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Sri Lankan President receives ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake who is on a three-day state visit to New Delhi, was accorded a grand ceremonial welcome at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday, marking his first overseas visit as head of state. President Dissanayake is expected to hold crucial discussions with Prime Minister Modi later in the day, aiming to reinforce ties and address key regional and global challenges. President Dissanayake, who assumed office in September following his victory in Sri Lanka's presidential and parliamentary elections, was welcomed by Indian President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Telangana Assembly witnesses heated debate on pending Panchayat Raj bills

Hyderabad, Dec 16 : The Telangana Assembly on Monday witnessed heated exchanges between the treasury benches and the principal opposition party BRS on the issue of pending the Panchayat Raj bills. BRS MLA Harish Rao raised a question on pending bills to Sarpanches during the Assembly Question Hour. He alleged that the Congress government had not been giving a single rupee to the Gram Panchayats since it came to power in Telangana. Responding to the remarks, Minister for Panchayat Raj Seethakka said.



Tabla Maestro Zakir Hussain passes away, confirms family

New Delhi, Dec 16 : Tabla maestro Zakir Hussain has passed away, confirmed his family on Monday. He was 73. Hussain died at a hospital in San Francisco due to complications arising out of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, the family said in a statement. Hussain, who is regarded as the greatest tabla player of his generation.



Constitution debate in RS: Those who practise hate politics are lecturing us, says Kharge

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Mallikarjun Kharge, the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha joined the debate trailing the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution, and used the opportunity on Monday to hit out at the ruling BJP over its "hate politics." Kharge also responded to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "jumla" charge at the Congress and said that it's his government which was fooling people with false promises. Kharge, speaking in the Upper House, said that it was under the Indira Gandhi government in 1971 that the Indian forces divided Pakistan into two parts and liberated Bangladesh. He also urged the Centre to ensure the safeguarding of Hindu minorities in the neighbouring country. He said that BJP leaders keep abusing Jawaharlal Nehru as well as Mahatma Gandhi and then go on to give lectures on probity in



public life. "Those who hate Ashok chakra, those who hate the Constitution, they are giving us lectures today," said the Congress chief. Further dishing out advice to the ruling BJP, he said that they should first make amends for their own wrongdoings before uncovering the failures of others. "There have been numerous landmark achievements under past governments.



Red sanders smuggling continuing unabated under NDA rule, says YSRCP

Amaravati, Dec 16 (IANS) : Andhra Pradesh's main opposition party YSR Congress on Monday said that smuggling of red sanders is "going on unabated" under the TDP-led NDA government while it was under check when it was in power.

Priyanka's bag with 'Palestine' inscribed on it turns heads in Parliament

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Congress lawmaker Priyanka Gandhi reached Parliament on Monday with a 'Palestine' tag on her handbag, drawing the attention of fellow Parliamentarians and television cameras alike. It is seen as a move by the Congress MP to express solidarity with Palestinians amidst the months-long military face-off with Israel. Priyanka has been vociferous about the Israel-Gaza fight in the recent past and termed Israeli actions in Gaza as "barbaric and inhuman."

Ponnam dares BRS leaders for open debate on funds spent on BCs

Hyderabad, Dec 16 (NSS) : Minister for Transport and BC Welfare Ponnamparthi Prabhakar has dared BRS leaders for an open debate on the funds spent on BCs in the last ten years. Opposition Members raised a question in the Legislative Council on the construction of community buildings. Responding to the subject, the Minister made several key comments.



Govt to issue 10 lakh new white ration cards after Sankranti festival: Uttam

Hyderabad, Dec 16 : Irrigation, Food & Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that the Telangana government is preparing to issue 10 lakh new white ration cards after the Sankranti festival. This move will benefit an estimated 31 lakh people. Replying to a query during the Question Hour in the Telangana Legislative Council on Monday, the minister explained

that the state government will use data from the recently conducted caste census survey to finalise eligibility for the new ration cards. The initiative is projected to add a financial burden of Rs 956 crore annually to the state exchequer. He mentioned that over 18 lakh applications to add names to existing ration cards have been pending at MeeSeva centres for over a decade.

BRS has no right to fight over Telangana Talli, says Vijayashanthi

Hyderabad, Dec 16 (IANS) : Actor-politician Vijayashanthi on Monday said that the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has no right to fight over the change in the design of the 'Telangana Talli' (Mother Telangana) statue. Vijayashanthi recalled that in 2007, the first Telangana Talli statue was unveiled by the Talli Telangana Party, floated by her. In a post on 'X', she said that BS Ramulu had designed Telangana Talli as the mother of the poor, weak, and marginalised communities. Vijayashanthi, who is now with the Congress, stated that the then TRS, which is now the BRS, did not design Telangana Talli. "Subsequently, the TRS (BRS) unveiled a statue of Telangana Talli at their TRS office. However, for 10 years when they were in power, they never provided official status and respect to Telangana Talli," she wrote. The veteran actor-turned-politician mentioned that the present Congress government under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy gave official status, and respect and also laid down government policy for Telangana Talli. "How does a political party like



BRS have a right to fight over the change in the design of Telangana Talli," she asked. The former MP said that Telangana activists could also have fought when the BRS changed the design of Telangana Talli. "Our Bonalu and Bathukamma culture has been and will continue for generations. There is no need for the involvement of political parties for their own interests," she added. Vijayashanthi's comments came amid a protest by the BRS over the modified Telangana Talli statue, unveiled at the state Secretariat on December 9.



STATE BANK OF INDIA – THE MARKET LEADER IN HOME LOANS

Hyderabad, Dec 16 (TIM Bureau) : State Bank of India is the Market Leader and first choice for Home Loans. State Bank of India, having its presence with over 22,500 branches across the country, has crossed Rs. 7.95 trillion mark in Home

Loan Business as on 30.11.2024. Shri Rajesh Kumar, Chief General Manager, State Bank of India, Hyderabad Circle explained the recent initiatives at the Press Meet on account of Mega Property Expo at Hitex on 20th, 21st & 22nd of December 2024.

Hyderabad Circle has a Home Loan Portfolio of ₹ 66,249 cr as on 30th Nov 2024. During the Current financial year April'24 – Nov'24, Bank has sanctioned 14,575 Home Loans & 5,732 Top Up Loans amounting to Rs. 10,700 crore in Telangana state and crossed Rs.10,000 crore disbursements during the year. The Bank is having exclusively 27 Home Loan Centres across the State of Telangana for processing & sanction of Home loans. Hyderabad Circle is having Builder Finance Portfolio of Rs.1,200 Cr as on date and during current financial year, has added New Sanctions worth Rs. 500 Cr. The Circle has 859 projects under "Builder Tie-up" till date and in current FY, 120 builder tie-ups were approved and many more projects are being considered under the ambit of "Builder Tie-Up" to accel-



erate the Home Loan process. SBI has wide range of Products apart from the Home Loan viz. a) Personal Loan against Property (P-LAP) b) HL Top-up c) Maxgain -Hybrid d) NRI Home Loan which are very popular and the

interest rates offered are competitive. The Bank has put in place various Digital Enablers in YONO App whereby customers can apply Home Loans without visiting Bank branch in YONO platform. Also "Insta Top up Loan" in

YONO for Housing Loan customers, who, can avail a Top up loan with a click of button in YONO app. Bank has very robust software called "Retail Loan Management Solutions".

HDB Financial Services Ltd.
Registered Office: Radhika, 2nd Floor, Law Garden Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Pin Code-380009.
Branch Office: Shree Balaji PSR Tower, 1st Floor, H.No.1-8-616, 1, Prakash Nagar, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana-500016.

APPENDIX IV POSSESSION NOTICE See Rule 8(1) (For Immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of M/s. HDB Financial Services Ltd., under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) (3) & R/w Rule 8.9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 calling upon the Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor in Loan A/c No's: 18902196, 1) Royal Chicken Center, K.K.Road, Suryapet-508213, Telangana. And also, at: H.No.6-78, Survey No.158/VU, Plot No.4, Kudakuda Village, Chivemmla Mandal, Suryapet-508213. 2) Sayed Gouse, H.No.6-78, Survey No.158/VU, Plot No.4, Kudakuda Village, Chivemmla Mandal, Suryapet-508213. 3) Sayed Jani Begum, H.No.6-78, Survey No.158/VU, Plot No.4 Kudakuda Village Chivemmla Mandal, Suryapet-508213, Telangana to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.31,80,004.60 (Rupees Thirty One Lakhs Eighty Thousand Four and Paise Sixty Only) as on 10.09.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act R/w Rule 8 And 9, on this 13th day of December of the year 2024.

The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the M/s. HDB Financials Ltd., for an amount of Rs.31,80,004.60 (Rupees Thirty One Lakhs Eighty Thousand Four and Paise Sixty Only) and interest and charges thereon. The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Sec.8 of the Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURITIES :- All that Residential House No.6-78 an extent 355 Sq.Yards within Kudakuda Revenue Survey No.158/VU, Plot No.4, situated at Kudakuda Grama Panchayath, Chevvela Mandal and Nalgonda District within the following Boundaries: North: Plot of M.Srinatha, South: Plot No.5, East: Suryapet to Danthalapally Road, West: Plot No.28

Date: 13-12-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer,
Place: Hyderabad HDB Financial Services Ltd.

HDB Financial Services Ltd.
Registered Office: Radhika, 2nd Floor, Law Garden Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Pin Code-380009.
Branch Office: Shree Balaji PSR Tower, 1st Floor, H.No.1-8-616, 1, Prakash Nagar, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana-500016.

APPENDIX IV POSSESSION NOTICE See Rule 8(1) (For Immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of M/s. HDB Financial Services Ltd., under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) (3) & R/w Rule 8.9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 calling upon the Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor in Loan A/c No's: 5979982, 12942699. 1) Golden Granites, Sy.No.203/A, Teldarupalli, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 2) Vinod Kumarjawa, S/o Sampath Kumar Jhawar, Sy.No.203/A, Teldarupalli, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 3) Rathimeenakshi, D/o Sampath Kumar, Sy.No.203/A, Teldarupalli, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 4) Nileshrathi, S/o Brijmohanrathi, H.No.5-1-660, Flat No.203, CRG Enclave Kaviraj Nagar, Khammam, Khammam-507002, Telangana. 5) Sampath Kumar Jhawar, S/o Jainarayan, Flat No.401, R.K.Plaza, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 6) Jhaverera Bai, D/o Poonamchand, Flat No.401, R.K.Plaza, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 7) Jhaver Seema, D/o Gopikrishna, Flat No.401, R.K.Plaza, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 8) Rajesh Kumar Jhawar, S/o Sampath Jhawar, Flat No.401, R.K.Plaza, Khammam-507003, Telangana. 9) Sampat Kumar Jhawar, S/o Jainara Yanjharwar, H.No.401/A, CRG Paradisi Apartments, Kaviraj Nagar, Beside CV Ramana College, Khammam-507002, Telangana. 10) Jhaverseema, D/o Gopi Krishnloya, H.No.15-8-886, R.K.Plaza, Mamatha Hospital Road, Khammam-507001, Telangana. 11) Rajesh Kumar Jhawar, S/o Sampath Kumar Jhawar, H.No.4-2-200, Flat No.405, CRG Paradisi Apartment, Kaviraj Nagar, Khammam-507002, Telangana. 12) Rathi Meenakshi, D/o Sampat Kumar Jhawar, H.No.5-1-660, Flat Number 203, CRG Enclave Kaviraj Nagar Khammam-507002, Telangana to repay the amount mentioned in The Notice Being Rs.20,18,064/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Eighteen Thousand and Sixty Four Only) as on 14.10.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act R/w Rule 8 And 9, on this 13th day of December of the year 2024.

The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the M/s. HDB Financials Ltd., for an amount of Rs.20,18,064/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Eighteen Thousand and Sixty Four Only) and interest and charges thereon. The Applicant/Co-Appliants/Guarantor attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Sec.8 of the Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURITIES :- All that Piece and Parcel of Land that a Dismantled Golden Granites Industrial Property with entire Machinery Survey No.203/A, N Admesuring Ac. 0.23/4, Guntas (2843.50 Sq.Yards) situated at Teldarupalli Village, Khammam Rural Mandal, Khammam District. Boundaries: North: Agri Land of Thota Ram Chadra Reddy, South: Banjaru Land, East: Road, West: Agri Land of Thota Ram Chadra Reddy.

Date: 13-12-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer,
Place: Hyderabad HDB Financial Services Ltd.

