

गिरिडीह के तीन गोदामों में लगी आग से करोड़ों की संपत्ति खाक प्लाईवुड व बिजली के सामान सहित चपेट में आ गई कार-बाइक भी

AGENCY GIRIDIH :

जिले के पंचबा थाना क्षेत्र के बोड़ो में स्थित प्लाईवुड के दो और बिजली सामान के एक सहित कुल तीन गोदामों में भीषण आग लग गई। आग लगने की घटना मंगलवार मध्य रात्रि की बताई जा रही है। आग लगने की वजह से लगभग दो करोड़ रुपये की संपत्ति की क्षति का अनुमान है। बताया गया है कि घटना में गोदाम में रखे प्लाईवुड सहित कई सामान के अलावा दो मोटरसाइकिल और एक एक्सव्यूवी कार पूरी तरह से जलकर राख हो गई। घटना को लेकर बाबाधाम प्लाईवुड के संचालक रवि कुमार साहू ने कहा कि बोलो हवाई अड्डा के बगल में झूमराज इंटरप्राइजेज, बाबाधाम प्लाईवुड और एक बिजली के



प्लाईवुड दुकान में लगी आग व जली कार

सामान का गोदाम है। बाबाधाम के संचालक वे खुद हैं। झूमराज इंटरप्राइजेज उनके ससुर भुनेश्वर प्रसाद साहू का है एवं बिजली के सामान का गोदाम अमित कुमार का है। तीनों गोदाम एक-दूसरे से सटे हैं। रवि ने कहा कि उसके दो कर्मियों गोदाम में ही रहते हैं। रात को 11:30 अचानक कर्मियों ने फोन

किया कि गोदाम में आग लग गई है। यह सुनते ही वह आनन-फानन में गोदाम पहुंचे। इसके बाद पंचबा थाना एवं फायर ब्रिगेड को सूचना दी गई। सूचना पर फायर ब्रिगेड की टीम पहुंची लेकिन आग पर काबू पाया नहीं जा सका। उन्होंने कहा कि रात 12:00 बजे से लेकर लगभग सुबह के आठ बजे तक

फोटोन न्यूज

चतरा में कोयला ढुलाई में लगे हाइवा में आगजनी

CHATRA : जिले के पिपरवार थाना क्षेत्र में कोयला ढुलाई में लगे हाइवा में आगजनी की घटना को अंजाम दिया गया है। बचरा स्ट्रेडियम के पीछे ट्रांसपोर्टिंग रोड पर मंगलवार की देर रात यह घटना हुई है। टंडा से बचरा साइडिंग तक होने वाले पनटीपीसी के कोयला ढुलाई वाले हाईवा को आग के हवाले कर दिया गया। इस घटना को अपराधियों या फिर किसी नवसली संगठनों के जरिये अंजाम दिया गया है अब तक यह स्पष्ट नहीं हो पाया है। इस घटना के बाद ट्रांसपोर्ट और कोयला व्यवसायियों में दहशत है।



बांग्लादेश में हिंसा के खिलाफ हिंदू संगठनों ने निकाली रैली

DHANBAD : बांग्लादेश में हिंदुओं पर हो रहे हमलों और आध्यात्मिक नेता चिन्मय कुशा दास की गिरफ्तारी के विरोध में बुधवार को विभिन्न हिंदू संगठनों ने रैलीया निकाली। हिंदू राष्ट्रीय समन्वय समिति (एचआरएसएफ) के प्रदर्शन में धनबाद इस्कॉन, बजरंग दल, भाजपा और अन्य संगठनों के सदस्य शामिल हुए। इसमें विधायक राज सिन्हा भी पहुंचे। हिंदू राष्ट्र समन्वय समिति के नेतृत्व में कई संगठनों के लोग हाथों में तख्तियां लिए और बांग्लादेश सरकार के खिलाफ नारे लगाते हुए रणधीर रमा चौक तक मार्च निकाला और वहां लगभग दो घंटे तक प्रदर्शन किया। कार्यक्रम को विधायक के अलावा तरुण हिंदू के संस्थापक डॉ. नील माधव दास, इस्कॉन धनबाद से दामोदर प्रभु, विश्व हिंदू परिषद से सुनील कुमार, हिंदू जनजागृति समिति से शंभु बवार और हिंदू राष्ट्र समन्वय समिति धनबाद के संयोजक डॉ. निशांत दास ने भी संबोधित किया।

BRIEF NEWS

मईयां योजना के लिए सुबह से जुट रहीं महिलाएं



DHANBAD : मईयां सम्मान योजना का लाभ लेने के लिए सरकारी दफ्तरों में महिलाओं की लंबी-लंबी कतारें लग रही हैं। हाल यह है कि सुबह से अंचल कार्यालयों में महिलाओं की जुटान हो रही है। धनबाद अंचल कार्यालय में बुधवार की सुबह महिलाओं की लंबी कतार लगी रही। सुबह 10 बजते-बजते कतार कार्यालय परिसर से बाहर सड़क तक पहुंच जा रही है। दस बजे तक दफ्तर में कोई कर्मचारी नहीं था। समय पर कर्मचारियों के नहीं आने के कारण महिलाओं में नाराजगी दिखाई। ज्ञात हो कि राज्य सरकार ने दिसंबर से ही मईयां योजना की राशि में वृद्धि की घोषणा की है। पहले प्रतिमाह एक हजार रुपये मिल रहे थे। जानकारी के मुताबिक 11 दिसंबर को पहली किस्त के रूप में 2500 रुपये दिए जाएंगे।

मंत्रिमंडल में शामिल नहीं होगी भाकपा-माले : अरूप



DHANBAD : निरसा के विधायक अरूप चटर्जी ने बुधवार को कहा कि भाकपा-माले झारखंड मंत्रिमंडल में शामिल नहीं होंगी। उन्होंने कहा कि झारखंड की जनता ने इंडिया गठबंधन को पूर्ण जनदेश दिया है। भाकपा माले ने गठबंधन के तहत चुनाव लड़ा था। सभी की इच्छा थी कि गठबंधन को पूर्ण बहुमत मिले और हेमंत सोरेन दोबारा मुख्यमंत्री बनें। विधायक ने कहा कि मैं मंत्री बनू या नहीं, इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ने वाला है। जनता के विश्वास पर मैं खरा उतरने का हरसंभव प्रयास करूंगा और अब वह समय आ भी गया है। निरसा सहित पूरे धनबाद जिले में विकास को कोई भी काम नहीं रुकेगा। इधर, सिंदरी से भाकपा-माले के विधायक चंद्रदेव महतो उर्फ बबलू महतो ने भी अरूप चटर्जी की बातों का समर्थन किया।

बीआईटी में क्वालिटी क्लब का ओरिएंटेशन सत्र

SINDRI : बीआईटी सिंदरी के क्वालिटी क्लब का ओरिएंटेशन सत्र बुधवार को हुआ, जिसमें डॉ. घनश्याम, डॉ. माया राज नारायण, डॉ. अमप्रकाश सहित कई शिक्षक और क्लब के सदस्य थे। सत्र में क्लब की शुरुआत की गई और छात्रों को इसके कामकाज और उद्देश्यों की जानकारी दी गई। कार्यक्रम में आईएफक्यूएम से जुड़ी बड़ी कंपनियों के सीईओ के संदेश भी साझा किए गए।

स्टैंडिंग कमेटी की बैठक 17 को

DHANBAD : दिल्ली में 17 दिसंबर को स्टैंडिंग कमेटी ऑन सेफ्टी इन कोल माईंस की बैठक होगी। इसकी अध्यक्षता कोयला मंत्री करेंगे। इसमें कोयला खदानों की सुरक्षा पर चर्चा की जाएगी।

पलामू की बीस सूत्री कार्यक्रम क्रियान्वयन समिति की उपाध्यक्ष विमला कुमारी ने किया सनसनीखेज खुलासा, कहा-

बालिका गृह में चार वर्षों से चल रहा था यौन शोषण का खेल

PHOTON NEWS PALAMU :

पलामू बालिका गृह में बच्चियों से यौन शोषण का मामला सामने आने के बाद इसके संचालक रामप्रताप गुप्ता और महिला काउंसलर प्रियंका कुमारी को जेल भेज दिया गया है। बालिका गृह को सील कर यहाँ की बच्चियों को दूसरी जगह शिफ्ट किया गया है। सीडब्ल्यूसी और जिला बाल संरक्षण पदाधिकारी पर कार्रवाई की गयी है। इस बीच पलामू की बीस सूत्री कार्यक्रम क्रियान्वयन समिति की उपाध्यक्ष विमला कुमारी ने बुधवार को सनसनीखेज खुलासे करते हुए कहा कि पलामू बालिका गृह में पिछले चार वर्ष से यौन शोषण का खेल चल रहा था। जांच के बाद कार्रवाई के लिए शिकायत की गयी थी, लेकिन पलामू के तत्कालीन डीडीसी एवं डीएसडब्ल्यूओ ने कार्रवाई के नाम



पत्रकारों को संबोधित करती विमला कुमारी

पर केवल कोरम पूरा किया था। इस मामले में दोनों की भूमिका संदिहास्पद है। ऐसे में इन दोनों की उच्च स्तरीय जांच होनी चाहिए। उन्होंने बालिका गृह और कस्तूरबा विद्यालय की निगरानी के लिए स्पेशल कमिटी बनाने की मांग की। विमला ने पत्रकारों को बताया कि बालिका गृह को लेकर कई

शिकायतें मिली थीं। 16 मार्च 2023 को बालिका गृह की जांच की थी। कई गड़बड़ियां पायी गयीं। मामले को उठाया, लेकिन पलामू की तत्कालीन समाज कल्याण पदाधिकारी संख्या रानी ने अपने स्तर से जांच कर बालिका गृह को बत्तीन चोट दे दी थी, तब तत्कालीन डीसी तक मामले को पहुंचाया गया। डीसी ने



