake sim cards to cyber fraudsters across the country. "We received a requisition from Maharashtra Police regarding the involvement of a SIM card from Ghasipura in a cyber crime case there. Based on the information,

a case was registered at the Cyber Crime and Economic Offences police station following further investigation in the case. During investigation, we found that they have sold around 4000 SIM cards to cyber criminals in Rajasthan, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar. They used to charge Rs 500 to Rs 1000 per SIM Card," said Kusalkar Nitin Dagudu, SP Keonjhar district. He further said that police have so far found records of more than 300 FIRs registered in different areas across the country where the cyber criminals duped several gullible victims of their hard-earned money using the SIM cards supplied by the arrested accused from Ghasipura. "In one such FIR, a victim in Maharashtra was duped by callers claiming to be from a reputed bank promising interest-free loan. In another case, a victim from Telangana was duped by callers claiming to be from an electric bike company offering e-bike at a discount," said police sources.

Congress is like an ocean, anyone's exit won't affect party: Shivakumar

Bengaluru, Jan 29 (IANS) : Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday said that Congress is like an ocean and no matter who exits, the party won't get affected. "BJP is trying to pull everyone and not sparing anyone. We are also familiar with the act. If we had to do the same, many would have been pulled into the party," the Deputy Chief Minister said. He said that former chief Minister Jagadish Shettar had joined Congress after making allegations against BJP as he was worried over the internal fighting there.

"Shettar lost the assembly elections by 35,000 votes on the Congress ticket. Even though we had nominated him as a MLC," the Deputy Chief Minister said while addressing the media at the Congress office in Bengaluru. In a major development, former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, who had joined the Congress before the 2023 Assembly election, rejoined the BJP on Monday. "Our party has won 136 seats. We have lost 7 to 8 seats due to our own mistakes. Even now many are looking forward to joining the party," the Deputy Chief Minister said. "We carry out politics on ideologies and morals. The leaders from Belagavi and other regions



have opined that exit of Shettar is a good development for the party. Shettar was given an opportunity keeping long term interests in mind. He must answer for his statements against the BJP. We need not speak about them. The post vacated by his exit would be given to a Congress loyalist," Shivakumar said. He said that upholding the Indian

Constitution is the primary objective of the Congress party. "It is a national scripture. The history of India is all about the history of the Congress party. If Congress comes to power people of all sections would get power. The party will take everyone along," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

Air quality continues to be 'severe' at some stations in Delhi

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : For the third consecutive day on Monday, the air quality in Delhi continued to be in 'severe' category at several stations across the national capital, owing to unfavourable meteorological and climate conditions. The air quality at Aya Nagar

plummeted to 'severe' category with PM2.5 at 455 and PM10 at 400 or 'very poor' while CO reached at 103 or 'moderate'.



Kerala will not bow before arrogant Guv Khan: Minister Sivankutty

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 29 (IANS) : The happenings of the past two days in which the central character appeared to be Governor Arif Mohammed Khan have irked the ruling Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left government with one of its ministers V. Sivankutty saying that 'Kerala will not bow before the arrogant governor'. On Monday soon after Khan finished his Republic Day address where he applauded the Centre and took potshots at Vijayan's governance, Sivankutty said, "Kerala will not bow before the arrogance of the governor, who is out to portray the state and those who run the administration in a poor light. Khan literally abused eminent historian Irfan Habib and termed him as a goon.

SC freezes Tamil Nadu anti-corruption probe against ED official arrested in bribery case

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : In an interim direction, the Supreme Court on Monday temporarily froze the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) probe against Enforcement Directorate (ED) official Ankit Tiwari. Tiwari – an officer of the central agency – was arrested by DVAC on charges of demanding and accepting bribes from a state govern-

ment employee. The DVAC officials seized Rs 20 lakh cash from Tiwari's car, which he had allegedly received as a bribe from an accused in a Disproportionate Assets case. Hearing a plea filed by the central anti-money laundering agency seeking transfer of probe in the matter to the CBI, a Bench presided over by Justice Surya Kant issued a notice to the Tamil Nadu Government returnable within a period of two weeks. The Bench, also comprising Jus-



tice KV Vishwanathan, asked the state government to furnish the apex court with all the materials collected by the DVAC against the ED official so far. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta,

appearing for the central agency, said that DVAC conducted searches at the ED's Madurai office and seized several unconnected files.