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
भारत सरकार का उद्योग (A Government of India Undertaking)

REGIONAL OFFICE HYDERABAD SOUTH: #4-1-954, 3rd Floor, Abids, Beside Hollywood Footwear, Hyderabad-500001. Ph: 8332940061. E-Mail: rohyd3rec@canarabank.com

Ref:/2427/SaleNotice/SREEBALAJI/01 Date: 13-12-2024

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Canara Bank Branches are mentioned below will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" for recovery of dues to the Canara Bank plus unapplied interest and bank charges thereon are mentioned below:

Date & time of the e-Auction is on 17.01.2025, 11:30 A.M. to 01:30 P.M. (With unlimited extension of 5 minutes duration each till the conclusion of the sale). Last date of deposit of EMD is on or before 16.01.2025 at 11:00 P.M.

1 SME KUKATPALLY BRANCH: Name and Address of the Borrower(s): M/s. Sree Balaji Packaging Industries, Plot No.47, Shed No.4 CIE, Gandhi Nagar, Balanagar, Hyderabad-50003. Smt. Keelukani Vasumathi, W/o. Ravinder, H.No.1-7-204/6/1, Sy.No.332, B Ward, Jakeru, Hussain Nagar, Madharam Revenue Village, Suryapet Town & District.
Legal Heirs: Sri Keelukani Ravinder, S/o. Kelukani Gopiah, 1-7-204/6/1, 8th Ward, JH Nagar, Suryapet Municipality, Suryapet, Nalgonda-508213. Smt. Kelukani Mamtha, W/o. Late Kelukani Vijay Kumar, Community Hall, H.No.33-63, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar, Shapur Nagar, IDA Jeedimetla, Qutubullapur-500055.

TOTAL LIABILITIES: Rs.49,31,525.04 (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs Thirty One Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Five and Four Paise Only) Contractual dues as on 13.12.2024 plus unapplied interest w.e.f. 14.12.2024 and Bank charges. The amounts remitted after issuance of Demand notice are duly accounted.

DETAILS AND FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY: EMT of plot admeasuring 300 sq.yards in Sy.No.332 equivalent to 252 sq.mts at Road No.1, Block No.7, having House No.1-7-204/6/1 at bechirag Madharam in Municipal Jurisdiction of Suryapet, B Madharam Revenue Village, Suryapet-508213. Bounded by: East: Dharmareddy's Land, West: Kelukani Vasumathi's House No.1-7-204/6/1, North: Land of Darma Rao, South: Baata.

RESERVE PRICE: Rs.30,60,000/- EMD: Rs.3,06,000/- BID MULTIPLES: Rs.10,000/-

EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited by way of Demand Draft in favor of Authorized Officer, Canara Bank, SME KUKATPALLY BRANCH or shall be deposited through RTGS/ NEFT/ Fund Transfer to credit of account of Canara Bank, SME KUKATPALLY BRANCH, A/c No.: 209272434, IFSC Code: CNRB0002427 on or before 16.01.2025 at 11:00 P.M.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact Mr. S SHANTANU BHARGAVEE - SME KUKATPALLY Branch, Canara Bank. Ph. No.7382932278 during office hours on any working day. Intending bidders shall hold a valid digital signature certificate and e-mail address. For details with regard to digital signature please contact the service provider M/s. PSB Alliance (Ebkray), Mobile No.8291220220, E-mail: support.ebkray@psballiance.com, Website- https://ebkgray.in/

The property can be inspected, with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer, on 10.01.2025 11.00 A.M. and 03.00 P.M.

* No Known Encumbrances to the Knowledge of the Bank
Date: 13.12.2024, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank.

Cong amended Constitution to protect those in power : FM Sitharaman in RS

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, initiated the Constitution debate in Rajya Sabha on Monday and stated that the Congress amended the Constitution to protect those in power. Mentioning an incident from 1949 she said, "Majrooh Sultanpuri and Balraj Sahni were both jailed in 1949. For what reason? During a meeting organised for mill workers in 1949, Majrooh Sultanpuri recited a poem written against Jawaharlal Nehru, and for that, he was sent to jail. He refused to apologise for it and was therefore jailed in 1949 along with Balraj Sahni, the eminent actor of those days." "That was the level of intolerance," she added.

The Finance Minister also criticised the Congress for holding the Constitution in their hands, going to vote, and talking about freedom of speech, but still claiming that "there is a sense of fear in the country," she said. "Did Majrooh Sultanpuri feel it? Did Balraj Sahni feel it? But history repeats itself when it comes to the Congress party," she added. In 1988, the book 'Satanic Verses' was also banned, following the bans on Nehru's biography and the film 'Kissa Kursi Ka'. "This spree of curtailing the freedom of the press happened before 1949, dur-



ing 1949-50, and it continues," said Sitharaman. She further claimed that the judiciary was held in contempt. "A constitutional amendment was made to nullify the judgment in the Indira Gandhi vs. Raj Narain case, wherein the Allahabad High

Court set aside the election of Indira Gandhi." "A case was pending, being heard in court, but there was a hurry — what if the court came against her? The 39th Amendment Act was passed, which added Article 392(A)," she added.

Amit Shah lauds Chhattisgarh govt for action against Maoists

Jagdalpur, Dec 16 (IANS) : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday commended the Chhattisgarh government for its determined efforts in combating Maoism in the state. Addressing a gathering in Jagdalpur, Shah praised the collaborative approach adopted by the state government and central agencies to tackle the issue effectively. During his visit, the Home Minister interacted with surrendered Maoists and their families, offering them reassurance and support. He emphasised the government's commitment to rehabilitating those affected by the violence and urged collective efforts to uproot Maoism from the region.

Hyderabad: No delay in taking action in Mohan Babu case, says police

Hyderabad, Dec 18 (IANS) : Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu on Monday denied that there was any delay in taking action against veteran actor Mohan Babu in the cases registered against him. The Commissioner told media persons that the police would obey the orders of the High Court, which has given Mohan Babu till December 24 to appear before the police. Sudheer Babu said if there was no response from Mohan

Babu after December 24, they would serve a fresh notice. Mohan Babu was admitted to a hospital on the night of December 10 with complaints of high blood pressure and anxiety following a clash at his house in Jalpally when his actor son Manchu Manoj broke the gate after he was stopped by the bouncers deployed there. Rachakonda Commissioner, who is also the Additional District Collector, had summoned Mohan Babu and his sons Manchu Vishnu and Manchu Manoj on December 11 for a hearing with regard to the

cases booked against them. Mohan Babu and his sons were booked under BNS sections 329 (4) (criminal trespass and house trespass) and 115 (2) (voluntarily causing hurt) r/w 3 (5). Mohan Babu had approached the High Court seeking exemption from appearing before the Police Commissioner.



BRS legislators protest over handcuffing arrested farmer in Telangana

Hyderabad, Dec 16 (IANS) : Opposition Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) staged a protest at the Telangana Assembly complex over the alleged ill-treatment of farmers arrested in connection with the Lagacherla incident. The BRS legislators reached the Assembly building holding placards and raising slogans over the handcuffing of one of the arrested farmers. They were stopped by the police and Assembly security personnel, saying there was no permission to enter the premises with placards.

CAN FIN HOMES LTD
Branch Office: 15-8-1105, 1st Floor, Opp. Ganesh Temple, Varadaiiah Nagar, Mamatha Hospital Rd, Khammam-507002
Tel: 08742-238161, Cell: 7625079213, Email: khammam@canfinhomes.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

[Rule 8 (1)] [For Immovable Property]

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Limited under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers under the said Act and Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated 31-07-2024 calling upon the borrowers Mrs. Shaik Shameena Begam, W/o. Late Shaik Pasha Miya and all other legal heirs of late Shaik Pasha Miya, repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.52,66,161/- (Amount Fifty Two Lakhs Sixty Six Thousand One Hundred Sixty One Rupees Only) with further interest at contractual rates, till date of realization within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

The borrower having failed 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 under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 (of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002) on this the 10th day of December of the year 2024.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Can Fin Homes Limited for an amount of Rs.52,66,161/- (Amount Fifty Two Lakhs Sixty Six Thousand One Hundred Sixty One Rupees Only) and interest thereon.

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All that the Residential House on 20-7-41/1/A/1, R.S.No.63/C, Plot No.3 Part, situated at Sri Ram Nagar Road No.13, P.J.R Nagar Dhamsalapuram Khammam Municipal Corporation, Khammam, District, to an extent of 166.66-00 Sq.yards equals to 139-34 Squire Meters, with in the Limits of Khammam Municipal Corporation and with in Registration District Khammam and Joint Sub-Registrar Khammam. Bounded by: East: Plot No.3 part, West: 30 ft wide road, North: Plot No.3 part, South: Plot No.3/A

Date: 10.12.2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer
Place: Khammam Can Fin Homes Ltd.



Bihar: EOU issues advisory for 70th combined PT examination of BPSC

Patna, Dec 16 (IANS) : The Bihar Economic Offences Unit (EOU) has issued a crucial advisory regarding the 70th Combined Preliminary Competitive Examination scheduled by the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC). The advisory aims to counter misinformation and caution candidates against potential fraud, paper leaks and disruptions. The EOU has confirmed that the exam is proceeding as planned and dismissed rumours of its cancellation circulating on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, and X.

CMFRI to join hands with Kerala govt to improve marine infrastructure



Kochi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) is set to partner with the Kerala government to improve the state's coastal infrastructure and marine development efforts. The institute inked a pact with the Kerala State Coastal Area Development Corporation (KSCADC) under the state government's Fisheries Department, fostering collaboration in the construction and implementation of various developmental projects in the marine sector. This collaboration aims to leverage the CMFRI's technical expertise to support the implementation of projects undertaken by the KSCADC. A

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by CMFRI Director Dr Grinson George and KSCADC Managing Director P.I. Sheik Pareeth.

According to the MoU, the CMFRI will provide technical guidance and support to the KSCADC in the planning, design, and execution of projects such as marine hatcheries, marine aquariums, offshore structures, marine parks, sea cages, and artificial reefs.

"This partnership will enable the efficient utilisation of resources and ensure the sustainability of these projects," CMFRI Director George said.

The linkage seeks to enhance fisheries infrastructure, improve marine biodiversity conservation and promote preservation and restoration of marine habitats, contributing to the growth of the fisheries

sector in Kerala, he said. Highlighting the importance of the partnership, he added that "CMFRI's scientific knowledge will be instrumental in conserving marine biodiversity and protecting delicate ecosystems while carrying out developmental works in the sector".

Further, the collaboration also aims to create sustainable income opportunities for coastal communities in the state through improved coastal aquaculture and potential marine projects.

The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute was established by the Centre on February 3, 1947, under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and it joined the ICAR family in 1967.

During the course of over 75 years, the Institute has emerged as a leading tropical marine fisheries research institute in the world.



8.72 lakh immovable Waqf properties registered in govt records

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : A total of 8.72 lakh immovable and 16,713 movable Waqf properties are registered nationwide under the Waqf Act, 1954 and the subsequent Waqf Act, 1995, the Parliament was informed on Monday. Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju, in a written reply, told the Rajya Sabha that as per the information available on the Waqf Assets Management System of India portal, which is entered by the respective State Waqf Boards, 8,72,352 immovable and movable 16,713 waqf properties exist in the country. Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of 2,32,547 immovable properties registered on the WAMSI.



52,507 pilgrims allotted to Haj Group Organisers for 2025: Govt

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : For Haj 2025, the quota of Haj pilgrims earmarked for Haj Group Organisers (HGOs) is 52,507, the Parliament was informed on Monday. The quota of India for Haj 2025 is fixed by Saudi Arabia at 1,75,025 pilgrims, which has been distributed between Haj Committee of India (HCoI) and HGOs. Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, in a written reply, told Rajya Sabha that the HGO Policy for Haj 2025 has evolved and the application process for HGOs has been initiated by the Ministry well in advance this year, so as to ensure that the online process for selection of HGOs is com-

pleted as per the guidelines and timelines prescribed by Saudi Arabia. In reply to a question by Haris Beeran of the Indian Union Muslim League, the Minister said, "Saudi Arabia's guidelines for Haj 2025 allow only those entities which can cater to a minimum of 2,000 Haj pilgrims only, with emphasis on quality, experience and capability." Taking into account the guidelines of Saudi Arabia and the best practices followed by other countries and in order to meet its sovereign obligation, the Government of India, through the HGO Policy for Haj 2025.

Congress flags pollution in Ganga ahead of Maha Kumbh

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The Congress on Monday flagged the issue of severe pollution in the Ganga River in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand ahead of the Maha Kumbh scheduled early next year. Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, party leader and Media Coordinator Abhay Dubey disclosed how the casual and callous attitude of the BJP governments in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand had polluted the sacred waters of the Ganga River. He asked the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister whether he can guarantee that the sanctity of the holy water of Ganga will be restored before Maha Kumbh.