घटनास्थल पर जुटे लोग

इसकी जानकारी ग्रामीणों को दी। बाद में शव की पहचान की गई। सूचना मिलने पर लेस्लीगंज पुलिस मौके पर पहुंची एवं फंदे से शव को उतारकर शव को अंत्यपरिक्षण के लिए मेदिनीनगर के मेदिनी राय मेडिकल कॉलेज में भेज दिया। जानकारी के अनुसार, वर्ष 1997 में ओरिया में अमरेश महतो की हत्या हो गयी थी, जिसमें पूर्व प्रमुख राजनाथ महतो, 74 वर्षीय सिद्धनाथ महतो, 70 वर्षीय

बुजुर्ग धर्मपाल महतो, 76 वर्षीय मुक्तेश्वर महतो, 65 वर्षीय अनिल महतो एवं 62 वर्षीय नरेश महतो को जिला कोर्ट से 20 साल की सजा सुनायी गयी थी। राजनाथ महतो की दो साल पहले ही मौत हो चुकी है। इस फैसले के खिलाफ बचे हुए दोषी उच्च न्यायालय में गए थे, जहाँ उम्र को देखते हुए सभी की सजा आधी कर दी गयी थी। कोर्ट के आदेशानुसार 4 दिसम्बर को सभी दोषियों को सरेंडर करना था। परिजनों के अनुसार, धर्मपाल महतो मंगलवार रात से गायब थे। ज्यादा उम्र होने एवं 10 साल जेल में रहने के डर से धर्मपाल महतो ने खुदकुशी करना उचित समझा। चर्चा है कि कोर्ट के आदेश पर बचे हुए चार में से दो दोषियों ने बुधवार को सरेंडर कर दिया।

हिंदुओं पर हो रही हिंसा के विरोध में धरना



JAMTARA : राष्ट्रीय भारतीय समाज, जामताड़ा की ओर से बुधवार को गांधी चौक के सामने बांग्लादेश में हिंदुओं पर हो रहे अत्याचार के विरोध में धरना दिया गया। इस दौरान बांग्लादेश सरकार की मनमानी पर रोक लगाने की मांग की गई। बांग्लादेश में हिंदू पर हिंसा बंद करने, हिंदुओं के मवेशियों की रक्षा करने, बांग्लादेश पुलिस की तानाशाही रोकने आदि को लेकर नारेबाजी की गई। धरना के बाद गांधी चौक से मुख्य बाजार होते हुए चंचल चौक तक सभी ने मार्च निकाला। कार्यक्रम के अंत में शिष्टमंडल ने उपायुक्त को ज्ञापन सौंपा। इस कार्यक्रम में जामताड़ा जिले के सभी प्रखंड और गांव से सनातन समाज के लोग शामिल थे।

तिलैया जलाशय में डाले गए मछली के आठ लाख बीज

PHOTON NEWS HAZARIBAG :

जिला मत्स्य कार्यालय, हजारीबाग ने बुधवार को तिलैया जलाशय में मत्स्य अंगुलिका (मछली का जीरा या बीज) संचयन कार्यक्रम हुआ। इस दौरान सहायक समाहर्ता लोकेश बारगे की उपस्थिति में मछली का कुल 8 लाख बीज डाला गया। लोकेश बारगे ने केज प्रणाली में मत्स्य पालन का भी निरीक्षण किया। यह प्रणाली जलाशय में मछलियों का पालन नियंत्रित और वैज्ञानिक तरीके से करने के लिए एक आधुनिक तकनीक है। उन्होंने मत्स्यपालकों के प्रयासों की सराहना की और इस तकनीक को और अधिक प्रोत्साहित करने की बात कही। जिला मत्स्य अधिकारी प्रदीप कुमार ने जानकारी दी कि तिलैया जलाशय में मत्स्य अंगुलिका



मत्स्य पालकों से बात करते सहायक समाहर्ता लोकेश बारगे

संचयन और केज प्रणाली के माध्यम से मत्स्य उत्पादन में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि की उम्मीद है। इस पहल से न केवल मत्स्य कृषकों को आर्थिक विकास को भी बल मिलेगा। इस दौरान मत्स्य प्रसार पदाधिकारी डॉ. रजनी गुप्ता, प्रधान लिपिक संजीव कुमार, प्रवीण किरसोट्टा, जयंत खलखो, मत्स्य पालक संदीप उरांव, राजू निपाद, मो. जसीम, मनोज साव, कल्याण यादव, छोटन भुइयां, सजय कुमार, दीपक कुमार, मुकेश निपाद, मो. मुस्लिम, मुस्ताक मियां आदि किसान मौजूद थे।

अलपिटे पंचायत की मुखिया व पति के विरुद्ध जांच का निर्देश

HAZARIBAG :

उपायुक्त नैसी सहाय ने अलपिटे पंचायत की मुखिया व उनके पति के विरुद्ध जांच करने का निर्देश दिया है। जिला पंचायत राज शाखा हजारीबाग द्वारा आदेश जारी कर बताया गया कि प्रखंड विकास पदाधिकारी विष्णुगढ़ द्वारा प्राप्त विस्तृत प्रतिवेदन के क्रम में ग्राम पंचायत अलपिटे की मुखिया सुमिता देवी तथा उनके पति धनेश्वर यादव के विरुद्ध मनमाने ढंग से कार्य करने एवं सरकारी दस्तावेजों में गलत तरीके से हस्ताक्षर किए जाने, साथ ही मनरेगा योजना के तहत नियम विरुद्ध कुल 19 योजनाओं का निर्माण करने के क्रम में संबंधित मुखिया, तत्कालीन पंचायत सचिवों एवं अन्य कर्मियों व वेंडरों पर कुल 27,87,811.68 रुपये सरकारी राशि गवन करने

● मुखिया, तत्कालीन पंचायत सचिवों एवं अन्य कर्मियों-वेंडरों पर 27,87,811.68 रुपये गवन का आरोप

का आरोप अधिष्ठापित किया गया है। इसके साथ ही प्रखंड विकास पदाधिकारी विष्णुगढ़ द्वारा ग्राम पंचायत अलपिटे के पंचायत भवन में अधिलेख, रोकड़ पंजी, योजना पंजी इत्यादि की चोरी होने संबंधी सूचना प्राप्त है। इस परिप्रेक्ष्य में सरकार के सचिव, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग (पंचायत राज) झारखंड रांची के कार्यालय ने 15 फरवरी 2019 के आलोक में उक्त संदर्भ में विस्तृत जांच दल गठित किया गया है।

रेलवे यूनियन की मान्यता के लिए पूरे जोन में शुरू हुआ मतदान

दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे के 76,266 कर्मचारी 90 स्थानों पर करेंगे वोटिंग

AGENCY BOKARO :

यूनियन की मान्यता के लिए दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे के अंतर्गत बोकारो प्रखेत्र समेत पूरे जोन में मतदान हो रहा है। बुधवार को सुबह आठ बजे से मतदान प्रारंभ हो गया। मतदान 4 से 6 दिसंबर तक होगा। दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे में स्थायी रूप से कार्यालय व वर्कशापों में काम करने वाले कर्मचारी चुनाव 4 तथा 5 दिसंबर को मतदान करेंगे, जबकि रनिंग स्टाफ 6 दिसंबर को भी मतदान कर सकेंगे। वहीं, मतगणना की तिथि 12 दिसंबर तक की गई है। दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे में कुल 76,266 वोट हैं। इस जोन में 90 मतदान केंद्र बनाए गए हैं, जिनमें 26 संवेदनशील मतदान केंद्र हैं। पिछले चुनाव में दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे में कुल 7 यूनियन तथा मंस काग्रेस पहले तथा मंस यूनियन दूसरे नंबर पर रही थी। वैसे दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे मजदूर

कहां कितने वोट		
मंडल का नाम	मतदाता	मतदान केंद्र
आद्रा रेल मंडल	13,966	18
चक्रधरपुर	24,180	31
खड़गपुर	21,221	23
रांची	6,972	6
खड़गपुर वर्कशाप	6,878	9
मुख्यालय	3,049	3

संघ ने मजबूत उपस्थिति दर्ज कराई थी। मतदान को लेकर मंस यूनियन, मंस काग्रेस व डीपीआरएमएस के कार्यकर्ता पोलिंग बुथ पर तैनात हैं। वे मतदाताओं को अपने पक्ष में मतदान के लिए प्रेरित कर रहे हैं। चुनाव के दौरान सुरक्षा व्यवस्था को लेकर आद्रा रेल मंडल में 75 सीसीटीवी कैमरा स्थापित किया गया है। दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे में 7 यूनियन मैदान में हैं। इन्होंने ऑल इंडिया रेलवे मेटेनर यूनियन, दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे

मजदूर संघ, साउथ ईस्टर्न रेलवे मंस काग्रेस, साउथ ईस्टर्न रेलवे तुणमूल काग्रेस, साउथ ईस्टर्न रेलवे मंस यूनियन, साउथ ईस्टर्न रेलवे मजदूर यूनियन तथा स्वतंत्र रेलवे बहुजन कर्मचारी यूनियन शामिल हैं। अकेले बोकारो में 3068 मतदाता हैं। इनके लिए कोटशिला सहित 4 मतदान केंद्र बनाए गए हैं। बोकारो में सहायक अभियंता कार्यालय, रेल पथ निरीक्षक कार्यालय, डीजल शेड आदि में मतदान केंद्र बनाया गया है।

Courts letting ancient sores erupt afresh

WHEN in a hole, stop digging further — thus goes the familiar proverb. After the Ayodhya temple judgments, Indian courts are now sought to be engaged in a frenetic digging up of ancient religious grievances of a similar nature.