Trinamool ridicules Padma award for Mithun Chakraborty

Kolkata, Jan 29 (IANS) : Trinamool Congress Spokesman Kunal Ghosh -- without directly naming anyone -- has ridiculed the Padma Bhushan award for superstar Mithun Chakraborty. Ghosh said that the Padma Bhushan award is not for his acting talent but as the prize for shifting political camp. "The Padma Bhushan award is not any recognition of his acting talent. In that case the award could have been conferred any time after 2014. Actually it is an award for his dishonesty towards Trinamool Congress and subsequent slandering of the party," Ghosh said in this social media handle post on Monday. However, the state BJP president in West Bengal and the party Lok Sabha member Sukanta Majumdar has launched a scathing attack against Ghosh.



Unnao rape case : Delhi HC upholds 10-yr sentence for brother of expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Sengar

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court has rejected the plea to suspend the 10-year sentence of Jaideep Singh Sengar, the brother of expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar. Jaideep was convicted in March 2020 for his involvement in the death of the father of the 2018 Unnao rape victim. The court, led by Justice

Swarana Kanta Sharma, dismissed Jaideep's application seeking suspension of his sentence during the pendency of his appeal. The decision was made considering factors such as his medical condition, the severity of the offence, and public confidence in the judiciary.

Four killed, one injured in fire in Philippines

Manila, Jan 29 (IANS) : At least four people were killed and one injured in a fire that broke out in a residential area in the Philippines' Lucena city on Monday. The deceased included a 72-year-old and a 65-year-old, and two others aged 18 and 8, who were all living together in one of the burned houses, Lucena police said. The blaze that broke out at 3.45 a.m. local time was doused by 6.26 a.m. local time. The police said that the victims got trapped inside the house and their remains were found by firemen, Xinhua news agency reported. The injured who suffered second degree burn was rushed to a hospital. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained.



Japanese police to set up 1,000 security cameras in quake-hit areas to fight crime



Tokyo, Jan 29 (IANS) : Japan's National Police Agency (NPA) on Monday said it will install around 1,000 security cameras to prevent burglaries and other crimes in the quake-hit areas in central Japan, local media reported. The NPA as well as Ishikawa and other prefectural police forces will contribute about 600 cameras, while the agency plans to procure the remaining 400 using 135 million yen (about \$915,000) from reserve funds in its fiscal 2023 budget, Kyodo News reported.



Indian-origin ex-lawyer gets jail for misappropriating nearly \$358k in Singapore

Singapore, Jan 29 (IANS) : An Indian-origin former lawyer has been sentenced to three years and 11 months in jail in Singapore for misappropriating nearly \$358k (approx US\$480,000) of clients' money. Gurdaib Singh Pala Singh, 70, who used to be a lawyer at Gurdaib Cheong & Partners (GCP), continued to act as an advocate and solicitor even after he was struck off the rolls in 2018. He pleaded guilty last year to two counts of criminal breach of trust involving nearly

SG\$459,000 and an offence under the Legal Profession Act, The Straits Times reported on Thursday. A third criminal breach of trust charge involving another SG\$21,000 was considered during sentencing. Singh's bail was set at SG\$100,000 on Monday and he is expected to surrender himself at the State Courts on February 15 to begin serving his sentence. The Straits Times earlier reported that a man named Zulkifli Osman engaged GCP's services for the sale of his late father's flat in December 2010, which was sold in 2011 and the firm received sale

proceeds of more than SG\$356,000. Between Zulkifli and Singh it was agreed that out of that sum, the former's brother was to receive SG\$138,876.50. Following this, Zulkifli deposited SG\$138,876 into GCP's client account to be held in escrow as his brother's share of the sales proceeds on December 15, 2011. However, between December 20, 2011, and May 3, 2012, Singh misappropriated Zulkifli's funds in GCP's client account by issuing cheques to pay for other matters such as the firm's office expenses. Zulkifli made three requests to Singh between August 2012 and July 2014 to withdraw a portion of the money, unaware that it had been fully expended. Singh then disbursed a total of SG\$10,156 to Zulkifli by using money in the GCP client account that belonged to the firm's other clients. In June 2015, Zulkifli asked Singh to withdraw the remaining SG\$128,720 from the funds but the offender failed to disburse any money to him. After being struck off the company rolls in 2018, Singh agreed to represent a man in divorce proceedings.