Delhi poll: Congress, BJP take swipe at Sisodia for changing constituency

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee President Devender Yadav said on Monday that sensing the angry mood of people against the Aam Aadmi Party government, party National Convener Arvind Kejriwal has conceded defeat by dropping 13 sitting MLAs in the second list of 20 AAP candidates. The Delhi BJP also joined the Congress in mocking the AAP decision to change the seat of former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, claiming the move reflected that the Patparganj legislator had failed to perform. Delhi Congress chief Yadav said even before the dates for

the Delhi Assembly elections were announced, Kejriwal had dropped 13 sitting MLAs in the second list while including six candidates from other parties in the first list of 11 candidates. He said that Kejriwal's cosmetic changes in the AAP line-up for the February Assembly elections will not change people's anger against him for ruining their lives through misrule. Yadav said that the AAP governments led by Kejriwal and Chief Minister Atishi had failed on all fronts. The Delhi Congress chief said the poor performance of AAP MLAs was reflected in the party's decision to change the constituency of former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who held 18 portfolios, including finance before he was arrested and jailed in connec-



tion with the liquor scam. Sisodia has been shifted from his sitting Patparganj seat to Jangpura as he could not look after his own constituency, Yadav said. He said that the fact that AAP has so far dropped 16 MLAs, while announcing the names of 31 candidates, was proof that the ruling party MLAs only committed corruption to loot the funds meant for public welfare and developments. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva also hit out at the AAP for changing the constituency of Sisodia, claiming the move reflected that he had failed to perform as a legislator.

Maha Vista Project: New legislature building to have sitting capacity for 350 members

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : After taking over as Maharashtra Speaker for the second consecutive time, the BJP legislator from Colaba constituency Rahul Narwekar on Monday revealed his ambitious plan for the launch of the Maha Vista Project which includes construction of a new legislature building with a sitting capacity for 350 legislators. The proposed new building will be developed adjacent to the existing Vidhan Bhavan which is situated at the Nariman Point. "The existing Vidhan Bhavan became functional in 1980. The Lower House can accommodate 300 members but the new building will have a sitting capacity for 350 members at a time in a more comfortable manner," said Rahul Narwekar after his unanimous election as the Assembly Speaker. He further announced that the entire functioning of the legislature

will be digitised within the next two years. Narwekar also announced his plan to construct a central hall at Nagpur's legislative campus. "There has been no central hall in Nagpur and I think it should be built. I will push for the construction of the same at Nagpur," he said. The present strength of the Maharashtra Assembly is 288. The House can accommodate around 305-310 MLAs with some changes in sitting arrangements. However, with the delimitation exercise likely to happen by 2026, the strength of the Assembly may increase up to 350 with an increase of at least 60 seats. A bigger House is going to be a necessity in the near future and the Maha Vista Project on the lines of the Central Vista project in Delhi is set to get a big push. The project was first announced



in February 2024 by Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar in his budget speech. At an estimated cost of Rs 7500 crore, the entire Mantralaya, ministers' bungalow, new secretariate and legislative complex will be revamped. In August, the state Public Works Department (PWD) a global tender for designs of ministers' bungalows and Mantralaya was sought.



Mahakumbh 2025: In a first, six fireboats to be deployed for safety of pilgrims

Prayagraj, Dec 16 (IANS) : The preparations for Mahakumbh 2025 are in full swing. Uttar Pradesh Fire and Emergency Services Department has come up with a first-of-its-kind initiative of deploying fireboats to make the pilgrimage safe and secure for the devotees. The fireboats will remain stationed along the ghats of Ganga, near the fair zone and ensure that the Mahakumbh remains a fire accident-free zone. Equipped to deliver quick response, these fireboats will prevent fire incidents on river ghats. A total budget of Rs 131.48 crore was allocated for devel-

oping fireboats and accessory equipment including Rs 66.75 crore, designated by the Fire department and Rs 64.73 crore from the departmental budget. Chief Fire Officer and Mahakumbh Nodal Officer Pramod Sharma confirmed that the six advanced fireboats will be deployed at the Sangam and on other ghats by the last week of December. "Fireboats are renowned for their swift response and ability to navigate rivers quickly, ensuring rapid fire control. They are especially effective in fire prevention and rescue operations on riverfront ghats," he explained.



Neet exam: MP HC quashes state counselling process, asks NBEMS to prepare fresh list

Bhopal, Dec 16 (IANS) : Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday invalidated the NEET-PG 2024 state merit list and quashed the counselling process observing discrepancies in it. The court has also directed the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) to prepare a fresh state merit list as soon as possible. The development came during the hearing of a petition filed by a resident doctor associated with Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital (SGMH) Abhishek Shukla. The petitioner has raised his apprehension, alleging unfair practices in the preparation of the merit list and has sought immediate intervention from the High Court. He has alleged that despite scoring high in the NEET merit list, many in-service candidates were ranked lower in the state merit list. This discrepancy was deemed a violation of the rules governing the selection process.

OPINIONmail



GOVERNMENT DATA GIVEN IN RAJYA SABHA CONCEALS FRIGHTENING UNEMPLOYMENT

The data given by the Union Ministry of State for Labour and Employment Ms. Shobha Karandlaje in a written reply in Rajya Sabha on December 5, 2024 conceals the frightening ground level reality of unemployment in India. The pattern is simple – first various government agencies produce data portraying rosy picture on employment front, and the Centre goes on repeating this, and the propaganda is so loud that it drowns the desperate voices of the unemployed. Centre highlighted that worker population ratio rose, unemployment rate dropped, and formalization of jobs that is quality jobs had risen. The data were taken from the annual Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023-24, Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) (2022-23), and the KLEMS (Capital, Labour, Energy, Materials, and Services) database by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). All the databases were already convincingly suspicious, and were sufficiently refuted in the past by many analysts.

The reply further mentioned the government announcement in the Budget 2024-25, referring the Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a 5-year period with a central outlay of Rs. 2 lakh crores, without mentioning how much progress has already been achieved since there is little progress in these schemes, even though the budget exercises have already begun for the next financial year 2025-26, which will be tabled within less than two months on February 1, 2025. The propaganda machine of the government is busy in protecting the image of the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi especially regarding his promises fulfilled. Everybody knows his promise of 'work for every hand' made during election campaigns in 2014, which was later interpreted 2 crore jobs every year, since that much number of people were estimated joining in India's workforce every year. The data now given in the Rajya Sabha refers to RBI's KLEMS provisional data 2023-24, which said employment in the country increased to 64.33 crore in 2023-24 compared to 47.15 crore in 2014-15. Total increase in employment during 2014-15 to 2023-24 was about 17.18 crore, the Union Ministry of Labour said. It was during 2024 Lok Sabha election, the Labour Secretary of Union Ministry of Labour and Employment has said that the RBI data to be published soon showed such an increase in employment. PM Modi had also claimed the same, and the reality came to light when the RBI data was released on July 8. RBI's data was found to be questionable. In the year 2014-15 we had 471.46 million employed persons, which rose to 472.04 million in 2015-16. For the year 2016-17, when millions of MSMEs were closed and most of them reduced their operation up to 75 per cent after the demonetization in November 2016, and millions of workers lost their jobs, the RBI data showed 1.2 per cent increase in employment which increased to 473.2 million. For the year, 2017-18, when even NSSO data showed 45 years high unemployment rate at 6.1 per cent, the RBI data showed that employment increased by 1.8 per cent to 475 million. For the year 2018-19, RBI data on employment showed a jump of 17.6 per cent to 492.6 million. In 2019-20, RBI data showed a jump in employment be 41.8 per cent that rose to 534.4 million. The more mysterious RBI data came for 2020-21, the year of the lockdown and COVID-19 crisis when the entire economy came to a halt. RBI data said that employment jumped to 31.2 per cent for that year and it reached to 565.6 million. The next COVID-19 crisis year was 2021-22, and the RBI data showed 11.9 per cent jump in employment which reached to 577.5 million. For 2022-23 the data showed 19.2 per cent jump to 596.7 million, and for 2023-24 the jump was 46.7 per cent to 643.3 million. This obviously suspicious RBI data has again been given in the Rajya Sabha to show a rosy picture on employment front. It is also a well-known fact that by 2017-18, unemployment rate rose to 6.1 per cent which was 45 years high, which was leaked followed by resignation of officials of National Statistics Office alleging suppression of the data.

(By Dr. Gyan Pathak)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

OUTGOING PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN
PARDONING HIS SON HUNTER HAS TURNED CONTROVERSIAL

Last week, Americans and people worldwide were stunned by the news that President Joe Biden pardoned his son, Hunter Biden. This clemency controversy was significant because Hunter Biden, a family member, contributed to the debate surrounding the pardon. The pardon ensures that Hunter will not be sentenced for his alleged crimes and will not go to prison. The judges handling his cases will likely cancel the sentencing hearings scheduled for December 12 for the gun case and December 16 for the tax case. President is no longer running for office. He made his no-pardon pledge before dropping out of the June presidential race. Presidential pardons in the United States have often sparked controversy; however, some decisions—such as President Biden pardoning his son—have led to more criticism than others. Constitutionally, the President

can grant pardons, a power previous presidents have used. Traditionally, US presidents dole out pardons as they leave office. However, Joe Biden's 'complete and unconditional' pardon of his son adds a layer of complexity and public scrutiny to the issue, a historical context that is important for the public to understand. It is important to understand why Joe Biden acted as he did. Joe Biden has faced many difficulties in his life. He has faced significant personal challenges. He was caught between saving his son and the public criticism. Everyone knows that he is loyal to his family. His baby daughter and first wife died in a car accident, which also injured his sons, Beau and Hunter. Biden wanted Beau to contest in elections, but Beau sadly died from brain cancer in 2015. This focus on the Biden family's struggles aims to create empathy from the public. According to the American media, Biden's second wife per-



sued Joe to make a final decision. The public reaction to the Presidential pardon is both critical and supportive. While some think it is fair, others consider it not justified. This mixed reaction from the public, as well as from Biden's party colleagues, adds a layer of complexity to the issue. Presidents from both parties have

used their pardon power, which has raised eyebrows. George Washington used the power to pardon some people. Presidents often use their pardon powers for friends and allies. A controversial case was former President Richard Nixon, who Gerald Ford pardoned on September 8, 1974.

(IPA Service)

IN DHAKA TV CHANNELS, DEFENCE 'EXPERTS' TALK OF INDIAN PLAN TO GRAB BANGLADESH

Since the anti Awami League (AL) coup of August 5, Bangladesh interim government authorities have employed grizzled army veterans/defence experts in media panel discussions, to counter what Dhaka perceives as 'hostile, biased Indian propaganda'. This group of influential people has now come up with a fresh narrative asserting that the new Bangladeshi rulers had foiled a major Indian plan to launch a major offensive in the NE region even as they ousted Sheikh Hasina from power. In other words, India far more than the AL or Sheikh Hasina — was the bigger loser in terms of the massive setback to its long term strategic objectives.

In its own ongoing propaganda war against India, Bangladesh's latest claim is by no means the only tale of its kind to be peddled for the consumption of the international press as well as Bangladeshi domestic TV viewers.

(IPA Service)



DE-DOLLARISATION MOVE SHOULD WORRY
TRUMP MORE THAN NON-EXISTENT BRICS CURRENCY

US president-elect Donald Trump's threat to slap a 100 percent tariff on nine-member BRICS Plus countries if they try to replace the US dollar with a common BRICS currency may at best be called as a panic reaction to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's wish to create a common BRICS currency to reduce the growing vulnerability to US dollar exchange rate fluctuations. President Lula made

the common BRICS currency proposal at a BRICS summit at Johannesburg in August last year. More recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin called for a new international payments system at the latest BRICS summit at Kazan (Russia), saying "the dollar is being used as a weapon." The Kazan summit underlined BRICS's ambition to foster relations with the Global South, and its aim of shaping an alternative multipolar world order, particularly in the global financial and trade system. Obviously, the idea of floating an

alternative currency to US\$ did not go down well with Trump, who reacted rather nervously without giving much thought on the subject or the ground level difficulties involved in creating such a competing new international currency given the geographical, political, trade and economic diversities clubbing together the nine BRICS nations — Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates — spread over four continents.



SYRIA POWER VACUUM HAS SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR MIDDLE EAST STABILITY

Syria is witnessing seismic shifts in its prolonged conflict, with President Bashar al-Assad's regime having collapsed amid dwindling support from its critical allies, Russia and Iran. The rebel factions, spearheaded by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), are in control,

creating uncertainty about the nation's political future. This precarious balance raises concerns of a potential power vacuum with regional ramifications. HTS is led by Abu Muhammad al-Julani, The group, a splinter faction of al-Qaeda, has steadily consolidated power in northern Syria.