The underlying primary assumption is that many mosques were built upon temples that had been demolished by invaders. The second assumption is that notwithstanding the passage of centuries of time, there is today a legal right to restore the old temple by demolishing the existing mosque if necessary. The third assumption is that any court anywhere in India can grant executable decrees of change of character of a place of worship of one faith, to a worshipper of another faith. None of these assumptions was upheld by the five-judge Constitution Bench that passed the Ayodhya verdict. The judgment refutes the claim that a temple was brought down to build a mosque in medieval India. It awards decrees to both religions as having established their rights of worship at the spot. However, using the Supreme Court's special powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, it imposed a majoritarian peace by pushing away the mosque to an alternative site and letting a temple be built on the original site.

Thus, all three assumptions listed above stood legally negated by the judgment that ran into over a thousand pages. Implicit in the judgment was the acceptance that the resolution of the Ayodhya dispute was to be treated as a one-off event and not as a precedent for further claims. However, the message that percolated down to the public was that the Supreme Court had upheld the building of a temple where a mosque once stood. Public perception, therefore, was that all mosques were, henceforth, fair game for conversion. What the courts did soon thereafter only added to the public perception. The Ayodhya judgment had barely been delivered that cases were filed for the conversion of mosques in Mathura and Varanasi. The mosque committees responded that the suits had to be dismissed because the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act of 1991 prohibited the change of character of any place of worship that existed as on August 15, 1947. The Act of 1991 had been upheld unanimously in the Ayodhya judgment.

Thus, in the fresh Gyanvapi dispute, when an order of the courts in Varanasi was carried to the SC, the court had an opportunity to nip the trouble in the bud. That was not to be. It was an ill-considered remark by presiding judge DY Chandrachud — that the courts could still inquire into what the exact character of the place was on the first day of Independence — that gave a fresh life to the suit and let loose the dragon seeds of fresh hatred.

Running parallel to the Varanasi dispute was the dispute regarding the Eidgah in Mathura. Both suits were allowed by the SC to proceed and work their way through the court system. Some interim orders were also passed, depriving the Muslim side of the use of some portion of the facilities and allowing surveys to be done by the Archaeological Survey of India and various court commissioners. The upshot is that courts are now instruments of an Ayodhyaesque kar seva.

It may well be that the judges of the Supreme Court felt it to be safer for public passions to be expended in the long process of the Indian litigation. They possibly thought that the legal process would help a nation resolve uncomfortable questions from the past. What they did not perceive was that disputes about religious sites are not about religions but about nationalism itself. Are we a nation of unity in diversity or are we a unitarian civilisation? Journalist and author Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, in his book on Ayodhya, *The Demolition and the Verdict*, writes: "... 'inclusive' or 'multiple sub-nationalisms' (region and religion) were amalgamated into pan-Indian nationalism by the Congress, especially with the advent of Gandhi.

Shaky Dhaka needs a helping hand

EVER since a popular revolt overthrew the government of Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh, the country has been rocked by violence and disorder. The minority Hindu community there has been targeted. New Delhi has expressed strong concerns about these incidents to...

EVER since a popular revolt overthrew the government of Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh, the country has been rocked by violence and disorder. The minority Hindu community there has been targeted. New Delhi has expressed strong concerns about these incidents to Dhaka, saying that the primary responsibility for the safety and security of "all citizens of Bangladesh, including minorities, rests with the Government of Bangladesh".

Developments in the country can be seen in two ways. First, after the iron hand of Hasina's Awami League government has been lifted, the country is reverting to a situation of semi-anarchy, with the Islamists and Pakistan's ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) holding sway and the Hindu minority being persecuted. The second approach would be to consider that Bangladesh is going through a temporary phase in which the country, which did not have real democracy for the past decade, is trying to find its feet under the aegis of an interim government.

Bangladesh is perhaps the most consequential neighbour of India in South Asia, being 'India-locked' — of its 4,367-km land boundary, just 271 km is with Myanmar and the remaining 4,096 with India. It borders Tripura, Mizoram, Assam, Meghalaya and West Bengal and holds the key to the economic development as well as security of our northeastern region.

Given the nature of the Bangladesh border, it is difficult to completely seal it; as a result, the policies of various governments of the country have had a vital bearing on our security. India's relations with Bangladesh have seen ups and downs. Beginning with India's role in helping Bangladesh emerge as an independent nation, it has been a rollercoaster ride for bilateral ties as dictators Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad encouraged the Islamicisation of the country in a bid to maintain their control. As in Pakistan, the Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) has played a significant role and grown in the process, despite the fact that it fought against the freedom movement of the country. But what happens in Bangladesh is not just about India but the wider region, including China, Myanmar and South-East Asia. The creeping radicalisation of its large Muslim population could have wider global consequences. Besides the JeI, there are other

radical groups, like the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami and the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, as well as elements of the al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. A network of madarsa leaders, Hefazat-e-Islam, too, wants Sharia rule in the country and is opposed to the establishment of a secular polity there. The JeI's alliance with the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), headed by Begum Khaleda Zia, has been a major



problem. As a result, her tenures as Prime Minister in 1991-96 and 2001-06 have been marked by problems arising out of the virtually free rein given to the ISI and the sanctuary provided to an assortment of insurgent groups active against India in the North-East.

The India-Bangladesh relationship stabilised with the establishment of Hasina's government in 2009. Most importantly, it helped check the use of Bangladeshi territory by anti-India elements, be it the ISI or various north-eastern insurgent groups. This led to the reopening of land routes connecting the two nations and signing of the Motor Vehicles Agreement by BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal) to promote regional movement of traffic. China has developed significant interest in Bangladesh both as part of its larger policy of containing India as well as exploiting the country's

location at the head of the Bay of Bengal, next to the Rakhine state of Myanmar, where it has important investments and from where a pipeline carries oil from the port of Kyaukpuy to Yunnan in China, bypassing the Malacca Strait. Beijing has invested large amounts of money in constructing bridges, roads and power plants in Bangladesh and has also emerged as the biggest military supplier to the

country. For many of the reasons cited above, New Delhi needs to handle things with care in Bangladesh. It is true that the situation is extremely volatile and can go out of control, resulting in negative consequences for India. The situation is compounded by the fact that the ISI is likely to be working overtime to impose an anti-India narrative on the popular movement there.

India needs to draw lessons from its successful handling of strained ties with neighbours recently. By providing financial succour to Sri Lanka during its economic crisis, it has bought considerable goodwill, which is paying dividends with the government of Anura Kumara Dissanayake. Likewise, by calmly dealing with President Muizzu of Maldives, New Delhi has managed to blunt his "India out" strategy.

Similar dividends are visible in Nepal — the nominally anti-India Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, who is on an official visit to China, had made it clear beforehand that his country would not sign any new loan agreement with Beijing under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Indeed, the Nepalese want to sign a new agreement with China that will narrow the scope of BRI in their country.

With Bangladesh, too, India needs to adopt a policy of strategic patience. Bangladesh is a country in transition. New Delhi needs to support the process of restoring democracy there. There has been a tendency to exaggerate the attacks on Hindus. After an initial upsurge, such attacks have come down. We also must understand that our one-sided support to Hasina has resulted in suspicion about our motives and there is need to provide a corrective to our Bangladesh policy.

Population push

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has sounded the alarm. He has expressed concern over a paradoxical situation: population growth in the world's most populous country is on the decline. Painting an apocalyptic picture, Bhagwat has warned that a society whose total...

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has sounded the alarm. He has expressed concern over a paradoxical situation: population growth in the world's most populous country is on the decline. Painting an apocalyptic picture, Bhagwat has warned that a society whose total fertility rate (TFR) dips below 2.1 could disappear off the face of the earth. He has a solution: Hum Do Hamare Teen — every couple should have at least three children. Does the RSS Sarsangchalak want members of every community in the country — majority as well as minority -- to produce more kids? That seems unlikely, going by what Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at an election rally in Banswara, Rajasthan, in April. In a thinly veiled attack on a particular community, the PM had equated 'infiltrators' with "those who have more children".

Bhagwat is worried most probably because of the findings of a working paper released by the Economic Advisory Council to the PM a few weeks after Modi's controversial speech. It says that the share of Hindus in India's



population decreased by 7.82 per cent between 1950 and 2015, while that of Muslims increased by 43 per cent. The worst-case scenario for the RSS chief is the majority

community being reduced to a minority. Ironically, Health Minister JP Nadda, while addressing a meeting on World Population Day (July 11), stated that 'smaller families' could help India achieve the goal of Viksit Bharat. It's true that India's fertility rate has fallen significantly, in part due to a laudable rise in the contraceptive prevalence rate. A low TFR has prompted Andhra Pradesh to do away with its two-child policy, while Telangana is keen to follow suit. However, various states would be well advised to take stock of the resources available while reversing time-tested family planning measures. Can they handle the additional demographic burden in terms of healthcare, education, job generation and poverty alleviation? It's tempting for political and religious leaders to play the numbers game and stoke communal fires, but they should not overlook the implications of such actions for India's long-term social and economic stability.

What holds back Punjab's draft agricultural policy

IAM often asked about my tenure as the Chairman of the Punjab State Farmers' & Farm Workers' Commission (April 6, 2017-September 20, 2021). On the very first day, without even a hint of guidance on what my work entailed, flummoxed...

IAM often asked about my tenure as the Chairman of the Punjab State Farmers' & Farm Workers' Commission (April 6, 2017-September 20, 2021). On the very first day, without even a hint of guidance on what my work entailed, flummoxed but undeterred, I sent a letter to the Department of Agriculture, asking it to provide information on pesticide, seed and fertiliser sample failures in the state.