Canada 'disappointed' at UK's decision to pause free trade talks

Ottawa, Jan 29 (IANS) : Canadian Trade Minister Mary Ng has expressed disappointment over the UK's decision to pause the bilateral free trade talks. Talking to reporters, Ng said she is "very confident" that the two sides will get back to the table, Xinhua news agency reported. "I would encourage my colleagues in the United Kingdom to get back to the table because negotiating is how we get a deal," she said. Earlier on Monday a British government spokesperson said in a statement that they reserve the right to pause negotiations with any country if progress is not being made, adding that they will

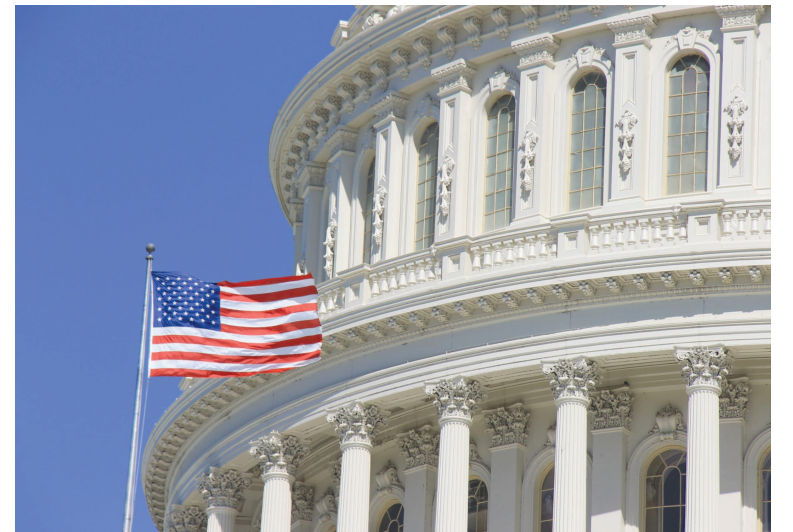
remain open to restarting talks with Canada in the future. According to CBC News, a major sticking point between the two sides remains how much tariff-free access British producers should have to the Canadian cheese market. Canadian dairy farmers want to keep their supply-managed and heavily protected sector out of this deal. Talks are also faltering on drafting new rules for automotive trade between the two countries, CBC News said. Britain is Canada's third-largest trading partner. The two commonwealth nations started free trade negotiation in 2022 and eight rounds of talks have been completed since then.

US public officials face surge of threats ahead of 2024 election

New York, Jan 29 (IANS) : Ever since former President Donald Trump contested the 2020 elections as a "stolen one" by Democrats, state and local officials have faced a surge of violent threats, harassment, and intimidation. Especially from his supporters following the infamous attack on Capitol Hill on January 6, 2021, when Trump lost the election to Joe Biden. These threats, harassment and intimidation are virtually reshaping the way public officials across the US do their jobs, making them less likely to engage with constituents,

hold public events, advocate for government policies that could lead to blowback, or run for re-election, the Time Magazine reported in a special dispatch this week. Quoting a new report published on Monday by the Brennan Center for Justice, the journal laid out how this abuse was interfering and affecting the efficiency of public officials. More than 40 per cent of state legislators surveyed reported being threatened or attacked in the past three years. Nearly 90 per cent said they had suffered less severe abuse, including harassment, intimidation, and stalking.

Almost 40 per cent of local officials, including 50 per cent of women, said the ongoing harassment made them less willing to run for re-election or to seek higher office. This tally includes many state and local election officials, who in 2020 bore the brunt of the anger of Trump's supporters, who falsely accused them of rigging that race and subsequently hounded many out of office, the journal said. The resulting turnover means that more than 1 in 5 election administrators will be doing the job for the first time in 2024, according to the Brennan Centre's data. "We never thought our lives, or



most importantly, our family members' or significant others' lives, would be in jeopardy," former Virginia House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn, a Democrat, said in the Brennan Center survey. "I think you're going to lose a lot of good people because of it." Public officials have of late faced

some level of anger from constituents who disagree with them. And this disagreement and the severity and scale of this "constant barrage of intimidating behaviour is now [having] an impact on the way they do their jobs."

British Sikh says was urged to confess Post Office theft due to her Asian descent

London, Jan 29 (IANS) : An elderly British Sikh former post office operator has claimed that she faced discrimination due to her Asian heritage and was urged by the auditors to confess to stealing 30,000 pounds. Kuldeep Kaur Atwal, 73, was accused of stealing the money over a period from July 1995 until November 1996, when Post Office auditors made a morning visit to the Coventry branch in 1997. Before her trial at Coventry Crown Court in 1997, Atwal, then 46, was told by the auditors that her cultural background may have played a role in her criminality. The Guardian newspaper reported on Monday. While she was cleared of all charges later, Atwal claims it was suggested by the auditors that if she admitted to being at fault, she may be able to avoid the harshest sanctions.