INDIA CAN NOT AFFORD TO HAVE ITS NEIGHBOUR BANGLADESH REMAIN HOSTILE FOR LONG

Much to its mortification, our country today is surrounded by unfriendly, if not hostile, neighbours. Leave out the Himalayan kingdom Bhutan, which is more like Switzerland equally well disposed to every other nation, the rest of India's other immediate neighbours having undergone regime changes in recent times have no love lost for the largest south Asian country. The birth of Bangladesh ending the subjugation of Bengalis, their language, culture et al by an ever hostile and domineering Islamabad was a revolution with support from India. That country has come full circle with the dethroning of Sheikh Hasina that ended an unbroken 15-year rule by the Awami League.

The change in August came about through swelling street protests with students in the forefront. Their prime demand that reservation of jobs for the descendants of freedom fighters after all these years was beyond challenge. What, however, was totally unacceptable was mob rule that saw ascendancy of Islamist forces that in no time torpedoed whatever remained of the secular character of Bangladesh. Image of the country got sullied in the process in the eyes of democrats and liberals around the world. Even while the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, 2006 Nobel peace prize winner, continues to make unconvincing efforts to play down the persecution of minority communities, particularly the Hindus and the Buddhists.



Myanmar: About 220,000 students register for matriculation exam

Yangon, Dec 16 (IANS) : About 220,000 students registered for the nationwide matriculation examination of Myanmar for the academic year of 2024-2025, state-run media reported on Monday. The number of students registered to take the exam for the 2024-2025 academic year increased compared to the previous academic year, reports Xinhua.

Bashar al-Assad along with his family arrives in Moscow

Moscow, Dec 16 (IANS) : Former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his family have arrived in Moscow after escaping from the Middle East country, and they have received asylum in Russia, the media reported, citing top officials. A leading Russian media outlet citing a Kremlin source said that Assad and his family have been granted asylum by Russia for humanitarian reasons. Russia, an ally of Syria, has stressed the necessity to restart negotiations on the settlement of the situation in the Middle East

nation under the 'overall guidance' of the United Nations. Assad stepped down as the president of Syria and left the country, hours after rebel forces took control of the capital Damascus. The BBC reported that early on Sunday morning, after their fighters entered the city without resistance, the Islamist militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and its allies declared that "the tyrant Bashar al-Assad has fled". Assad has not been seen in pictures since he met the Iranian Foreign Minister in Damascus a week ago. He had then vowed to "crush



the rebels seizing territory at a brisk pace. In a stunning turn of events on Sunday, opposition forces in Syria seized control of the capital, Damascus, following a rapid offensive that saw major Syrian cities falling like dominos within days. After taking over, opposition fighters appeared on state television channels to announce what they described as the fall of Damascus and the end of President Bashar al-Assad's rule. A man in military fatigues, flanked by armed fighters, read a statement on air, calling it 'Statement No. 1.' He claimed that rebel units had captured Damascus. Opposition activists said the rebel fighters entered the Syrian capital at dawn Sunday, according to the Britain-based war monitor Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Xinhua news agency reported. The monitor said hundreds of government soldiers were ordered to withdraw from Damascus International Airport and were seen removing their military uniforms and donning civilian clothing.

Bangladeshi govt warns foreign nationals against illegal residency, employment

Dhaka, Dec 16 (IANS) : The Bangladeshi interim government has issued a warning that foreigners will not be allowed to stay and work illegally in the country. Bangladesh Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam made the announcement on Sunday, Xinhua news agency reported.



Iran says Syria's future should be decided by its people

Tehran, Dec 16 (IANS) : Iran said that it believes the Syrian people should have the sole right to determine their own future, free from any foreign interference or imposition. In response to the latest developments in Syria, including the fall of President Bashar al-Assad's government, the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Monday said.

Flu, flu-like illnesses surge in Mongolia's capital amid severe air pollution

Ulan Bator, Dec 16 (IANS) : The prevalence of flu and flu-like illnesses is surging in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia, amid severe air pollution, according to the country's National Centre for Communicable Diseases (NCCD) on Monday. Nationwide, 277,000 people sought outpatient care in the past week, with 7.7 per cent showing symptoms of influenza or influenza-like illness, the NCCD said in a statement. The NCCD urged the public to take strict infection prevention measures, including wearing masks, to combat the high prevalence of flu and flu-like illnesses amid the worsening air pollution, Xinhua news agency reported. Flu is a prevalent viral infection that poses a significant threat, particularly to high-risk populations. Influenza affects the lungs, nasal passages, and throat. Young children, elderly individuals, pregnant women, and those with chronic illnesses or compromised im-



mune systems are particularly vulnerable. Common symptoms encompass fever, chills, muscle pain, cough, nasal congestion, runny nose, headaches, and fatigue. The primary approach to treating influenza involves rest and increased fluid intake, enabling the body to combat the infection naturally. While paracetamol may alleviate symptoms, the use of NSAIDs is not recommended. An annual vaccination can aid in preventing influenza and mitigating its potential complications.

South Korea: Defence Ministry says control of military currently lies with Yoon

Seoul, Dec 16 (IANS) : The control of South Korea's military forces currently lies with President Yoon Suk Yeol as the commander in chief, the Defence Ministry said on Monday, as he faces investigation as a suspect on treason charges over last week's martial law declaration. On Monday, prosecutors said they booked

Yoon as a suspect on insurrection charges after his surprise declaration of martial law on Tuesday night that was unanimously rejected by the National Assembly hours later. "Legally, (the control of military forces) currently lies with the commander in chief," the Defence Ministry's spokesperson Jeon Ha-kyou said in a regular briefing when asked whether a suspect

in an insurrection case can hold such powers, Yonhap news agency reported. Han Dong-hoon, leader of the ruling People Power Party, said on Sunday that Yoon would step away from state affairs, such as diplomacy, until he leaves office. Asked by reporters if that also would include Yoon's control over the military, Han said: "I think that would be the same. It would cover

diplomatic affairs." Asked about who could declare martial law in the event of war, Jeon said he understands that the authority remains unchanged. Vice Defence Minister Kim Seon-ho, who also serves as acting Defence Minister, said last week that the Defence Ministry and the military will not obey any orders to enforce martial law should they be issued again.



Brazil still on alert for storms, floods

Sao Paulo, Dec 16 (IANS) : South Brazil's Santa Catarina state remains on alert for heavy storms, which have triggered flooding, landslides, and evacuations in 22 cities, according to the country's civil defence authority.

Joinville, the largest city in the state, has been suffering flooding since Thursday, with the weather service forecasting rain to persist until Tuesday morning, Xinhua news agency reported. According to the agency, the municipality of Dionisio Cerqueira has recorded the highest rainfall of 186.4 mm over the past 48 hours, raising serious landslide risks. The agency warned of potential meteorological events with "moderate to high risk." A cloud front moving from central South America toward the Atlantic caused the storms in Santa Catarina.

Austin arrives in Japan in his last Asia trip as US Defence Secretary

Tokyo, Dec 16 (IANS) : US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin arrived in Japan late Monday in his last trip to the Indo-Pacific as the Pentagon chief, as he seeks to cement the Biden administration's policy legacy of deepening regional alliances and partnerships. Austin arrived at Yokota Air Base near Tokyo, kicking off

the Asia swing that has excluded an anticipated stop in South Korea, another key US ally, in the aftermath of President Yoon Suk Yeol's botched martial law attempt last week. During the trip through Wednesday, the Secretary is scheduled to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and Defence Minister Gen Nakatani, visit a US aircraft carrier and meet with



American troops, and observe a military exercise involving Australian forces, according to a senior US defence official, reported Yonhap news agency.

"The Secretary's trip is going to be highlighting how much the Department (of Defence) has achieved with Japan.

Libya approves national strategy to achieve food self-sufficiency

Tripoli, Dec 16 (IANS) : Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamed Dbeibah approved the National Food Security Strategy 2025-2035, the Libyan government said in a statement. The strategy includes 174 projects and 65 programs for ensuring food security in the country, Xinhua news agency reported quoting the government's statement. In a speech at the approval ceremony, Dbeibah said that food security is a top national priority and a fundamental pillar of economic and social stability, noting that the strategy is a response mechanism to major challenges facing Libya, according to the statement.



South Korea: Interior Minister Lee Sang-min steps down amid martial law turmoil

Seoul, Dec 16 (IANS) : Interior Minister Lee Sang-min stepped down from his post on Monday amid political turmoil sparked by President Yoon Suk Yeol's botched martial law declaration last week. The ministry said Yoon accepted Lee's resignation shortly after he offered to resign. Lee, one of Yoon's closest aides, announced his resignation in a statement, a day after the main

opposition party proposed an impeachment motion against Lee, with the vote scheduled for Tuesday, Yonhap news agency reported. In a parliamentary committee session following the lifting of martial law, Lee appeared to defend Yoon, saying the President carried out martial law while abiding by the constitutional process and law.

Ensure foolproof arrangements for Shaheedi Sabha, Punjab CM directs officials

Chandigarh, Dec 16 (IANS) : Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday asked officers to ensure foolproof arrangements for the 'Shaheedi Sabha', marking the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh's minor sons, to be held in Fatehgarh Sahib from December 25 to 27. Chairing a meeting to review arrangements for the Shaheedi Sabha here, the Chief Minister said the government has already allotted funds for the repair of roads and the work

should be completed in a time-bound manner. He asked the officers to set up helplines on every road leading to the gurdwara so that pilgrims do not face any problems. Mann also asked the officers to ensure that every nook and corner of Sri Fatehgarh Sahib is covered under CCTV cameras so that any sort of untoward incident can be checked. The Chief Minister said elaborate arrangements should be made to facilitate thousands of pilgrims coming annually to pay respect during Shaheedi Sabha, adding

that special focus should also be made on the cleanliness of the town. He said this sacred land "is a source of inspiration for not only Sikhs but the entire humanity as

all of them converge here every year to pay respect to Chotta Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri on their martyrdom day".



Women-led startups thriving across 600+ districts in India: Jitin Prasada

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Startups led by women are thriving across more than 600 districts in India's tech ecosystem, said Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Jitin Prasada. Prasada stated that more than half of the startups in these districts are being led by women. He said this while inaugurating the 4th edition of the India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) at Bharat Mandapam. This year's theme, "Innovating Internet Governance for India", highlights the nation's commitment to leveraging the Internet for sustainable, inclusive, and equitable growth.

He also emphasised how government initiatives have reduced the digital divide, bringing technology to rural communities and enabling opportunities for all. "Today, 95 per cent of our villages are linked to 3G-4G connectivity, and our startup ecosystem has reached over 600 districts, with more than half led by women," Prasada said. Prasada noted that the rapid strides that India took in digital transformation are a model for the world. With over 1.4 billion citizens and nearly 1 billion Internet users, India has emerged as a vibrant digital economy, setting global benchmarks in innovation and inclusivity.

Special programmes will be organised to celebrate first anniversary Rajasthan govt: CM

Jaipur, Dec 16 (IANS) : Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma announced on Monday that special programmes will be organised to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the incumbent government. "These events will focus on women, youth, farmers, and workers," he said. The CM detailed the schedule: a programme for the youth will be held on December 12, for farmers on December 13, for women on December 14, and for workers on December 15. During these sessions, new schemes targeting each group will be introduced, which will later be implemented. Sharma further revealed that the government plans to allocate Rs 100 crore to women through the Mahila Nidhi Bank. Additionally, one lakh women will be honoured as "Lakshmi Sisters," and Rs 10,000 self-help groups will receive funds to improve their livelihoods. "A programme to provide gas cylinders at a subsidised rate of Rs 450 to 20 lakh women is also in progress," he said while



addressing the Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit. In his address, he emphasised the importance of empowering women, who make up half the population, to improve their lives. On December 12, the state government will distribute cycles to 1.25 lakh girls to facilitate their access to education. Furthermore, 21,000 girls pursuing higher education will receive scooters. The Chief Minister also mentioned that the Prime Minister will soon release the first instalment of the Laado scheme, benefiting one lakh girls in Rajasthan. "Additionally, 216 "Namo Drone Didis" will be honoured, and the government is planning to form

three women battalions and launch the Maa Voucher scheme, with many more initiatives set to begin on December 15," he claimed. He further urged women to become entrepreneurs and take leadership roles in various sectors, emphasising that the progress of women directly contributes to the advancement of families, the state, and the nation. The Chief Minister concluded by stating that both the government and the private sector should collaborate to empower women, ensuring they become self-reliant and achieve great things for Rajasthan.



AAP will not win more than 12 seats in Delhi elections, claims BJP MP Manoj Tiwari

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Manoj Tiwari took a sharp jab at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) after the latter shifted former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia from his Patparganj seat to Jangpura. While speaking to IANS, Tiwari predicted that AAP would struggle to secure more than 12-13 seats in the upcoming elections. "The Aam Aadmi Party has already conceded defeat in Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is no longer the Chief Minister and, given the graft charges against him, he cannot return to the position," Tiwari asserted. Criticising Sisodia's decision to change his constituency, Tiwari remarked, "Manish Sisodia, the second-in-command of the party, has abandoned Patparganj because they know they cannot win there."