The data — that would have taken a few hours to put together in the private sector — took two years of dogged perseverance and persuasive cajoling to get. It took six months just to get an officer from the department to assist the commission in its work. Having never worked in the government, the chase taught me a vital lesson: the real problem is not the government, it is the bureaucracy. That was lesson number one. I cut the long story short, the commission found many instances of pesticide, fertiliser and seed sample failures where no cases had been filed for the past 10 years or had been time-barred. Consequently, around 150 officers were charge-sheeted. I was informed that the officers had threatened to go on strike. However, the commission's aim was not to penalise anyone, which it ensured, but thereafter, compliance became 100 per cent. The same happened a little later when we proposed that the government create a price stabilisation fund for milk, food and vegetables by imposing a 20 per cent fee on the charges received by the arhtiyas for the procurement of grains for the FCI. The arhtiyas arrived, flexing their muscles. I told them that if they were to agitate at my doorstep, it would do good for the commission's image. However, they easily convinced the government to

ignore my advice. Initially, different departments were to brief me on their working and issues so as to understand how the system worked. Instead, the commission decided to visit all departments and meet the officers and junior staff in their respective offices. It proved to be an eye-opener. It led to the next awakening: "inept governance" holds back progress. Consequently, in the draft agricultural policy, the first chapter is on 'governance'. It was the first-ever policy of any kind to identify governance as a problem and a solution. It was not palatable for many but, with time, my stand was vindicated. The commission only has an advisory role. Yet, I have regrets — not for the work I did, but about the decisions I did not make or was dissuaded from taking. It is hard to quantify all the work in brief here, but some laws that got enacted during my tenure were path-breaking. I was doubtful that the then state Chief Minister, Capt Amarinder Singh, would agree to banning truck unions, but his administrative acumen being outstanding, truck unions were banned. Though they kept operating in some places like Bathinda. That was the third learning: never be afraid to punch above your weight. On regulating the electricity subsidy to the economically better farmers, the CM was persuaded by his office not to tread the politically contentious path, even though the farmers' unions had concurred with this suggestion.

I must acknowledge that farmers' union leaders were supportive of the commission's efforts in policy formation. Making the draft of Punjab state farmers' policy taught us the fourth valuable lesson: a transparent consultation process is a fundamental

requirement for achieving positive policy outcomes. Additionally, we ensured that Punjab banned the sale of herbicide glyphosate, the only state to do so.

There were other remarkable wins. In 2002, the government had allocated over 300 acres of land in Ladhawal near Ludhiana to a business group for a



measly Rs 2,000 per acre for supporting agriculture. On finding out that the land was not being used for the purpose, the commission submitted a report on the issue, based on which the group returned the land without litigation to the state. That was the fifth takeaway: success is only possible if one works as a team as the commission did; not as individuals.

My own experiences derived from my farm at Abohar helped me in my work at the commission. Agriculture college students train at our farm as a part of their degree course. Their practical knowledge is left wanting in many aspects. After joining the

commission, I was shocked to learn that unlike medical colleges that are regulated by the Union Government, agriculture colleges were not regulated. Agriculture is a state subject and the state did not have any such law. On the commission's suggestion, the state government enacted the Punjab State Council for Higher Education Act 2017. Out of the 112 colleges in the state, the Punjab State Council for Higher Education (PSCAE) asked students to avoid taking admission in colleges offering BSc (agricultural) which were not fulfilling conditions under the Act. It also released a list of the institutes that complied with the minimum standards prescribed. The list had only 15 names. The farm experience had also taught me about the difficulty of viably operating a greenhouse. We decided to list each greenhouse subsidised by government agencies. To its shock, the commission documented that over 90 per cent greenhouses had stopped operating within three to four years. There were many other such instances. The commission had a similar

experience on the suo motu inquiry report on canal water pollution in the Beas river from the Chadha distillery spill. The sixth learning was that the system tends to turn a blind eye to failures and evidence-based research should influence the policy and action. We, thus, recommended that actual beneficiaries be allowed to assess the programme outcomes. When the commission reached out to district headquarters to follow up on the rehabilitation of families affected by farmers' suicide, it found that, like other laws, it was not even on their agenda.

Government has kept banks stable in last 10 years, says Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

NEW DELHI. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the Indian banking system is critical to the growth of the nation and the government in the last 10 years has been extremely cautious so that banks remain stable. "The intention is to keep our banks safe, stable, healthy, and after 10 years you are seeing the outcome," the finance minister said while replying to a debate on the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 in Lok Sabha. Today the banks are being professionally run, the public sector banks are safe, stable and healthy, and have performed exceptionally well in recent years. She added that the metrics of the banks are healthy so they can go to the market and raise bonds, raise loans and run their business accordingly.

She informed the lower house of parliament that total bank branches of scheduled commercial banks have increased by 3,792 in a year to reach 16,55,001 in September 2024. Out of this 85,116 branches are of public sector banks.

5.5 million customers port numbers to BSNL after private telcos hiked tariff

NEW DELHI. Nearly 5.5 million mobile users (till October 2024) ported their numbers to the state-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) after the tariff hikes announced by private telecom service providers in June 2024.

As per data from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), there was a major rise in customer migrations from other telcos to BSNL from July to October 2024 period. In July 2024, BSNL saw 1.5 million users joining its network from Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, and Vodafone Idea (VIL). This number rose to 2.1 million in August, 1.1 million in September, and 0.7 million in October 2024. In contrast, BSNL experienced only 63,709 port-ins in June 2024, prior to the tariff hikes. At the same time, the number of customers leaving BSNL to switch to other networks had been higher in June 2024, with nearly 0.4 million users porting out. Following the tariff hikes, the rate of customer churn significantly decreased. By July 2024, only 0.31 million users left BSNL, and this number further dropped to 0.26 million in August, 0.28 million in September, and 0.51 million in October 2024.

Overall, the number of customers joining BSNL far outpaced those leaving the network during this period, with many consumers opting for the state-run operator. Additionally, BSNL experienced a surge in new SIM card sales. The company sold just 790,000 SIM cards in June 2024, but this number jumped to 4.9 million in July 2024, 5 million in August 2024, 2.8 million in September, and 1.9 million in October 2024. Meanwhile, the telecom industry saw a decline in subscriber numbers. As per the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), telcos collectively lost 10 million users in September 2024. Jio lost 7.9 million, Airtel lost 1.4 million, and VIL lost 1.5 million subscribers during the month. Robert Ravi, Chairman and MD of BSNL, stated that the company has no plans to increase its tariffs in the near future.

India's Affordable Housing Market To Reach Rs 67 Lakh Cr By 2030, Demand At 31.2 Mn Units

New Delhi. India's affordable housing market is projected to reach Rs 67 lakh crore by 2030, with cumulative demand likely to be 31.2 million units, a report showed on Wednesday. The existing shortage as well as upcoming demand for the affordable housing segment in India is estimated to be 30.7 Mn units by 2030 and the opportunity to finance these units is calculated to be Rs 44 lakh crore, according to the report by Knight Frank India and CII.

Led by factors such as urbanisation and employment opportunities, 22.2 million units of housing will be required in urban centres in the country. Almost 95.2 per cent of this demand, equivalent to 21.1 million units, will be concentrated in the affordable housing segment, the report mentioned.

A predominant share of 45.8 per cent of the demand will be concentrated among the economically weaker section (EWS) households as there is already an existing shortage of 10.1 million units. The current portfolio of the affordable housing loan market in India is estimated to be Rs 13 lakh crore, with Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) constituting Rs 6.9 lakh crore and Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) holding a share of Rs 6.2 lakh crore.

"As urbanisation accelerates and income levels rise, affordable housing is positioned to play a pivotal role in shaping the country's real estate landscape," Knight Frank India Chairman and Managing Director, Shishir Bajjal, said.

Addressing this demand will require innovative strategies, including public-private partnerships, policy interventions, and advancements in construction technologies, making affordable housing not just a social imperative but also a critical driver of economic growth, he added. The loan market in this category is anticipated to experience significant expansion due to the escalating potential demand for affordable housing. The reliance on loans is notably high in the affordable housing segment as compared to premium in India. Based on an assumption of a 77 per cent loan dependency and loan-to-value (LTV) ratios applied at various loan thresholds, the potential financing opportunity for banks and Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) in the affordable housing segment is estimated to be Rs 45 lakh crore, said the report.

IndiGo takes Mahindra to court over use of '6e' name

NEW DELHI. IndiGo has filed a trademark infringement suit against Mahindra Electric Automobile, objecting to the latter naming its upcoming EV as BE 6e as "6E" is the airline's flight code. Mahindra launched the electric car on Nov 26, with company officials insisting then there is no copyright infringement with use of 6e. IndiGo went to the court within days. Titled Interglobe Aviation (IndiGo parent) vs Mahindra Electric Automobile, the case was on Tuesday listed to be heard in the court of Justice Amit Bansal. However, the judge recused himself from hearing the matter. The next hearing is scheduled for Dec 9. Appearing for IndiGo, senior advocate Sandeep Sethi informed the court that Mahindra had initiated discussions with the airline to address the issue. In a statement, IndiGo said: "6E mark is an integral part of IndiGo's identity for the past 18 years and is a registered trademark that holds strong global recognition. The 6E mark,



whether standalone or in its variants and formative forms, is extensively used by IndiGo for its offerings and for goods and services provided in collaboration with trusted partners." The airline further said, "Any unauthorised use of the '6E' mark,

whether standalone or in any form, constitutes an infringement of IndiGo's rights, reputation and goodwill. IndiGo is committed to taking all necessary and appropriate steps to safeguard its intellectual property and brand identity."

Mahindra said it revealed EV SUVs - the BE 6e and XEV 9e - late last month. "Mahindra has applied for trade mark registration under class 12 (vehicles) for 'BE 6e' a part of its electric origin SUV portfolio. We hence don't see a conflict as Mahindra's mark is 'BE 6e,' not the standalone '6E.' It differs fundamentally from IndiGo's '6E,' which represents an airline, eliminating any risk of confusion..." The distinct styling further emphasises their uniqueness. We have taken on board the concerns that InterGlobe Aviation Limited have to infringement of their goodwill, which was not our intention. We are engaged in discussions with them to find an amicable solution." This is the second time IndiGo is locked in a legal battle with some other company using a name associated with it. In 2015, the airline had a trademark dispute with Tata Motors which then used to sell its sedan under the name IndiGo.