A mother of three, Atwal said the auditor's alleged comment had made her angry at the time but she had felt powerless to respond. "One of the auditors commented to me... that 'It is quite common in your society that women come under pressure to take money on the side, they don't tell the family. Is someone putting pressure on you?'" Atwal recounted. "He meant being an Asian woman, the culture is such that the rest of the family puts pressure on the woman (leading to theft). I said, 'Don't be silly.'"



Complete power blackout hits hospital in Gaza's Khan Younis

Gaza, Jan 29 (IANS) : A complete power blackout has hit the Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. Photos circulating on social media showed complete darkness shrouding the hospital, Xinhua news agency reported. The Gaza-based Health Ministry said in a statement on Monday that the Israeli forces deliberately disabled the hospital through attacks and blockade and prevented its ambulances from operating. The Israeli army continued military operations in Khan Younis on Monday, resulting in at least 28 deaths, according to the state-run Palestine TV.



UN trade body sounds alarm over Red Sea conflict's impact on trade; Suez shipping down 42%

United Nations, Jan 29 (IANS) : Sounding an alarm about the impact of the Red Sea conflict on the international economy, the United Nations trade body UNCTAD has said that the volume of international trade going through the Suez Canal has come down by 42 per cent during the last two months and is affecting

energy exports to India. "We are concerned that the attacks on Red Sea shipping are adding tensions to a context of global trade disruptions due to geopolitics and climate change," Jan Hoffmann, who heads the Trade Logistics Branch of UNCTAD, told reporters on Monday. The longer trade distances and higher freight rates as ships avoid the Red Sea and the Suez Canal

"could have cascading effects on food prices", he said, warning of the spectre of inflation. He said that according to the UNCTAD estimates, attacks by Houthi rebels on ships in the Red Sea region since November have led to the volume of shipping using the Suez Canal falling by 42 per cent. Majors in the shipping industry are temporarily stopping Suez transits as they search for other routes, he said. Some energy exports from Europe to India go through the Suez Canal, he said. The Suez Canal which connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea is a vital link connecting Asia and East Africa with Europe and beyond and handled approximately 12 per cent to 15 per cent of global trade last year. To avoid the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, ships have to go around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. UNCTAD – the UN Conference on Trade and Development – is the world body's agency for trade and development.



Asian Games medallists Avinash Sable, Parul Choudhary to head to the US for foreign training

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : With their eyes set on performing well at the upcoming Paris Olympics Games later this year, middle distance runners Avinash Sable and Parul Choudhary, both medallists at last year's Asian Games, and wrestlers Anshu Malik and Sarita Mor will soon be heading abroad for training. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), in their latest meeting, approved requests of multiple athletes to train abroad with Asian Games medallists Avinash Sable and Parul Choudhary heading to Colorado.

Jasprit Bumrah reprimanded for breaching ICC Code of Conduct during Hyderabad Test

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : India's fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been handed an official reprimand for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during the first match of the Test series against England, which ended in a 28-run loss for the hosts' at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Sunday. The International Cricket Council (ICC) said Bumrah was found to have breached Article 2.12 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "inappropriate physical contact with a Player, Player Support Personnel, Umpire, Match Referee or any other person (including a spectator during an International Match)." It also added that one demerit point has been added to Bumrah's disciplinary

record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period. The incident occurred in the 81st over of England's second innings, when Bumrah, after completing his follow through, deliberately stepped in Ollie Pope's way as the batter went for a run, leading to inappropriate physical contact.

Bumrah, who had figures of 2/28 and 4/41 in the Hyderabad Test, admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Richie Richardson of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, so there was no need for a formal hearing. On-field umpires Paul Reiffel and

Chris Gaffaney, third umpire Marais Erasmus and fourth umpire Rohan Pandit levelled the charge. Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 per cent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points. Demerit Points to remain on a Player or Player Support Personnel's disciplinary record for a period of twenty-four (24) months from their imposition following which they will be expunged.



England have given India something to think about, says Mark Wood after Hyderabad Test triumph

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : England's tearaway pacer Mark Wood says the side's astonishing come-from-behind 28-run win in the first Test at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium has given India something to think about ahead of the second game of the series at Visakhapatnam. England converted conceding a lead of 190 runs to defeat India by 28 runs, which will rank as one of their greatest Test wins in overseas conditions. Vice-captain Ollie

Pope's 196 and debutant left-arm spinner Tom Hartley's 7-62 played key roles in England's come-from-behind improbable win, giving them 1-0 lead in the five-game series.