Will accept party's decision: RJD MLA on Mahua Assembly seat

Patna, Dec 16 (IANS) : The RJD's Mahua MLA Mukesh Roshan said on Monday that he will accept the party's decision after Tej Pratap Yadav, the elder son of RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, expressed interest in contesting from the Mahua assembly seat instead of Hasanpur seat. "Will accept any decision made by the party. But if sidelined, I will also decide whether to remain in politics or join back my medical profession," Roshan said. Earlier, Tej Pratap Yadav cited his contributions to the development of Mahua, including building roads and

hospitals, as reasons for considering a move to this constituency. His remarks suggest a sense of personal investment and legacy in the Mahua region. During the 2020 elections, the decision to shift Tej Pratap Yadav from Mahua to Hasanpur was driven by the potential challenge posed by his estranged wife, Aishwarya Rai, who was speculated to contest from Mahua.



Deadline for achieving BJP's target of 1 crore new members in Bengal extended till Dec 31

Kolkata, Dec 16 (IANS) : The deadline for achieving the target of inducting one crore new party members in West Bengal by the state unit of BJP has been extended to December 31 from the current deadline. The decision was taken at a meeting with the elected Parliamentarians of the party from West Bengal, both in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, chaired by BJP's central observer for West Bengal Sunil Bansal in Delhi on Monday afternoon, said a party insider aware of the developments at the meeting. Of the 14 Parliamentarians of BJP from West Bengal, 12 in Lok Sabha and two in Rajya Sabha, 10 were present at the meeting. The four party MPs who could not attend the meeting include three Lok Sabha members.

Bihar: No big or small player in INDIA Bloc, says Shahnawaz Alam

Patna, Dec 16 (IANS) : Congress's national secretary and Bihar in-charge Shahnawaz Alam said on Monday that there are no big or small players in the INDIA Bloc. "We must reinforce the ideological foundation of the coalition, rather than a hier-

archy of power. Congress workers should not view themselves as subordinate to other alliance partners. Any decisions within the alliance would incorporate the input of Congress workers," he said. He said that the distribution of seats should be based on the strike rate—a metric reflecting the per-

formance of parties in recent elections, particularly the Lok Sabha polls. This formula, if implemented, could lead to renegotiations within the alliance, potentially unsettling the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), led by Tejashwi Yadav, which has traditionally been the dominant partner in the



state. The Congress's proposition to base seat-sharing for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections

on the strike rate from the 2024 Lok Sabha elections has introduced a significant challenge for the RJD. RJD contested 23 seats and won four, yielding a strike rate of 17 per cent. Congress contested nine seats and won three, achieving a strike rate of 33 per cent. CPI (ML), with the highest strike rate, contested three seats and won two, marking 67 per cent success.

J&K BJP demands CBI probe into settlement of Rohingyas & Bangladeshis in Jammu

Jammu, Dec 16 (IANS) : J&K BJP on Monday demanded a CBI probe into the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu. Terming the settlement of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in Jammu city as a major political conspiracy, BJP chief spokesman, Sunil Sharma demanded a CBI probe to identify those involved in

facilitating it. Lashing out at the ruling National Conference (NC) government over remarks on granting water and power connections to them in Jammu, the BJP alleged it was done to protect them as they belong to a particular community. "The BJP will urge the lieutenant governor to initiate a CBI probe and lodge an FIR to comprehensively investigate this conspiracy."



Unhappy over Cong's treatment, Kerala ex-CM Oommen Chandy's son says not assigned work

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 16 (IANS) : First-time Congress legislator Chandy Oommen, the son of late two-time Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, has expressed unhappiness over the way party leadership is treating him. Speaking about the recent Palakkad Assembly bypoll, Chandy Oommen stated, "While others were given responsibilities for the campaign, I was not assigned any work in the party." "I refrained from commenting



earlier, and I do not wish to elaborate even now. I was in Palakkad for only one day. The leadership must take everyone together. It is their duty," he added. Addressing the ongoing discussions about changes in party leadership.

realme 14x sets new durability standards with first IP69 under Rs 15,000

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Smartphone durability remains a top priority for consumers investing in new devices. As phones become more sophisticated and prices continue to rise, the ability to withstand daily wear, accidental drops, and environmental exposure becomes increasingly critical. The past decade has seen remarkable advances in protection standards, from water resistance ratings and reinforced materials to

more resilient batteries and displays. While premium devices have long offered these protective features, the industry is now seeing a welcome shift as comprehensive durability features become available across more price segments. With its upcoming device, realme 14x, realme aims to set new benchmarks for durability in the mid-range smartphone segment. The device introduces several industry-first protection features

and robust build quality that have typically been reserved for premium flagship phones. From advanced water resistance to military-grade shock protection, the realme 14x represents a significant step forward in making durable smartphones more easily available to consumers. Most notable is the realme 14x's IP69 rating - making it the first smartphone under Rs 15,000 to achieve this high-end certification.



Reliance Industries marching towards negative return for 1st time in last 10 years

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : The share of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has underperformed in the last three months, and India's largest private firm stock is heading towards negative return for the first time in the last 10 years. RIL, which holds an 8 per cent weight in Nifty, has corrected 15 per cent in the last three months. During this period, Nifty was down by 4.9 per cent. RIL's stock has declined by 2.3 per cent since the start of

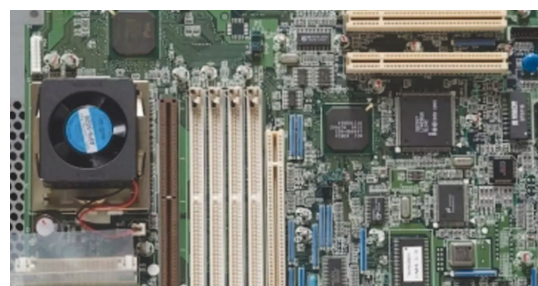
2024. This is the first time since 2014 that this stock is giving negative returns on an annual basis. RIL's stock has been seeing a decline since the company's Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in August. In the AGM meeting, no timeline was given for the monetisation of Reliance Retail and Reliance Jio, due to which investors were very disappointed. RIL's stock has posted a return of -2.2 per cent in September, -9.8 per cent in October, -3 per cent in November, and -3.9 per cent in December. Apart from this, Reliance

Industries is facing heat from multiple levels. The margins of the company's oil-gas and petrochemical business are under pressure. The operationalisation of the New Energy Business, where a large part of the capital expenditure (Capex) is invested, is running behind schedule. Meanwhile, the average revenue per user (ARPU) of the telecom business is growing at a slower pace than expected due to competition and SIM consolidation.



PM Surya Ghar scheme set to surpass a decade's installation growth in a year

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : In a significant feat for the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, the scheme has achieved more than 6.85 lakh installations to date, and is set to surpass a decade's solar growth in about a year. Since its launch in February this year, the scheme with 685,763 installations has already reached 86 per cent of what was installed in a decade before that. The key demand came from the 3-5 kW load segment at 77 per cent installations, while 14 per cent was in the segment higher than 5kW. Gujarat showed the highest installations followed by Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala. Gujarat witnessed the maximum number of solar installations under the initiative at 2,86,545. Maharashtra stands next with 1,26,344 installations, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 53,423 installations.



Porous silicon oxide electrodes can fix durability issues in batteries: Researchers

Tokyo, Dec 16 (IANS) : A team of researchers from Doshisha University in Japan on Monday said that porous silicon oxide electrodes offer a breakthrough towards sustainable energy storage. Lithium-ion batteries (LIBs) can be found virtually everywhere. However, current battery designs suffer from some crippling drawbacks, including low durability and the use of toxic liquid electrolytes.

Indian SCBs clock highest-ever net profit at Rs 23.50 lakh cr in FY24, reduce NPAs

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The gross non-performing asset (NPA) ratio for scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) have improved significantly with a reduction to 2.67 per cent in June 2024 from 11.18 per cent in March 2018, according to the government. Moreover, SCBs recorded highest-ever aggregate net profit of Rs 23.50 lakh crore in FY2023-24, against net profit of Rs 22.63 lakh crore in FY2022-23. The asset quality of SCBs has improved significantly with gross NPA ratio of SCBs declining to 2.67 per cent (Rs 4.75 lakh crore) in June-2024 from a peak of 11.18 per cent (Rs 10.36 lakh crore) in March-2018, informed the Ministry of Finance. "Provision coverage ratio (PCR) increasing from 49.31 per cent in March-2015 to a healthy 92.52 per

cent in June-24 shows increased resilience," the ministry added. Gross NPA ratio of PSBs declined to 3.32 per cent in June-24 from 4.97 per cent in March-2015 and from a peak of 14.58 per cent March-2018. Also, SCBs recorded highest ever aggregate net profit of 23.50 lakh crore in FY2023-24 against net profit of 22.63 lakh crore in FY2022-23. A recent stress test result of the Reserve Bank of India revealed that SCBs are well-capitalised and capable of absorbing macroeconomic



shocks even in the absence of any further capital infusion by stakeholders. All banks would be able to meet the minimum regulatory common equity tier 1 (CET1) ratio of 5.5 per cent even under severe stress scenario, it showed.

Meanwhile, the gross NPA ratio of public sector banks (PSBs) declined to 3.12 per cent in September this year, from 4.97 per cent in March 2015 and from a peak of 14.58 per cent in March 2018.



Buy on dips strategy working well in Indian stock market amid sharp rebound

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : The surge in the Indian stock market on Monday helped the Indian benchmark indices end the week on a positive note. A strong 2,000-point rebound from the lows suggests that the buy-on-dips strategy is working well in the market, experts said on Saturday. "With inflation coming within the RBI's tolerance level and an expectation of further ease in food prices on account of seasonal corrections in vegetable prices, it could build up the expectation for ease in monetary policy in February," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. On the last trading session this week, Nifty witnessed a sharp recovery of more than 2 per cent from day's low, rebounding from a significant dip earlier in the session.

Market Outlook: US Fed policy, FII data and global cues key triggers for next week

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : A blend of global and domestic factors will influence the stock market outlook for next week. On the global front, particularly the performance of US markets and the Fed's monetary policy decisions will play a significant role; and domestic economic indicators like GDP growth, FIIs and inflation will shape market sentiment. Last week, Indian stock markets ended on a positive note, with the Sensex and Nifty gaining nearly 3 per cent from their recent lows. A broad-based buying spree lifted more than 40 Nifty stocks. This strong performance was driven by a combination of factors, improving

global and domestic sentiments. On Monday (the last trading session), the stock market saw a smart

turnaround after initially experiencing a big fall. Telecom, tech, consumer durables.



Apple's chipset shipments increased to 18 pc in Q3 globally

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Tech giant Apple's chipset shipments increased to 18 per cent globally in the third quarter this year (from 13 per cent in Q2 2024), due to the launch of its A18 chipset. According to a Counterpoint Research report, the Cupertino (California)-based tech giant recently launched two chipsets - A18 and A18 Pro. The iPhone 16 base models come with A18, while the iPhone 16 Pro models house the A18

Pro. A18 Pro delivers unprecedented efficiency. The new 16-core Neural Engine is faster and more efficient than the previous generation, powering remarkable on-device performance for Apple Intelligence. At the top, MediaTek's overall shipments increased slightly to 36 per cent in Q3 2024, from 34 per cent in Q2. "5G shipments re-



mained flat while LTE chipset shipments increased. Premium-tier shipments are expected to increase due to the early launch of the Dimensity 9400," the report noted.

Poor records, lack of gloves hit Mid-day Meal Scheme in UP

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Inadequacy in record maintenance and non-availability of gloves and aprons for cooks have emerged as major shortcomings in the implementation of the Mid-day Meal Scheme in some districts of Uttar Pradesh, the Parliament was informed on Monday. Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary, in a written reply, said that social audit of the Mid-day Meal, given under Pradhan Mantri Poshan

Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN), showed inadequacy in record maintenance in districts of Uttar Pradesh such as Sitapur, Lakhimpur Khiri, Mau, Gonda, and Balrampur. Non-availability of gloves and aprons for cooks was identified as the major shortcoming in districts Lakhimpur and Hardoi, the Minister said in reply to a question by Ruchi Vira of Samajwadi Party. Minister Chaudhary said that Uttar Pradesh has reported that under the PM POSHAN Scheme,

social audit was conducted in 1,500 schools for the years 2022-23 and in 1,575 schools for the year 2023-24, in all 75 districts as per the guidelines laid by the Central government; and the process for 2024-25 is underway. He said under PM POSHAN, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), every local authority, or any other authority or body, authorised by the State Government, is supposed to conduct periodic social audits on the



functioning of the Scheme. He said that the Mid-Day Meal Rules, 2015 provide for mandatory testing of food samples by Government Food Research Laboratory or any laboratory accredited or recognised by law to ensure that the meals meet nutritional standards and quality. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is given the responsibility for the issue of food grains for the meals. The FCI appoints a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in the supply of food grains under the PM POSHAN Scheme, he said.