Swiggy likely to increase delivery charge on Instamart orders: Report

NEW DELHI. Food and grocery delivery platform Swiggy is considering increasing the delivery fees for its quick commerce arm, Instamart, reported moneycontrol.com. The move aims to improve profitability, according to Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Rahul Bothra, who discussed the plan with analysts after the company announced its Q2 FY25 results on December 3.



Currently, Swiggy subsidises delivery fees through its loyalty program, Swiggy One, and discounts for new users. While delivery is free for Swiggy One members, other customers pay a dynamic fee. Bothra indicated that the company plans to raise these charges

gradually but did not specify a timeline. The competitive quick commerce sector includes players like Zomato-owned Blinkit and Zepto. Unlike Swiggy, Blinkit does not offer free delivery for any orders, while Zepto waives fees for loyalty program members. Bothra also highlighted additional measures to boost margins,

including increasing platform fees for food delivery orders and monetising Instamart through advertisements.

Swiggy has already raised its platform fee fivefold, from Rs 2 to Rs 10 per order, in the past 18 months. The company intends to improve its take rates (commissions) for Instamart from the current 15% to 20-22%. Instamart recorded adjusted revenue of Rs 513 crore in Q2 FY25, more than double the Rs 240 crore earned in the same period last year. However, it still trails Blinkit, which reported revenue of Rs 1,156 crore during the quarter.

At the company level, Swiggy's revenue rose 30% year-on-year to Rs 3,601.5 crore for Q2 FY25, while its losses narrowed to Rs 625.5 crore from Rs 657 crore a year earlier.

NTPC Green Energy shares climb 44% post-listing. What's driving the rally

NEW DELHI. Shares of NTPC Green Energy, a subsidiary of NTPC Limited, have witnessed a commendable surge in prices since their listing.

The stock, which debuted on the stock exchanges on November 27, has climbed steadily and is now trading 44% higher than its IPO price of Rs 108, with a fresh all-time high of Rs 155.35 per share on December 4. NTPC Green Energy shares had hit the 10% upper circuit limit in the previous session. NTPC Green Energy shares were trading at Rs 147.45, up 3.76%, at the time the article was being written. Despite starting off modestly on its listing day, NTPC Green Energy shares have quickly gained momentum in subsequent trading sessions. Analysts attribute the rally to the company's strong fundamentals and its prominent position in India's renewable energy sector, which is poised for good growth.

The company launched a Rs 10,000 crore IPO last month, which was open for subscription between November 19 and November 22. The issue



received strong investor interest, being oversubscribed 2.55 times.

INDIA'S LEADING RENEWABLE ENERGY PSU

NTPC Green Energy is India's largest renewable energy public sector enterprise, excluding hydro projects, based on operating capacity and power generation as of September 30, 2024.

According to a CRISIL report, the company's diversified renewable energy portfolio includes solar and wind power assets spread across more than six states, helping mitigate risks related to location-specific variability in power generation. The company's operational capacity consists of 3,220 MW of solar projects and 100 MW of wind projects. In addition, it has a contracted and awarded capacity of 13,576 MW and a total portfolio, including pipeline projects, of 26,071 MW. With 17 offtakers across 41 solar projects and 11 wind projects, NTPC Green Energy has built a robust customer base, primarily from public sector undertakings (PSUs) and Indian corporates. NTPC Green Energy has a clear focus on expanding its utility-scale renewable energy projects. It has been actively working on developing large-scale projects, catering to the growing energy needs of public and private sector entities in India.

December tax deadlines: Your essential guide for ITR compliance

NEW DELHI. As the year comes to a close, December becomes a vital month for taxpayers to fulfil important financial and compliance duties. It is the time to claim deductions, make advance tax payments, and file returns, ensuring all tax responsibilities are wrapped up before the year ends.

Failing to meet these deadlines can lead to penalties, which makes early planning essential. Staying on top of the crucial deadlines in December 2024 is key to ensuring smooth compliance and taking full advantage of available tax benefits. By understanding the key dates, taxpayers can avoid last-minute stress and ensure they complete all obligations on time. Here's a look at the important income tax deadlines to keep in mind for the month.

DECEMBER 7, 2024

The last date to deposit tax deducted or collected for the month of November 2024. However, all taxes deducted or collected by a government office must

be credited to the Central Government on the same day if no Income-tax Challan is used for payment. DECEMBER 15, 2024

The deadline for submitting Form 24G by government offices for TDS/TCS



payments made without a challan for the month of November 2024.

The third instalment of advance tax for the assessment year 2025-26.

The due date to issue TDS Certificates for deductions made in October 2024 under sections 194S (for specified persons), 194-IA, 194-IB, and 194M. The deadline for filing Form 3BB by stock exchanges for modified client codes for the month of

December 2024. DECEMBER 30, 2024

December 2024. DECEMBER 30, 2024

Last date to furnish challan-cum-statements for tax deductions for the month of November 2024 under sections 194S (specified persons), 194-IA, 194-IB, and 194M.

The final date to file belated or revised income tax returns for AY 2024-25, provided assessments are not completed by December 31, 2024.

By adhering to these deadlines, taxpayers can avoid penalties, stay compliant, and wrap up their tax obligations efficiently before the year concludes.

Sebi cancels SME IPO of Trafiksol ITS Technologies, orders to refund money

The IPO which was open for subscription between September 10 and 12, 2024 oversubscribed 345.65 times. The issue was priced at the upper end of the price band (Rs 70 per share) and Rs 44.87 crore was raised through the issue.

NEW DELHI. Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has cancelled the SME IPO of Trafiksol ITS Technologies and asked the company to refund the money to the investors for alleged questionable dealings with a 'shell entity'. The IPO which was open for subscription between September 10 and 12, 2024 oversubscribed 345.65 times. The issue was priced at the upper end of the price band (Rs 70 per share) and Rs 44.87 crore was raised through the issue.

After the closure of the issue and allotment of shares, a complaint was received by

SEBI and BSE from the Small Investors' Welfare Association - SIREN which alleged that the objects of the issue by the company included purchase of software valued at Rs 17.70 crore from a vendor which had questionable financials and failed to file its annual financial statements with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The BSE then in consultation with the SEBI deferred the listing of the shares of the company. "Based on the findings, it is reasonable to conclude that the third-party vendor (TPV) in question is a 'shell entity'. The TPV's office was found locked during a site inspection, and its financial statements for FY22 to FY24, submitted in response to allegations, were obtained under questionable circumstances as it was signed by the auditor on same day it was submitted to the BSE by the MB (merchant banker)," Sebi said in its 16-page order. This was one day after BSE in consultation with Sebi put on hold the listing of the shares of the company and initiated an examination. "Further, the client list and credentials of its directors, presented in its profile, were fabricated. Apart from the above, the ex-director's sworn statement



that the company was sold for a nominal sum of Rs. 20,000 reinforces the conclusion that the TPV lacked the technical expertise and operational capacity to execute a complex project such as ICCC software," Sebi said. Further, the client list and credentials of its directors, presented in its profile, were fabricated. Apart from the above, the ex-director's sworn statement that the TPV lacked the technical expertise and operational capacity to execute a complex project such as ICCC software, Sebi order said. "The question of whether the quotation from the TPV was part of a scheme to divert IPO proceeds will remain moot due to the events triggered

by the complaint and subsequent regulatory intervention. This, however, does not take away the fact that the company relied on a sham entity and participated in a cover-up when the credentials of the TPV were being examined," Sebi said. I cannot also lose sight of the fact that the funds of the investors who have been allotted shares in the IPO have remained locked-in for close to three months now. Therefore, the issue cannot be put on hold till the other findings of the Investigation are adjudicated," Sebi. Wholtime Director Ashwani Bhatia said in the order. Balancing these considerations, the most prudent course of action is to direct the company to refund the money raised through the IPO, Sebi said.

The company may approach the market afresh after the ongoing proceedings initiated by SEBI are concluded and subject to any directions issued therein, it said. I cannot also lose sight of the fact that the funds of the investors who have been allotted shares in the IPO have remained locked-in for close to three months now. Therefore, the issue cannot be put on hold till the other findings of the Investigation are adjudicated.

"Respectfully Disagree": Congress MP Vs Narayana Murthy On Work-Life Balance

New Delhi. After Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy reignited debates on work-life balance, Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Wednesday responded and expressed his disagreement to the tech tycoon's statement supporting grinding, relentless work hours--an 'overwork culture'. Gaurav Gogoi countered Narayana Murthy's beliefs of work-life balance as an indulgent myth and highlighted the perspective where the traditional division of labor between men and women in the household is being challenged, in context to work-life balance. Mr Gogoi shared his disagreement with Narayan Murthy's view on work-life balance, who is known for his strong stance on the importance of work-life balance.

Gaurav Gogoi suggested that the concept of a "work-life balance" is not as straightforward or achievable for everyone, especially women. Taking to his official handle on X, Mr Gogoi posted, "I

also disagree with the view of Narayana Murthy on work-life balance. After all what is life but looking after your children, cooking for them, teaching them, taking care of your elderly parents, being there for your friends in their times of need, making sure that your house in order. The above is just as much a man's job as it is a women's."

Mr Gogoi describes life not only in terms of professional work but also as a combination of various personal responsibilities--raising children, caring for elderly parents, managing the household, and supporting friends. This paints a picture of life as a balancing act between multiple roles, all of which are demanding and require time and energy. Mr Gogoi points to an egalitarian view where both men and women share the burden of maintaining



the household and raising children. His post further read, "Traditionally working women don't even have the choice to cut away life from work. It is a luxury that traditionally men have and one that they have to forego in the modern world." Mr Gogoi suggests that in the modern world, men no longer have the same luxury of "cutting away life from work," implying that both men and women are now

required to manage work and life responsibilities more equally, and that the concept of work-life balance is a challenge for everyone, not just women. Mr Gogoi calls for a more equitable sharing of all roles within the family and workplace. His response comes after a user on X shared an open letter to Narayana Murthy, respectfully disagreeing with his opinion on work life balance.