"They now have to come up with a different plan. We've only won one game and there are five in the series. We've proved to India it will be a battle and we're not going to give up. "It's one of our greatest wins."

"People were a little bit sceptical

before but there was always belief in the group. We knew it was going to be a huge task, which it was, but it's a monumental achievement. Now we know we can do it and we have given India something to think about," said Wood to BBC Sport. When England last toured India in 2021, the hosts' bounced back after losing the series opener in Chennai by winning the series 3-1 on extreme spin-friendly pitches.

KTYG 2023 : Assam's Pahi applies her Tezpur lake lessons to win the Chennai pool

Chennai, Jan 29 (IANS) : Far from the glittering waters of an Olympic-size pool, Pahi Borah learned swimming in a lake and had to use makeshift bamboo arrangements to dive and somersault.



Gill's got the cushion that perhaps even Pujara didn't get, says Anil Kumble

Hyderabad, Jan 29 (IANS) : On Shubman Gill's recent struggles in Test cricket, former India captain Anil Kumble said the right-handed batter has been provided with a cushion which probably even veteran batter Cheteshwar Pujara didn't receive when he was in the national set-up. After a great start to his Test career, Gill has found the going tough after moving to number three position. At Hyderabad, Gill struggled to break free before falling for 23, flicking straight to mid-wicket off debutant Tom Hartley in first innings. In the chase of 231, the tentative right-handed batter spooned a simple catch to short mid-off against Hartley and fell for a two-ball duck.

As of now, Gill has aggregated 173 runs at an average of 17.30 in his last 11 Test innings, with just one 30+ score to show. It

stands in stark contrast of him amassing 1000+ runs in ODIs and becoming IPL 2023 top run-scorer last year. "He has been given the cushion perhaps even a Cheteshwar Pujara didn't get, because although he (Pujara) has played over a 100 Tests, I keep coming back to him mainly because that was his place not too long ago. Pujara played in that World Test Championship final and post that, it's been Shubman

Gill, who's been moving from the opener's slot, and he himself wanted to bat at No. 3."

"So, when you want to bat at No. 3 especially in India because you have that talent, you certainly need to work on your game. He has the skills, he is young and he's learning, but he needs to do it in Vizag, otherwise the pressure will be on him," said Kumble on 'Match Centre Live' show on JioCinema.



India squad for SAFF U-19 Women's Championship announced

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : The U-19 Women's National Team head coach Sukla Dutta, on Monday, announced a 23-member squad for the SAFF U-19 Women's Championship 2024 scheduled to take place in Dhaka, Bangladesh from February 2-8. The Indian team will depart for Bangladesh tomorrow, January 30, 2024. The Indian U-19 girls, who finished runners-up in the

2021 edition, will open their campaign against Bhutan on February 2, 2024 followed by defending champions Bangladesh on February 4 and Nepal on February 6. The tournament will be played in a round robin format with the top two teams after the league round will face each other in the final. All the matches will be played at the Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Dhaka.

Elgar revealed shocking incident claiming, "Virat Kohli spat on me"

New Delhi, Jan 29 (IANS) : Former South Africa captain Dean Elgar shared a shocking incident from the Proteas' tour of India in 2015 claiming that during the first Test in Mohali, a young Virat Kohli spat at him on the challenging pitch. "Those wickets were jokes. Like playing on that... that surface there. And I came into bat and I was actually holding my

own against Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, and Kohli, he like spat at me," Elgar recalled on the "Banter, with The Boys" podcast. On being asked if Kohli knew the meaning of the word, Elgar replied: "Yes, he did because de Villiers was his teammate at RCB, so he understood. And I said if you do that, I'll ... on this field, I'll absolutely knock you



out. Anyways, we are in India so you got to be a little bit cautious." Despite the heated exchange, Elgar acknowledged that Kohli later apologized during India's tour to South Africa in 2017-18.

La Liga : Xavi set to part ways with Barcelona FC

Madrid, Jan 29 (IANS) : FC Barcelona coach Xavi Hernández has announced that he will leave the club at the end of the current season.



Hockey5s Men's WC: India outclass Jamaica 13-0 in their final Pool B match

Muscat, Jan 29 (IANS) : In their third and final Pool B match of the FIH Hockey5s Men's World Cup Oman 2024, the Indian Men's Hockey Team showcased an extraordinary performance.