Everything will come out soon: Prahlad Joshi on Sonia Gandhi-George Soros link

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : As BJP claimed that the alleged connections between Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and Hungarian-American businessman George Soros, Union Minister for Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs Prahlad Joshi on Monday said that everything will come out very soon.

Speaking to the media, Prahlad Joshi stated, "Congress is violating all norms. We don't know who they are working for, whether it's George Soros or someone else. The connection between Congress and Soros will soon be exposed. The Congress party is facing defeats across the country. They were celebrating after securing 99 seats, but now people are rejecting them because of their actions."

He added, "Even the parties they ally with are facing losses. Take the recent Maharashtra poll results, where Shiv Sena and NCP also suffered defeats because of Congress. Everything regarding Congress's ties to George Soros is now out in the open, though the responsible authorities will look into it."

The BJP on Monday launched a scathing attack at former Congress President Sonia Gandhi, accusing her of "working against India" after allegations surfaced regarding her links with an organisation financed by the George Soros Foundation.



MUDA case: Should we hang ourselves, says K'taka Minister

Belagavi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Karnataka Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh reacting angrily to the letter by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to the Lokayukta in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case, said on Monday that should 'we hang ourselves'.

"After allegations regarding the MUDA case were made during the last session, we formed a committee under the retired Justice P.N. Desai to look into the matter. The case is also being investigated by the court. What else can we do? Should we hang ourselves," the minister told media persons.

Centre's millet scheme is boosting farmers' incomes: Minister

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The Centre's scheme to promote millet-based products has boosted local production and procurement of agricultural produce, which has benefited farmers, Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Ravneet Singh Bittu informed the Rajya Sabha on Monday. Thirty beneficiaries were initially enrolled in the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Millet-Based Products. Following the withdrawal of one beneficiary, there are now 29 beneficiaries. According to the scheme guidelines, only domestically sourced agricultural products (excluding additives, flavours, and oils) must be used in the preparation of millet-based products.

The Government has introduced several measures to enhance the implementation of the PLI Scheme for Millet-Based Products (PLISMBP). These measures include the establishment of a user-friendly portal and the creation of dedicated groups for prompt issue resolution. Clarifi-



cations on scheme guidelines have been issued from time to time to facilitate easy understanding of the scheme guidelines, the minister said in a written reply. Moreover, regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been instituted, and technical assistance is provided through dedicated teams to facilitate a smooth implementation of the scheme. Additionally, weekly meetings with applicants are held to ensure effective communication and progress tracking, he added.

Kashmiri Pandit body files police complaint against Iltija Mufti for derogatory remarks

Jammu, Dec 16 (IANS) : An organisation of migrant Kashmiri Pandits said on Monday that it has filed a police complaint against the alleged derogatory and inflammatory remarks by Iltija Mufti, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader and daughter of former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti. In a statement, a Kashmiri Pandit organisation called 'Youth 4 Panun Kashmir' said on Monday that a police complaint has been filed against Iltija Mufti for allegedly derogatory and in-

flammatory remarks against Lord Rama and the Hindus. Vithal Chowdhary, President Youth 4 Panun Kashmir (Y4PK) has filed a police complaint against Iltija Mufti for her derogatory and inflammatory tweet against Lord Rama, Hindu faith and Hindus. The complaint has

been lodged with the Cyber Crime Cell, Delhi, alleging that the statement is deeply offensive, is aimed at inciting communal discord, and deliberately insults Lord Rama, the Hindu religion and its followers. The complaint cites Sections 302, 325, and 323 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section

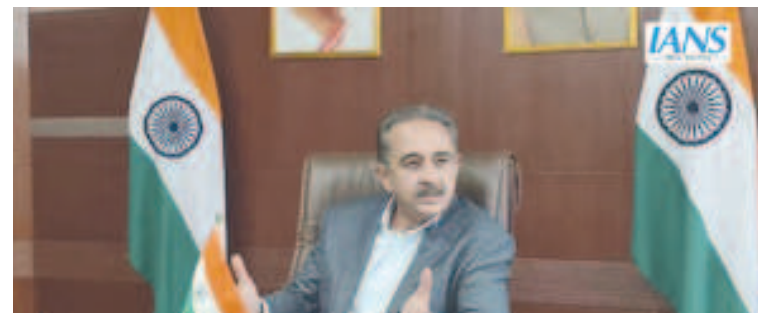


67 of the IT Act. Roots in Kashmir (RIK), another prominent Kashmiri Pandit organisation has welcomed the action of Y4PK.

India generating 41.36 lakh tonne plastic waste annually, TN biggest polluter

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The country is generating 41.36 lakh tonne per annum (TPA) plastic waste every year and Tamil Nadu is the largest polluter with an annual quantity of 7.82 lakh TPA, the Parliament was informed on Monday. Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate

Change Kirti Vardhan Singh, in a written reply, told Lok Sabha that plastic waste generation has been steadily rising in the country with Rs 33.6 lakh TPA in 2018-19, 34.69 lakh TPA in 2019-20, 41.26 lakh TPA in 2020-21, 39.01 lakh TPA in 2021-22 and 41.36 lakh TPA in 2022-23. Telangana with 5.28 lakh TPA generation is the



second largest source of plastic waste, the Minister said in reply to a question by Amar Singh. Already struggling to tackle air and water pollution, Delhi has emerged as the third largest plastic waste

generator with an annual quantity of 4.03 lakh tonne, a figure that is more than even larger states like Maharashtra (3.95 lakh TPA) and Karnataka (3.6 lakh TPA).

Punjab Speaker blames Centre for not accepting demands of farmers

Chandigarh, Dec 16 (IANS) : Punjab Assembly Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan on Monday accused the Union government of turning a blind eye to the genuine demands of farmers, leaving them to languish on the roads instead of addressing their grievances.

Urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to open channels of communication with the farmers, Speaker Sandhwan stressed that the Centre must take decisive action and resolve the farmers' issues without dragging its feet.

He lamented that it was a bitter pill for Punjab's farmers to swallow, being left high and dry on the roads, while the Union government remained indifferent.

Drawing a comparison, Speaker Sandhwan pointed out that in Europe and other nations, farmers are able to take their issues straight to

their parliaments, whereas Indian farmers are given the cold shoulder when they raise valid concerns.

The Speaker reminded the Centre that the country's farmers not only put food on the table for millions but also serve as the backbone of India's trade, industry, and economy by producing a variety of crops. He called upon the Union government to lend an ear to the farmers' demands and address them with sincerity, seriousness, and sympathy. "It's high time the farmers are given their due."



Why is Congress silent on allegations of Soros-backed funding? Anurag Thakur questions Oppn's agenda

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Senior BJP leader Anurag Thakur has mounted an attack on the Congress and other opposition parties under the INDIA Bloc.

Open to work with Adani Group: Kerala Minister Rajeev

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Kerala Minister of Law, Industries and Coir P Rajeev said that public welfare and the state's green development will remain the government's top priority while attracting private investment and clarified that there were no restrictions on working with the Adani Group in future. Talking to reporters, Rajeev said the Adani Group's Vizhinjam Seaport near its capital Thiruvananthapuram will go ahead as planned, ruling out any rethink in the backdrop of proceedings against the Adani group in the US. Expressing the government's objective of pro-



moting green projects, the minister said there is no bar on investment from any private investor, including the Adani Group.

Assam Guv launches mission to provide health & education support to underprivileged children

Guwahati, Dec 16 (IANS) : Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya on Monday launched "Mission Child Health and Literacy" in Guwahati.

The project aims to address critical issues surrounding child health and literacy in Assam, underscoring the pivotal role children play in shaping the nation's future. This initiative will focus on deliv-

ering quality education and healthcare services to underprivileged children, especially those attending government schools. Governor Acharya said that the strength of a nation's future lies in its education and the physical and mental well-being of its children.

He remarked, "We must guide our children to the right path and provide them with the necessary support to overcome the challenges

they face." Governor Acharya noted that the Rotary Club of Guwahati Smart City has taken a commendable step towards bridging the gaps in healthcare and education by taking an active part in this project.

Highlighting the cultural ethos of altruism, the Governor further stated, "Our Indian culture teaches us to live for the welfare of others. Through acts of selflessness and service, we can build a healthy

and prosperous society."

The Governor expressed confidence that an initiative like this would help Assam build a stronger and brighter future.

He said that the move would greatly bring about transformative changes in the lives of children.

The event was attended by MLA Guwahati East Sidharth Bhattacharya, President of Rotary Club of Guwahati Smart City Dr. B.P. Todi, and a host of other dig-



nitaries. Meanwhile, Governor Acharya also visited and saw different aspects of the project which aimed

at transforming Batadrava Than in Nagaon district into a significant tourist hub and cultural centre.



Shashi Tharoor launches BA (Honours) in Philosophy, Politics & Economics at JGU

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha said that the Philosophy, Politics & Economics programme at O.P. Jindal Global University will bring vitality and verve to a course that provides both a rigorous, comprehensive education in the humanities and is a launchpad for a great assortment of professions, from journalism to politics, entrepreneurship to civic activism, academia to the law, in all of which, across the globe, the products of PPE have done exceedingly well, leaving an indelible imprint on the world, and often changing it for the better.

Shashi Tharoor was speaking at the launch of the four-year Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) to begin in August 2025 at O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU). Tharoor, writer and former international diplomat, currently serving as a Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, since 2009, and the author of 18 bestselling books, commended JGU for rapidly emerging as one of India's foremost institutions with a dazzling array of programmes and courses across a wide range of disciplines.

Rabindra Nath Mahato set to be re-elected as Speaker of Jharkhand Assembly

Ranchi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Rabindra Nath Mahato is set to make history as he prepares to serve as the Speaker of the Jharkhand Legislative Assembly for the second straight time. The ruling coalition of the state has formally proposed his name for the prestigious post. Chief Minister Hemant Soren announced his name on Monday during an interaction with the media at the Assembly premises.

Soren expressed confidence in Mahato's unanimous re-election. The election for the Speaker's post is scheduled for December 10 during the ongoing special session of the Assembly. Mahato, 65, represents the Nala assembly seat from the Santhal Pargana division, marking his third con-

secutive victory in the constituency. He will also become the first legislator in Jharkhand's history to secure the Speaker's chair for a second term.

Mahato's re-election is significant, as he has successfully broken a long-standing myth in Jharkhand politics that no Speaker has previously managed to win re-election while holding the post. Mahato first won the Nala seat in 2005 but lost in the subsequent 2009 elections. He returned triumphantly in 2014 and has since continued his winning streak as a Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) candidate in the 2019 and 2024 elections as well.

Born on January 12, 1960, in Patanpur village under the Bindapathar police station area of

Jamtara district, Mahato hails from a humble background. His father, Golak Bihari Mahato, was a primary school teacher and passed away just two days ago.

A science graduate from Bhagalpur University, Bihar (1982), Mahato's life reflects simplicity and integrity. According to his affidavit filed with the Election Commission, his total declared assets stand at Rs 97.56 lakh, while his 2024-25 income tax return records an annual income of Rs 10.57 lakh.

Notably, Mahato has a spotless record, with no criminal cases registered against him. Earlier on Monday, the first session of the newly formed sixth Jharkhand Assembly began with Protom Speaker Stephen Marandi initiat-



ing the proceedings by reading the Governor's message, marking the formation of the new House. Chief Minister Hemant Soren was the first to take the oath as the representative from the Barhait constituency. Other ministers who took oath included Radha Krishna Kishore, Deepak Birua, Ramdas Soren among others.

Rs 35 lakh crore investment committed in three days: Rajyavardhan Rathore on Rising Rajasthan Summit



Jaipur, Dec 16 (IANS) : The ongoing Rising Rajasthan Summit 2024 has secured an investment commitment of Rs 35 lakh crore, giving a strong impetus to the state's economic landscape, cabinet minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said on Monday.

He said that the mammoth investments by Indian and foreign business conglomerates over the next few years will open new avenues of growth and unlock employment opportunities for the youth, adding that the state government has already set the ball rolling by simplifying

rules of 'ease of doing business and issuance of government clearances'. Speaking to IANS, the Rajasthan cabinet minister informed: "Prime Minister's visit has given new pace and thrust to the Rising Rajasthan Investor Summit 024. Scores of global business behemoths with many hailing from Rajasthan participated in the event and pledged huge investments in the next few years. In the last three days, we have received an investment commitment of Rs 35 lakh crore."

He added that the pledged investments are a record in itself and this will go a long way in contributing to the India growth story. "Rajasthan government wants to be a valuable contributor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat goal by 2047. These investments will spur more investments and unlock new potential of growth, not just for the state but also on a national level," he further told IANS. Outlining the state's hidden but immense potential for growth, he said that diverse sectors of the state including IT, education, petrochemical energy, solar energy, tourism and more are waiting to be explored and tapped.