"I respectfully disagree with you sir on work life balance. Employees are not slaves. Working longer hours doesn't mean better productivity. Several countries have switched to a 4 day work week and are doing better. Women don't have the luxury of working 70/80 hours a week either," shared the user on X with an attachment of the letter. Narayana Murthy at the CNBC Global Leadership Summit championed a 70-hour workweek as essential for India's economic rise.

BJP forms committees to strategise on Delhi assembly election campaign

With the upcoming election, the saffron party is leaving no stone unturned in its efforts to win.

NEW DELHI. Ahead of the Delhi assembly elections scheduled for February 2025, the Delhi BJP has set up 47 committees, comprising former and current leaders, sitting MPs, and former ministers, to shape the party's election campaign. The committees will focus on key areas, including manifesto preparation, outreach to women, youth, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Poorvanchalis, and beneficiaries of central government schemes. The BJP, which has not been in power in Delhi since 1998, faces a tough challenge after consecutive defeats to Congress in 1998, 2003, and 2008, and to AAP in 2015 and 2020. With the upcoming election, the saffron party is leaving no stone



turned in its efforts to win.

In mid-November, the BJP formed its Election Steering Committee, which includes prominent members like Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, Union minister Harshdeep Malhotra, BJP national general secretary Dushyant Gautam, MPs Manoj Tiwari, Arvinder Singh Lovely, Kailash Gahlot, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Vijender Gupta, Satish Upadhyay, Yogendra Chandolia, Kamaljeet Sehrawat, Bansuri Swaraj, and Praveen Khandelwal. Bajajant Panda, BJP's national vice president, has been appointed as the election in-charge, with Atul Garg, MP from Ghaziabad, serving as co-in-charge. The state unit has also formed a 12-member manifesto committee, headed by former south Delhi MP Ramesh Bidhuri, with members including Dr Harsh Vardhan, Arvinder Singh Lovely, Vijay Goel, Satish Upadhyay, Meenakshi Lekhi, and Praveesh Sahib Singh Verma. Additionally, the party has set up a Parivartan Yatra committee to manage its padyatra, which will commence soon. An 11-member Aarop Patra committee (state chargesheet committee) has been constituted to target the AAP-led Delhi government. The committee, led by Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Delhi assembly Vijender Gupta, includes former MP Ramesh Bidhuri, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, RP Singh, former Delhi mayor Aarti Mehra, LoP in MCD Raja Iqbal Singh, and Kapil Mishra, among others. A senior Delhi BJP leader said, "The BJP is committed to serving the people."

Three of a family stabbed to death in Delhi's Neb Sarai

NEW DELHI. Three members of the same family were stabbed to death at their residence in South Delhi's Neb Sarai area in the early hours of Wednesday. The deceased individuals were identified as Rajesh (55), Komal (47), and their daughter Kavita (23). According to officials, the police rushed to the spot after receiving the information on the incident around 5.30 a.m. Their son found the bodies lying in the house after he returned from a morning walk, preliminary enquiries revealed. The cops have cordoned off the entire area and the forensic teams are scanning the crime scene. Meanwhile, strongly reacting over the incident former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal once slammed



the BJP-ruled central government over the deteriorating law and order situation. "Three murders in the same house in Neb Sarai... This is extremely painful and frightening. Every day Delhiites wake up to such frightening news" Kejriwal posted on X.

"Homes are being destroyed, innocent lives are being lost. Those who are responsible are silently watching it happen. Will the Central government keep quiet and watch the law and order situation in Delhi collapse? Will his party still say that crime is not an issue in Delhi?", the AAP convener questioned. He also alleged that the criminals have been given a free hand in the city.

Security remains 'unsatisfactory' at Delhi hospitals: AIIMS RDA chief

NEW DELHI. Months after junior doctors across the country went on strike following the brutal rape and murder of a female colleague in Kolkata, security measures at Delhi's government hospitals remain inadequate. The tragic incident sparked nationwide outrage and calls for a central law to protect healthcare workers, alongside demands for better security, workplace conditions, and swift legal action against those who harm medical professionals.

In Delhi, the Resident Doctors Associations (RDAs) of seven government hospitals led the protests. However, despite several promises from authorities, doctors continue to express dissatisfaction with the progress made. "The improvement in security measures is far from satisfactory, even after four months," said Dr Rajat Sharma, president of the RDA at Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital. Recent incidents highlight the risks healthcare workers still face. At Safdarjung Hospital, an IPS officer verbally assaulted a resident doctor, while at GTB Hospital, a crowd barged into the duty room and threatened to kill a medical intern. "Just a few days ago, the administration fast-tracked a proposal to enhance security measures, but only after repeated reminders. This reflects their lack of seriousness in addressing workplace violence," Dr. Sharma added.

Dr Sarada Prasad Sahoo, president of the RDA at Lady Hardinge Medical College, echoed similar concerns. While there has been a slight increase in the number of security guards, key demands, such as the deployment of marshals or bouncers in high-risk areas, remain unmet, said Sahoo. "Merely increasing guards isn't enough. We have consistently asked for marshals, CCTV cameras, well-lit corridors, and female security staff for women doctors. Yet, the authorities' standard response is, 'the file is in process,'" the doctor added. Doctors continue to call for decisive action to ensure their protection, emphasizing that their ability to save lives depends on working in a safe and secure environment.

In an interview with Dr. Indra Shekhar Prasad, president of the RDA at the AIIMS Hospital, Ashish Srivastava discusses the most pressing issue and possible solutions. Excerpts.

Delhi government orders five-year CAG audit of women's university accounts

NEW DELHI. The Delhi Government has decided to conduct a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) audit of the accounts of the Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (IGDTUW) for five years, a statement issued by the chief minister's office said on Tuesday. Chief Minister Atishi has approved the audit to ensure financial accountability and transparency, the statement added.

Atishi said this decision will ensure transparency and accountability in the financial affairs of IGDTUW. "Through the audit, any irregularities or financial mismanagement will be identified and addressed," she added. The CM emphasised that improving the quality of education and ensuring efficient financial management are top priorities for the AAP government. "The CAG audit will guarantee that taxpayers' money is utilised



appropriately and effectively," she added. The chief minister also noted that the audit will ensure a thorough examination of all financial transactions and expenditures of the university. "This process will not only help curb financial mismanagement but also introduce greater transparency across the system. The CAG audit will promote administrative transparency," she said. IGDTUW is an independent government engineering college in the national capital with Delhi L-G

VK Saxena serving as its chancellor.

Last week, Saxena wrote to Atishi over Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports pending tabling in the Delhi Assembly, and called it unfortunate. The L-G said he had raised this issue with her predecessor, Arvind Kejriwal on several occasions and flagged the gross Constitutional "impropriety" of the government in this regard. He also reminded the Delhi CM that the office of CAG has sent several reminders to my office requesting urgent action in this regard.

Improving quality of education top priority: Atishi

The CM emphasised that improving the quality of education and ensuring efficient financial management are top priorities for the AAP government. "The CAG audit will guarantee that taxpayers' money is utilised appropriately and effectively," she added

Man shot dead following dispute in Mangolpuri, Kejriwal calls out cops

The probe revealed that Pankaj was gunned down in front of his nephew when the three assailants began firing indiscriminately towards the duo.

The nephew ran but Pankaj succumbed to his injuries.

NEW DELHI. A 19-year-old man was shot dead in the wee hours of Tuesday in the Mangolpuri area by three men who fired at least half a dozen bullets at him. The deceased, identified as Pankaj was a resident of X block in Mangolpuri and worked at a garment factory. DCP (Outer district) Sachin Sharma said they received information regarding a man being brought dead at a hospital following which a police team reached the hospital and enquired about the incident.

The probe revealed that Pankaj was gunned down in front of his nephew when the three assailants began firing indiscriminately towards the duo. The nephew ran but Pankaj succumbed to his injuries. Based on the nephew's statement, the police registered a case of murder against the accused. "The accused have been identified. Multiple teams are working to



nab the accused. Suspicious persons are being rounded up to know about the whereabouts of the accused," the DCP said.

Former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal criticised the Delhi Police for deteriorating law and order situation in the capital. "Last night, a man was shot dead in Mangolpuri. Day before yesterday three murders happened in Delhi. Delhiites must raise their

voice against crime. The important thing is the safety of yourself and your family," he wrote on X. On Tuesday, the AAP chief met the grieving family of Manish, a young man who was brutally murdered by two boys in Shalimar Bagh area. "The situation has spiraled out of control—people are afraid to step out of their homes after sunset," he said, vowing to stand with Delhiites and fight for their safety.

Kejriwal expressed serious concerns over the way the police is handling the case. "A major concern is that eyewitness Himanshu's official statement has not been taken and that the statement recorded in Himanshu's name is false. This clearly indicates that the police are trying to protect the culprits. It raises questions about whether the police are working under some external pressure or orders from higher authorities."

'No effective action': NGT pulls up officials for failing to restore ponds

The NGT noted that of the six ponds in dispute, five are under DDA's control and one is managed by DSIIIDC.

NEW DELHI. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has summoned key officials, including the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) Vice-Chairman, the District Magistrate of West Delhi, and Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Managing Director over their failure to restore ponds in the national capital. A bench led by Justice Sudhir Agarwal expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of progress, stating that "no effective action has been taken" and no evidence was



provided to demonstrate steps toward restoring the ponds to their original state. The bench, which also includes expert member Afroz Ahmad, emphasised that the DM, as Chairperson of the District Wetland Committee under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, is responsible for preventing damage, encroachment, or degradation of water bodies. The NGT noted that of the six ponds in dispute, five are under

DDA's control and one is managed by DSIIIDC. Despite assurances from DDA's counsel on October 25, that restoration efforts were underway and substantial progress would be achieved in a month, no compliance report has been submitted. The tribunal criticised the lack of detailed information, stating, "We find no option... but to direct personal appearance of V-C, DDA, District Magistrate, West Delhi, and Managing

Director, DSIIIDC before tribunal on the next date." The matter is scheduled for a hearing on December 13, with the NGT directing the authorities to present the current status and steps taken to restore the ponds. The case originated in May 2022 from a letter petition alleging the illegal filling of ponds and their conversion for other purposes, including road construction. The ponds in question include Shangushar, Guga, Johdi, Guhli, and the historic Shishuwala Talab. The NGT had ordered a joint committee of the Central Ground Water Authority, Delhi Pollution Control Committee, and District Commissioner, West Delhi, to report on the issue.