"Once put in motion, they will lay the foundation for Viksit Rajasthan," he added. Earlier, speaking at the 'Transforming Manufacturing with Industry 4.0' during the Summit.



AAP's boat is sinking, says BJP's Sachdeva after Sisodia shifted from Patparganj seat

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : After the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) fielded former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia from Jangpura in Assembly polls, shifting him from the Patparganj seat, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Monday said this shows that the AAP's boat is sinking. The AAP on Monday released its second list of 20 candidates. Prominent candidates in the list are Manish Sisodia fielded from Jangpura, Dinesh Bhardwaj from Narela, Surender Pal Singh Bittu from Timarpur, Mukesh Goel from Adarsh Nagar, Rakesh Jatav Dharamrakshak from Mangolpuri and Pradeep Mittal from Rohini.

Kerala Minister backtracks after slamming actress for demanding Rs 5 lakh for training students

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 16 (IANS) : After Kerala Education Minister V. Sivankutty criticised a popular Malayalam actress for demanding Rs 5 lakh to train school students for a dance performance, the Minister on Monday withdrew his statement, saying he does not want to create any controversy.

"The youth festival is around the corner. I am withdrawing my statement. I do not wish to create any controversy as it may affect the young school students' students. I will not name the actress who demanded money," the minister told media persons.

The minister alleged that the actress in question rose to fame through this very youth festival.

"All we asked her was to spend 10 minutes helping students prepare for the inaugural dance performance for the festival. Her demand for such a hefty sum is nothing but arrogance," the minister said. He clarified that the government is capable of paying the amount but has decided against engaging her due to the unreasonable demand. He also cited examples of ac-



tors like Fahadh Faasil and others who willingly cooperate with the state government without monetary expectations. Actor Sudhir Karamana, who was present at the public event, echoed the Minister's sentiments, saying, "It was inappropriate for the actress to ask for money, given that this is a government-supported program. I don't know who this actress is, but her demand reflects poorly." Earlier, the actress Asha Sarath - who was the chief guest at the festival - said that it's the professional's wish whether to charge fees for any programme or not.

MP: BJP leader Yogendra Solanki booked for rape charges

Bhopal, Dec 16 (IANS) : Political row erupted in Madhya Pradesh on Monday after the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Vidisha district vice-president Yogendra Solanki was booked for alleged rape charges. The police action came following a complaint from a woman, who alleged that Solanki raped her on multiple

occasions and used to threaten her with dire consequences if she tells anyone.

The 23-year-old victim, who is said to be the niece of Solanki, has lodged a complaint at Nateran police station in Vidisha, following which, a FIR was registered on Sunday.

Police said upon receiving the complaint, the woman was taken for a medical check-up, which

confirmed rape. "FIR has been registered after medical report of the woman confirmed rape," a senior police official said on Monday.

Meanwhile, Solanki has tendered his resignation from the party as well as from his post on Monday. In his resignation letter to BJP's district president for Vidisha, Solanki said, he has been implicated in a false rape case.



"A false case of rape has been imposed against me, therefore, I am resigning from the BJP and from the post to ensure a fair investigation in the matter," Solanki's resignation letter read.

Responding on the matter, Madhya Pradesh Congress head Jitu Patwari hit at BJP.

Focus on technology & branding to promote tourism: Rajasthan Dy CM

Jaipur, Dec 16 (IANS) : Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari said on Monday that the state government is focusing on technology and branding to promote tourism. She said that tourism is not just a means of business, it is a medium to share our culture and our experiences. While interacting with all the people present during the Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit, she said that the aim of the Rajasthan government is to promote repeat tourism in the state. She said that all should try to ensure that the tourists visiting Rajasthan come to the state again for tourism. "For this, we will have to promote new tourist destinations and expand tourist facilities," she claimed.



Gita Bhawans will be constructed in urban areas of MP : CM Yadav

Bhopal, Dec 16 (IANS) : Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday announced that his government has decided to construct a Gita Bhawan in each urban part of the state during in next three years. "Haryana government has an important role in shaping this event and I will request to make Madhya Pradesh a co-participant in next year's International Gita Mahotsav," Yadav said while addressing the 'Sant Sammelan' under the ongoing International Gita Mahotsav in

Kurukshetra Haryana. He also urged the organisers of the International Geeta Mahotsav to join Madhya Pradesh's Gita recitation virtually. More than 5000 priests will recite the Gita in two separate events in Bhopal and Ujjain on the occasion of Gita Jayanti on Dec 11. He further stated has decided to develop places associated with Lord Krishna as pilgrimage sites in Madhya Pradesh. Notably, a proposal for this purpose was already approved by the state Cabinet last month.

Centre must intervene for release of TN fishermen arrested by Sri Lankan Navy: PMK

Chennai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) president and former Union Minister Anbumani Ramadoss has called for immediate intervention by the Union government to secure the release of Tamil fishermen arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy. Ramadoss said that 40 fishermen from Tamil Nadu had been detained by the Sri

Lankan Navy over the past week. The arrests have sparked protests from the fishermen and their families, who are demanding urgent action. "These arrests challenge India's sovereignty," said the former Union Minister, highlighting the gravity of the situation. He pointed out that in 2024 alone, 569 Tamil Nadu fishermen were arrested, and 73 boats were impounded by the Sri Lankan Navy. He urged the Union government



to ensure the immediate release of the detained fishermen and also called for joint efforts by both Central and state governments to find a permanent resolution to the recurring issue.

India's tourism sector is full of extraordinary possibilities : Union Minister

Jaipur, Dec 16 (IANS) : Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Monday highlighted the immense potential of India's tourism sector, claiming it surpasses that of any other country in the world. "With over 5,000 years of civilisational history, 43 World Heritage Sites, 56 potential World Heritage Sites, and around 3,500 monuments of national importance, India's cultural heritage stands as a testament to its global strength," the minister said while speaking at the 'Embrac-

ing Diversity: Promoting Inclusive Tourism' session at Rising Rajasthan. He also emphasised that the significance of tourism lies more in its cultural value than in its economic or business aspects. He pointed out the importance of understanding the cultural elements that have shaped India's identity. He also noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Virasat Bhi Vikas Bhi' (heritage and development) has propelled the country's progress, connecting India's historical uniqueness with its modern achievements. The minister attributed India's



position as the world's fastest-growing economy to its deep-rooted cultural pride. He also discussed India's remarkable progress in the tourism sector, citing improvements such as a 1,50,000 km road network, the development of 500 new air routes, the construction of 150 new airports, and the introduction of high-speed trains like Vande Bharat.



No govt seems to be existing in Bangladesh : BJP

Kolkata, Dec 16 (IANS) : Former national vice-president of BJP and former Lok Sabha member from West Bengal Dilip Ghosh, on Monday, said that it seems no government exists in Bangladesh. He said that if Bangladesh moves in the same direction of a strong anti-India stand it will also face the same consequences as Pakistan. "Bangladesh, which is surviving on the mercy of India, does not seem to foresee their future," Ghosh said while interacting with media persons at Kharagpur in the West Midnapore district of West Bengal on Monday afternoon, a video of which he had uploaded on his social media wall. Ghosh launched a

scathing attack against the Chief Advisor of the interim Bangladesh government Muhammad Yunus and described the latter as an ardently corrupt person lacking any experience in running the administration. "If an upstart gives the power to the student leaders, how can an effective administration be achieved," said Ghosh. Earlier in the day the Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly accused the Chief Minister of "attempting" to downplay the atrocities against minority Hindus in neighbouring Bangladesh by claiming that rumours are being spread about the Bangladesh crisis by circulating fake videos.

MP: Former MLA criticises Jitu Patwari after denied entry at his residence

Bhopal, Dec 16 (IANS) : Former MLA Shabnam Mausi, who is the ever first transgender to reach the Legislative Assembly, slammed Madhya Pradesh Congress head Jitu Patwari, accusing him of insulting the transgender community. Shabnam Mausi claimed she had gone to Patwari's residence to meet him, however, she was forced to return. Former MLA alleged that Patwari's office bearers insulted her and denied her entry. "I was willing to become a Congress member that is why I went to meet Jitu Patwari. But I was not allowed to enter his residence. He has insulted not only me but the entire transgender community and he will pay for his act," said Shabnam Mausi.



Manipur: INDIA Bloc demands resolution of ethnic strife during Delhi sit-in protest

New Delhi/Imphal, Dec 16 (IANS) : The INDIA Bloc parties from Manipur on Monday held a sit-in protest in Delhi demanding Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit the violence-hit state and resolve the 19-month-long ethnic hostilities at the earliest. The leaders of the 10-party INDIA bloc while addressing the gathering at Jantar Mantar in

the national capital claimed that both the Centre and the state government failed to resolve the ethnic crisis even as the lives of the people were devastated due to the uninterrupted violence. The INDIA bloc leader also demanded to sack Chief Minister N Biren Singh for his "complete failure" to deal with the riots between Meitei and the Koki-Zo-Hmar community. Many opposition leaders, includ-

ing Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh, Congress' deputy leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi and CPI General Secretary D Raja among others participated in the protest. Ramesh said that Manipur has been inflicted with unprecedented turmoil, continuous curfew, internet ban, high price rise of all commodities, unavailability of medicines, continuous violence, highways blockade, rising

extortion, all forms of violent threats and disturbances, complete lawlessness and chaos, complete violation of right to life and right to properties, loss of life, and complete disarray of hope for the youth and total obstruction to the smooth functioning of schools, colleges, universities, and professional institutions in Manipur. The INDIA Bloc, Manipur, resolves to press for the four de-



mands to the President of India and the Prime Minister, he said in a post on the X. The demands include the Prime Minister visiting Manipur urgently for an immediate restoration of peace and normalcy in the state without affecting the territorial integrity of

Manipur. "Chief Minister of Manipur should be immediately sacked for allowing Manipur to keep burning for the last 19 months. Further, until peace and normalcy are restored, the INDIA Bloc, Manipur will continue the democratic struggle to bring peace and normalcy to the state. We solemnly declare that we will work together hand in hand irrespective of caste, creed, community, and ethnicity to strengthen the bond of love, unity, and integrity in Manipur," the Congress leader said.

Iltija Mufti's remark on 'Hindutva' shows her lack of intelligence : Ex-MP Minister Usha Thakur

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Former Madhya Pradesh Minister and BJP legislator Usha Thakur on Monday described the "Hindutva is a disease" remark of Iltija Mufti, daughter of former J&K chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, as baseless and meaningless. Speaking to IANS, Thakur said, "The statement of Iltiza is very baseless and meaningless. Neither does she know about Hindutva nor does she know about Shri Ram. India is a country of Vedas; of

Sanatanis... such comments of her on the world's best way of life (Hindutva) only show her lack of intelligence." Reacting to Iltija Mufti's comment on Lord Ram, the BJP leader said, "Ram is the nation, he is synonymous with the nation. The dignified life of Ram ji is an inspiration for every Indian. To have such thoughts for Lord Shri Ram shows her anti-nation mindset." When asked whether there should be 'Ram Ki Pathshala' in schools



of J&K, she said, "Why shouldn't it happen? Why only in Jammu and Kashmir and only in India? These schools should be all over the world. We are going to become the Vishwaguru."

Maha govt condemns injustice against Marathi-speaking people in border areas

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday announced that the state government condemns injustice by the Karnataka government to the Marathi-speaking people in the border areas including Belgaum. He further said that the Karnataka government's stance that Marathi-speaking

people should not hold a meeting in Belgaum is a violation of constitutional rights. He also claimed that the Karnataka minister's statement with regard to the removal of a portrait of VD Savarkar from the Karnataka State Assembly was quite serious, saying that the state government condemns this move. In his statement in the state council, the Chief Minister said the



Maharashtra legislature stands firmly behind the Marathi-speaking people in the border areas and declared that the fight will continue for a united Maharashtra with Belgaum and Nipani as its part.



Romania's Constitution Day marked by outrage over cancelled presidential elections

Bucharest, Dec 16 (IANS) : Tensions flared on Romania's Constitution Day as political figures and citizens voiced their outrage over the unprecedented cancellation of the 2024 presidential elections. The Central Electoral Bureau announced Saturday that its operations would cease on December 13, following the decision by the Constitutional Court of Romania (CCR) to annul the results of the first round of the elections.

Calin Georgescu, an independent presidential candidate, gathered with supporters on Monday at a polling station in Mogosoaia and expressed concern about the state of democracy in Romania. "Today is Constitution Day, and yet there is nothing constitutional left in Romania," said Georgescu. He emphasised the importance of democracy and vowed to continue peaceful advocacy for citizens' rights. On the same day, the Alli-

ance for the Unity of Romanians (AUR), a right-wing political party, initiated a petition for free elections, with plans to submit it to international organisations, including the Venice Commission and Council of Europe.