Encroachments persist

The NGT noted that of the six ponds in dispute, five are under DDA's control and one is managed by DSIIIDC. Despite earlier directives, the applicant claimed in a November 7 submission that encroachments persist, with BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd allegedly constructing a fenced.

NEWS BOX

'Bangladesh Govt Has Absolute Obligation To Protect Its Hindu Minority': US Congressman

Can influential US lawmaker on Tuesday said the interim Bangladeshi government has an absolute obligation to protect the minority Hindu community in the country after the fall of the democratically-elected Sheikh Hasina-led government earlier this year. Over the weekend, Hindus from Bangladesh organised a rally at the White House demanding release of Chinmaya Das and protection for Hindus of Bangladesh. Bangladesh's interim government has an absolute obligation to protect its Hindu minority and meaningfully address the protests of thousands of minority Hindus in outcry over the recent wave of attacks and harassment," Congressman Brad Sherman said in a statement. Bangladesh's interim government has an absolute obligation to protect its Hindu minority and meaningfully address the protests of thousands of minority Hindus in outcry over the recent wave of attacks and harassment," Congressman Brad Sherman said in a statement. Based on the feedback we are getting from #Bangladesh, Hindu monk and civil rights defender Chinmoy Krishna Brahmachari, who has been incarcerated by the interim government, faces a serious threat to his life, in custody," he said.

US Embassy In South Korea Issues Emergency Alert To Its Citizens After Lifting Of Martial Law

World. Following the lifting of martial law in South Korea, the United States Embassy in the country issued an emergency alert to its citizens on Wednesday, warning that the situation is "fluid" and advising them to take safety precautions.

The embassy posted the emergency information on its website a day after South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law. It was, however, lifted hours later after the National Assembly voted to reject it. "Following President Yoon's announcement to lift the martial law declaration, the situation remains fluid," the embassy said. US citizens should anticipate potential disruptions. When in public, you should pay attention to your surroundings and exercise routine safety precautions," as per the posting. The embassy also advised US citizens to avoid areas of demonstration and to exercise caution near "large crowds, gatherings, protests, or rallies." Peaceful demonstrations can turn confrontational and escalate into violence, it further stated. The embassy also noted that it will cancel routine consular appointments for US citizens and visa applicants on Wednesday.

Gladiator for a night at the Colosseum Some Romans are up in arms

Rome. It has probably been centuries since Romans have been so feverish about happenings at the Colosseum, and it is not because of the recent release of the Ridley Scott "Gladiator" sequel. A plan by the Colosseum and Airbnb to give a select few people the chance to unleash their "inner gladiator" at the most visited site in Italy has caused an uproar among many Romans who say it demeans a treasured cultural icon.

Over two nights in May, a total of up to 32 people will learn the art of gladiator fighting at the ancient arena, taught by Roman history buffs who specialise in historical re-enactments. The project is a partnership between the Colosseum Archaeological Park and Airbnb, the accommodations booking platform, which donated \$1.5 million to spruce up a permanent exhibit inside the arena. The aim, Airbnb said, "was to support the Colosseum's ongoing conservation work to find new ways to inspire and educate visitors on the historical significance of this bygone era." But some Romans and cultural leaders have given the initiative an emphatic thumbs down. (Footnote: While the emperor made such a gesture to condemn a fighter in the original "Gladiator" movie, scholars are uncertain about the direction thumbs actually pointed in ancient arenas for such purposes.) "We're against transforming the Colosseum into a theme park," said Massimiliano Smeriglio, a member of Rome's City Council. "We're all in favour if a company decides to sponsor a monument or a restoration," he said, "but it shouldn't be necessary to get anything in exchange." Federico Mollicone, a lawmaker with the Brothers of Italy party of PM Giorgia Meloni, dismissed the criticism as the views of a "radical chic" element in Rome that treated the arena "as something sacred". The Colosseum, he pointed out, had been built for rough-and-tumble entertainment. The center-right govt this year passed a law that supports the promotion of historical reenactments.

Critics also raised questions about Airbnb's involvement at a time when many European cities are struggling to balance the needs of locals with a booming postpandemic tourist industry facilitated by accommodation platforms. This summer, the backlash against mass tourism saw protests in many cities, including Barcelona, Spain, and Athens, Greece. While Romans are frequently incensed by many issues in their city - everything from uncollected garbage to potholes - they can be particularly sensitive about the Colosseum. A kerfuffle erupted last year after Elon Musk challenged Mark Zuckerberg on social media to "a cage match", and it was rumored that the Colosseum could be the venue.

South Korea lifts president's martial law decree after lawmakers reject military rule

SEOUL. The president of South Korea early Wednesday lifted the martial law he imposed on the country hours earlier, bending to political pressure after a tense night in which troops surrounded parliament and lawmakers voted to reject military rule. President Yoon Suk Yeol, who appeared likely to be impeached over his actions, imposed martial law late Tuesday out of frustration with the opposition, vowing to eliminate "anti-state" forces as he struggles against opponents who control parliament and that he accuses of sympathizing with communist North Korea. Police and military personnel were seen leaving the grounds of parliament following the bipartisan vote to overrule the president, and the declaration was formally lifted around 4:30 a.m. during a Cabinet meeting. Parliament acted swiftly after martial law was imposed, with National Assembly Speaker Woo Won Shik declaring that the law was "invalid" and that lawmakers would "protect democracy with the people." In all, martial law was in effect for about six hours. The president's surprising move harkened back to an era of authoritarian leaders that the country has not seen since the 1980s, and it was

immediately denounced by the opposition and the leader of Yoon's own conservative party. Lee Jae-myung, leader of the liberal Democratic Party, which holds the majority in the 300-seat parliament, said the party's lawmakers would remain in the Assembly's main hall until Yoon formally lifted his order. Woo applauded how troops quickly left the Assembly after the vote. "Even with our unfortunate memories of military coups, our citizens have surely observed the events of today and saw the maturity of our military," Woo said.

While announcing his plan to lift martial law, Yoon continued to criticize parliament's attempts to impeach key government officials and senior prosecutors. He said lawmakers had engaged in "unscrupulous acts of legislative and budgetary manipulation that are paralyzing the functions of the state." Jo Seung-lae, a Democratic lawmaker, claimed that security camera footage following Yoon's declaration showed that troops moved in a way that suggested they were trying to arrest Lee, Woo and even Han Dong-hoon, the leader of Yoon's People Power Party. Officials from Yoon's office and the Defense Ministry did not respond to



requests for comment early Wednesday. Seemingly hundreds of protesters gathered in front of the Assembly, waving banners and calling for Yoon's impeachment. Some protesters scuffled with troops ahead of the lawmakers' vote, but there were no immediate reports of injuries or major property damage. At least one window was broken as troops attempted to enter the Assembly building. One woman tried unsuccessfully to pull a rifle away from one of the soldiers, while shouting "Aren't you embarrassed?" Under South Korea's constitution, the president can declare martial law during "wartime, war-like situations or other comparable national

emergency states" that require the use of military force to maintain peace and order. It was questionable whether South Korea is currently in such a state.

When martial law is declared, "special measures" can be employed to restrict freedom of press, freedom of assembly and other rights, as well as the power of courts. The constitution also states that the president must oblige when the National Assembly demands the lifting of martial law with a majority vote. Following Yoon's announcement of martial law, South Korea's military proclaimed that parliament and other political gatherings that could cause "social confusion" would be suspended, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said. The military said anyone who violated the decree could be arrested without a warrant. In Washington, the White House said the U.S. was "seriously concerned" by the events in Seoul. A spokesperson for the National Security Council said President Joe Biden's administration was not notified in advance of the martial law announcement and was in contact with the South Korean government.

Hamas, Fatah near agreement on who will oversee postwar Gaza

CAIRO. Palestinian officials say Fatah and Hamas are closing in on an agreement to appoint a committee of politically independent technocrats to administer the Gaza Strip after the war. It would effectively end Hamas' rule and could help advance ceasefire talks with Israel. The rival factions have made several failed attempts to reconcile since Hamas seized power in Gaza in 2007. Israel has meanwhile ruled out any postwar role in Gaza for either Hamas or Fatah, which dominates the Western-backed Palestinian Authority. A Palestinian Authority official on Tuesday confirmed that a preliminary agreement had been reached following weeks of negotiations in Cairo. The official said the committee would have 12-15 members, most of them from Gaza. It would report to the Palestinian Authority, which is headquartered in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, and work with local and international parties to facilitate humanitarian assistance and reconstruction. A Hamas official said that Hamas and Fatah had agreed on the general terms but were still negotiating

over some details and the individuals who would serve on the committee. The official said an agreement would be announced after a meeting of all Palestinian factions in Cairo, without providing a timeline. Both officials



spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief media on the talks. There was no immediate comment from Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is dismantled and scores of hostages are returned. He says Israel will maintain open-ended security control over Gaza, with civilian affairs

administered by local Palestinians unaffiliated with the Palestinian Authority or Hamas.

No Palestinians have publicly volunteered for such a role, and Hamas has threatened anyone who cooperates with the Israeli military. The United States has called for a revitalized Palestinian Authority to govern both the West Bank and Gaza ahead of eventual statehood. The Israeli government, which is opposed to Palestinian statehood, is reportedly discussing a postwar plan with the United Arab Emirates, which normalized relations with Israel in 2020 and backs a rival Fatah faction. He Hamas official said the emerging Palestinian agreement would fulfill one of Israel's war goals by ending Hamas' rule in Gaza. It's unclear if Israeli officials would see it that way. The Palestinian Authority, which administers parts of the occupied West Bank, recognizes Israel and cooperates with it on security matters, a policy that is deeply unpopular among Palestinians, many of whom view it as a subcontractor of the occupation.