George Simion, president of the AUR, also announced the party's intention to file a complaint with Romania's supreme court, condemning the election cancellation as a breach of democratic norms, Xinhua news agency reported. Elena Lasconi, the presidential candidate from the Save Romania Union, criticized the CCR's decision as "illegal and immoral" and vowed to continue pursuing her political ambitions. "If CCR annuls the elections ten times, I will run an eleventh," she said. CCR President Marian Enache, meanwhile, defended the decision and used Constitution Day to call for adherence to democratic principles and counter disinformation. "We are witnessing forces that threaten the fundamental values of democracy," Enache said, reiterating the court's commitment to the rule of law and citizens' rights. In response to criticism, Enache

highlighted the importance of trust in the Constitution and alignment with European values, warning of the dangers posed by misinformation and the unchecked influence of artificial intelligence on public decision-making.

The cancellation has fueled distrust in public institutions and intensified political divides. Observers note that the controversy underscores the need for stronger mechanisms to ensure electoral integrity and public confidence in democratic processes. The dominance of key electoral institutions by the National Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party has raised concerns about potential bias and manipulation, which could undermine the credibility of the 2024 elections, said Claudia Badulescu, a research fellow at the Institute of European Studies of the Free University of Brussels. Badulescu said in a report that the cancellation raises significant questions about the country's political stability and adherence to democratic values, with both domestic.



Cambodia's Senate President embarks on official visit to four Islamic countries

Phnom Penh, Dec 16 (IANS) : Samdech Techo Hun Sen, the President of Cambodia's Senate, left here on Monday for a week-long official visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In Saudi Arabia, Hun Sen is scheduled to meet with Speaker of the Consultative Council Abdullah Bin Mohammed Bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, and Crown Prince

and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, said the Senate's press release, adding that in Qatar, he will talk with Speaker of Shura Council Hassan bin Abdulla Al-Ghanim and Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani. In Turkey, he will hold a bilateral meeting with the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly Numan Kurtulmus.



Nearly one million Afghan refugees return home in eight months

Kabul, Dec 16 (IANS) : A total of 970,000 Afghan refugees have returned to their motherland from Iran, Pakistan and Turkey in the past eight months. "Among them, about 88,000 are from Pakistan, around 5,000 from Turkey, and the remaining from Iran," the media quoted Abdul Mutalib Haqqani, spokesman for the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, Xinhua news agency reported quoting local media outlet TOLO news on Monday. According to official data released by the ministry, about 7 million Afghan refugees are living abroad, with the majority of them in Afghanistan's neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. The Afghan caretaker government has been repeatedly urging Afghan refugees to cease living abroad as refugees and return home to contribute to the rebuilding of their war-damaged country.

Committed to finding peaceful resolution, says Tibetan administration

Dharamsala, Dec 16 (IANS) : The democratically elected Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) on Monday reiterated that it "remains committed to finding a peaceful resolution to the Sino-Tibet conflict through the middle-way approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for all those living in the traditional Tibetan areas."

In a statement to mark the 35th anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the CTA said autonomy means to handle all own religious, cultural, linguistic, education, health, and environmental affairs, as guaranteed by the Chinese constitution and under the law on Regional National Autonomy. "Unfortunately, the Chinese government continues to bulldoze the Tibetan people's legitimate aspirations and continues to destroy our unique identity," it said.

In a prelude to the celebrations next year of the global Year of Compassion (July 6, 2025, to July 6, 2026) to mark the 90th birthday of the Dalai

Lama, the Kashag (cabinet) said, "Today, as we celebrate both the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the International Human Rights Day, it is the appropriate that we speak on His Holiness's tireless efforts against all odds in preserving the Tibetan language, and also promotion of the rich ancient Buddhist wisdom and its cultural values. "And also, His Holiness's role as a whistleblower for the protection of global ecology and environment." The Norwegian Nobel Committee in its citation emphasised that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has



opposed the use of violence. "He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people... In the opinion of the committee, the Dalai Lama has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and

global environmental problems."

While the world at large admires the Dalai Lama for all his selfless efforts, unfortunately, the central government in Beijing continues its anti-Dalai Lama campaigns and ignores the true aspirations of the people of Tibet under its illegal occupation, it said.



BSF seizes gold valued at Rs 1.28 crore close to Indo-B'desh border, smuggler arrested

Kolkata, Dec 16 (IANS) : The Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday claimed to have arrested a gold smuggler and two carriers with 1.67 kg gold close to the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB) in the Nadia district of West Bengal. N K Pandey, DIG and spokesperson, South Bengal Frontier, BSF said that the estimated value of the gold is Rs 1.28 crore. "Troops of the Puttkhali Border Outpost received intelligence inputs regarding an attempt to transport gold, smuggled from Bangladesh.



Three killed, 17 injured as bus hits multiple vehicles in Mumbai's Kurla

Mumbai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Three people died and 17 others were injured after a bus rammed into multiple vehicles in Mumbai's Kurla area on Monday night.

Police said that the accident occurred at 9.50 p.m. in front of Anjuman-e-Islam School on SG Barve Marg in Kurla (West). According to a police official, the driver of the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) bus lost control of the vehicle following which it collided with several vehicles.

Even wealthy would envy the grandeur of 'hypocrite' Kejriwal, says BJP leader

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : The BJP on Monday intensified its attack on Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal over the controversial 'Sheesh Mahal' row, releasing a video showcasing the luxurious features of his former official residence at 6 Flagstaff Road in Delhi. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva posted the video on X, claiming it reveals opulent upgrades made to Kejriwal's residence, including high-end fittings, fixtures, and amenities. The BJP accused Kejriwal of indulging in extravagance at the expense of Delhi's taxpayers, even as the capital struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The BJP alleged that Kejriwal's luxurious lifestyle is at odds with his public image of simplicity and humility that would even envy the wealthy.

BJP National Secretary Manjinder Singh Sirsa called it "the biggest proof of Arvind Kejriwal's hypocrisy," citing a spa-like room and a Rs 50-lakh jacuzzi in the house.

"This is a man who roams around in loose shirts and slippers pretending to be poor, claiming he does not even own proper shoes. But when videos of his house surface, it shows such grandeur; now a spa-like room has emerged that would make even the wealthiest people feel embarrassed."

"A spa room has been created at great expense, costing several crores of rupees. It features a luxurious jacuzzi worth Rs 50 lakhs. While they take advantage of the people of Delhi, they will enjoy relaxing in this jacuzzi.



J&K's Srinagar freezes at minus 5.4, season's coldest so far

Srinagar, Dec 16 (IANS) : Intense cold gripped Kashmir Valley as Srinagar city recorded the season's lowest minimum temperature at minus 5.4 degrees Celsius on Monday. The Meteorological (MeT) Department officials said the minimum temperature dropped to minus 5.4 degrees Celsius, which is the lowest so far this season. Gulmarg recorded minus 9 and Pahalgam minus 8.6 as the minimum temperature. A pristine blanket of white snow has brought Gulmarg to life as tourists are thrilled to witness such bountiful snowfall during their visit to this meadow of flowers. Jammu City had 5.4, Katra 5.6, Batote 1, Banihal minus 2.2 and Baderwah minus 3.4 as the minimum temperature. Water taps in Srinagar city and other cities and towns of the Valley froze as people were seen lighting small fires around these to de-freeze them in the morning. Morning frost and slippery roads prevented morning walkers from taking their daily strolls. Pedestrians and motorists also avoided coming out in the morning as fewer vehicles were seen on the roads and streets in the city.



LeBron reflects on rest-fueled return in Lakers' win, says 'it was great for mind & body'

Los Angeles, Dec 16 (IANS) : LeBron James returned to action on Monday (IST) after having missed the Los Angeles Lakers previous two games due to left foot soreness to help his team secure a 116-110 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies at Crypto.com Arena. The league veteran of 22 years reflected on his decision to sit out the games against the Portland Trail Blazers and Minnesota Timberwolves and believes the short break was a good decision.



Zimbabwe penalised for slow over-rate against Afghanistan

Dubai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Zimbabwean players have been fined 10 percent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate in the third T20I against Afghanistan in Harare on Monday. "Andy Pycroft of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanction after Zimbabwe were ruled to be two overs short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration," ICC said in a release. In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offences.

Argentina's Fennell becomes sixth cricketer to pick double hat-trick in T20Is

Buenos Aires, Dec 16 (IANS) : Argentina's Hernan Fennell achieved a rare and incredible feat during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Sub Regional Americas Qualifier. The 36-year-old seamer picked up a double hat-trick - four wickets in four consecutive balls - against the Cayman Islands, becoming only the sixth player in T20I history to do so. Fennell joins Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan, Sri Lanka speedster Lasith Malinga, Ireland all-rounder Curtis Campher.



Sky is the limit for Shaw if he gets his work ethics right : Shreyas Iyer

Bengaluru, Dec 16 (IANS) : Mumbai captain Shreyas Iyer has urged struggling teammate Prithvi Shaw to better his 'work ethics' to excel in his career. Shaw was part of Mumbai's title-winning campaign in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT). Mumbai defeated Madhya Pradesh by five wickets to lift the title for the second time on Sunday. Shaw, who was recently omitted from the Mumbai squad during the initial leg of the Ranji Trophy due to fitness concerns, made a comeback to the team for SMAT. The opener played in all nine matches of Mumbai's campaign, scoring 197 runs at a strike rate of 156.34 with an average just below 22. While he delivered five impactful cameos, his performances were mixed, with four low scores interspersed among them. "I think, personally, he is a god-gifted player. The amount of talent he possesses as an individual, no one has it. That's true. It's just that he needs to improve his work ethics. And I have said it before as well in many of the interviews. He needs to get his work ethics right. And if he does that, you know, sky is the limit for him. Can you force him to? I can't force him. He has played so much of cricket. And everyone has given him inputs."

MS, as a person, is very down-to-earth : Richard Gleeson

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : England pacer Richard Gleeson said he feels honoured to share a dressing room with former India skipper MS Dhoni during his time with Chennai Super Kings in the IPL 2024, highlighting the "down-to-earth" demeanour of the five-time IPL-winning captain. At the age of 36 years and 151 days, Gleeson became the second-oldest debutant in IPL history when he was signed as a replacement.



3rd Test: Indian team is going through a transition, says Jasprit Bumrah

Brisbane, Dec 16 (IANS) : India's fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has asked for patience to be shown with the team after losing four wickets in their first innings of ongoing third Test against Australia at the Gabba. On a day where only 33.1 overs of play was possible due to rain, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood scythed through the top-order to leave India at 51/4 in 17 overs and trail Australia by 394 runs. They need 194 runs to avoid follow-on, but heavy rain forecast for last two days means India might just be saved from going 2-1 behind in the five-match series. "As a team, we don't point fingers at each other and we don't want to get into that mindset where we are pointing fingers at each other that you should do

this and that. We as a team are going through a transition as new players are coming in and it's not the easiest place to play cricket over here," said Bumrah to reporters in press conference after day three's play. Bumrah, who picked 6-76 to be India's standout bowler yet again, felt it's difficult for inexperienced bowlers to hit the ground running in different conditions in Australia.



'No clear communication, blindsided': Gillespie reveals why he quit as Pakistan coach

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : Jason Gillespie has revealed he had no clear communication with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on the playing eleven before a matchday and added his role as their red-ball coach had reduced to him hitting catches. Gillespie, the former Australia fast bowler, took over as Pakistan's red-ball coach in April for a two-year deal and led the side to a 2-1 series victory at home over England in October. But Gillespie resigned from his role last week ahead of Pakistan's Test series in South Africa.



Newly-crowned World Chess Champion Gukesh gets rousing welcome in Chennai

Chennai, Dec 16 (IANS) : Youngest World Chess Champion, 18-year-old Gukesh D received a rousing welcome from fans at the Chennai International Airport on Monday upon his return from Singapore where he defeated defending champion Ding Liren of China in the World Chess Championship final. Gukesh became only the second Indian to achieve this milestone, following in the footsteps of the legendary Viswanathan Anand. The young Grandmaster's arrival was met with a vibrant spectacle, with cheering crowds, traditional dancers, and students from Velammal Vidyalaya, a school renowned for nurturing chess champions.



Ashley Hoffman looking forward to learning Hindi, building friendships in HIL

New Delhi, Dec 16 (IANS) : USA women's team defender Ashley Hoffman is excited to be part of the Hockey India League (HIL) 2024-25 season after being signed by Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers for Rs 10 lakh. The 28-year-old feels lucky to be playing in India after replacing Ireland's Sarah Hawkshaw in the Bengal squad. Ashley went unsold in the HIL auction last month but she was destined to play in India.