Trump's pick Chad Chronister withdraws from DEA nomination, cites commitment to local duties

World. Sheriff Chad Chronister of Hillsborough, US President-elect Donald Trump's pick for the role of Administrator of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), has withdrawn his candidacy, citing his ongoing commitment to local initiatives. "To have been nominated by President-Elect @realDonaldTrump to serve as Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration is the honour of a lifetime," Chronister wrote in an X post on Wednesday.

"Over the past several days, as the gravity of this very important responsibility set in, I've concluded that I must respectfully withdraw from consideration. There is more work to be done for the citizens of Hillsborough County and a lot of initiatives I am committed to fulfilling," he

added. Chronister expressed gratitude for the nomination and vowed to continue serving as sheriff. However, the announcement has sparked mixed reactions. District 1 Lake County Commissioner Anthony Sabatini called the withdrawal a "huge win for liberty," while Republican Congressman Thomas Massie of Kentucky criticised Chronister's past actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. "This sheriff ordered the arrest of a pastor for holding services during the COVID panic. He was tapped by Trump to head the DEA. Glad to see him withdraw from consideration. Next time politicians lose their ever-lovin' minds, he can redeem himself by following the Constitution," Massie wrote on X. Chronister faced backlash in 2020 for arresting Dr. Ronald Howard-

Browne, pastor of The River at Tampa Bay Church, for holding in-person services in violation of public health orders. At the time, Chronister defended the decision. "Announcing the arrest of Dr. Ronald Howard-Browne... who intentionally and repeatedly disregarded state and local public health orders, which put his congregation and our community in danger," he said. The charges were later dropped. Some conservatives, including commentator Liz Wheeler, criticised Chronister's nomination. "Chad Chronister is a COVID tyrant who arrested a Christian pastor... Chronister abused his power; he's unfit to lead the DEA," Wheeler wrote on X. Senator Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma defended Chronister, "What disqualifies somebody.

Gazans walk miles for bread and flour amid war shortages

World Faced with major food shortages after nearly 14 months of war, Palestinians describe long days hunting for flour and bread in the conflict-ravaged Gaza Strip. Every morning crowds form outside the few bakeries open in the Palestinian territory, as people desperately try to get a bag of bread at distribution points. Since the outbreak of war in Gaza last year, charities and international aid organisations have repeatedly warned of crisis levels of hunger for nearly two million people. A United Nations-backed assessment last month warned of famine looming in the northern Gaza Strip amid a near-halt in food aid after Israel launched an offensive in the area. Essential goods like water, fresh produce and medicines are also scarce.

Gazans across the territory have told AFP in recent months how they wake up at the crack of dawn just to ensure they can get some flour or bread, with current availability reaching an all-time low.

In the southern city of Khan Yunis, AFP photographers saw dozens of people at a distribution point, bodies pressed against each other. Over each other's heads, everyone tries to reach out as far as possible to grab the round bread.

A small child, her face covered in tears, squeezes a coin between her fingers as she makes her way through the crowd of adults.

Nothing in markets "I walked about eight kilometres (five miles) to get bread," Hatem Kullab, a displaced Palestinian living in a neighbourhood of makeshift tents, told AFP. It was in the middle of one of these crowds that two women and a child were trampled to death in a stampede at a bakery in the central Gaza city of Deir el-Balah Friday. "To get a loaf of bread you need a whole day of eight to 10 hours," said the brother of one of the women killed, describing his sister's ordeal as she tried to get bread to feed 10 family members. "The suffering that my sister went through is suffered by all the Palestinian people," Jameel Fayyad told AFP, criticising what he described as poor management of the bakeries. Fayyad's anger was largely directed at Israel, but he also blamed the World Food Programme (WFP) and "traders who want to make money on the backs of people". Palestinians from across the Gaza Strip told AFP journalists that it is extremely difficult to find the 50-kilogram (110 pounds) bags of flour that would last



them several weeks before the war. "There is no flour, no food, no vegetables in the markets," Nasser Al-Shawa, 56, said, who, like most residents, was forced to leave his home because of the bombings and lives with his children and grandchildren in central Gaza. Shawa, who now lives in a friend's house in Deir el-Balah, says a 50-kilogram bag costs between 500 and 700 shekels (\$137 and \$192). Before the war, it cost around 100 shekels. Inside Gaza where more than half of the buildings have been destroyed, the production is at an almost complete standstill. Flour mills, warehouses storing flour and industrial bakeries are unable to function because they have been so heavily damaged by

strikes. Humanitarian aid is trickling in but aid groups have repeatedly slammed the many constraints imposed on them by Israel, which the country denies. In the latest blow, the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) announced Sunday it was halting aid deliveries to Gaza via a key crossing point with Israel. UNRWA said delivery had become impossible, partly due to looting by gangs.

For Layla Hamad, who lives in a tent with her husband and seven children in southern Gaza's Al-Mawasi, UNRWA's decision was "like a bullet to the head". She said her family had regularly received "a small quantity" of flour from UNRWA. Every day, I think we will not survive, either because we will be killed by Israeli bombing or by hunger," she said. "There is no third option." The majority of private companies that Israel had in the past allowed to bring in food to Gaza say they are no longer able to do so. The war in Gaza broke out after Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,208 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official data.

NEWS BOX

Ben Stokes lashes out at ICC after England's WTC points docked

New Delhi. England captain Ben Stokes lashed out at the ICC after the team faced deductions in the World Test Championship points. The sanctions were put against New Zealand and England during the 1st Test of the series in Christchurch. Stokes took to his Instagram and shared a post over the same and captioned, "Good on you ICC. Finished the game with 10 hours of play still left." Stokes was unhappy with the deduction in points and highlighted that the match ended well within time.

Both New Zealand and England were fined 15% of their match fee and three points were docked in the World Test Championship standing. These penalties come in at a very critical juncture of the WTC 23-25 cycle as the teams are fighting it out to finish in top two.

England's commanding eight-wicket win at Hagley Oval may have been a showcase of dominance, but it does little to alter their fate in the World Test Championship (WTC), as they are already out of contention for the final. However, the victory dealt a



significant blow to New Zealand's campaign. Ben Stokes' Insta story points deduction has pushed the inaugural WTC champions down from joint fourth to fifth place in the standings, leaving them with a reduced points percentage of 47.92%. Even if New Zealand secures wins in both of their remaining Tests against England, their maximum possible points percentage rises to just 55.36%. This leaves the Black Caps in a precarious position, needing more than just back-to-back victories. They must rely on favorable outcomes in other matches to keep their slim hopes of reaching the final alive, making their path to qualification a daunting one. The penalties arose as both sides were found to be three overs short of the target after accounting for time allowances. Under competition rules, teams are penalized one championship point for each over they fall short. Captains Tom Latham (New Zealand) and Ben Stokes (England) admitted to the offense and accepted the sanctions, negating the need for a formal hearing. The charges were brought by on-field umpires Ahsan Raza and Rod Tucker, with support from third umpire Adrian Holdstock and fourth official Kim Cotton.

6mm grass, rain on Day 1: Adelaide pitch curator talks conditions for 2nd Test

Adelaide. Adelaide Oval's pitch curator Damian Hough has confirmed that the wicket will have an even covering of grass - 6mm to be exact in the 2nd Test match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Speaking to the press on Wednesday, 4 December, Hough said that the conditions will help the seamers. Asked if the conditions will be overwhelmingly favourable for fast bowlers in Adelaide, Hough said that him and his team were trying to make a balanced wicket where batters, pacers and spinners can impact the Test match. However, the curator added that under certain parameters such as under the lights or overcast conditions, the seamers will get a lot of help from the wicket. Thundershowers are expected on



Day 1 of the Adelaide Test match, with 88 per cent chances of rain predicted on December 6. Hough said that in those days, the ball will swing and seam but it will not be because of the pitch, but due to the conditions on the venue. "History suggests that it is hard to bat under lights in Adelaide. The pitch will have 6mm of grass. We are trying to produce a pitch that would be a good contest. The pitch did not play a part in the Test match finishing in 3 days last time India were here. I thought that it was really good bowling from Australia. As long as there is something in it for all aspects of the game, I am happy, I just want a good contest," Adelaide Oval curator Damian Hough told the press on Wednesday, 4 December. "The ball hooping around has got nothing to do with the pitch. Under right conditions, right weather, the ball will move," he further added. The last time India played in Adelaide, they were bowled out for 36 - their lowest ever Test total in Test cricket. The team go into the Test match this time around with more confidence. India won the first Test match of the series by 295 runs - their biggest win in Australia by the margin of runs.

The team will try to replicate their success from Perth as they hunt for a spot in the final of the World Test Championship.

Probable top-eight sweat it out ahead of day-night challenge

While nothing is certain as of now, it could well be the top eight of India's XI for the second Test against Australia that begins Friday.

New Delhi. With thousands of fans getting a close-in view, India captain Rohit Sharma had two extensive net sessions ahead of the pink-ball Test in Adelaide on Tuesday. Sharma, who missed the first Test, having hinted at batting in the middle-order to allow Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul remain at the top, did show a lot of resolve while facing the Pink Kookaburra. During the session, Indian team had four nets at the practice arena.

In one such net, Jaiswal and Rahul took turns



to bat while Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli were in the second net. It was the third net where Rohit was clubbed with the inimitable Rishabh Pant while the final net was occupied by Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington Sundar. While nothing is certain

as of now, it could well be the top eight of India's XI for the second Test against Australia that begins Friday.

Even as India trained for more than four hours in their attempt to get ready for the day-night challenge, the highlight of the day was fans

getting a close-in view of their heroes in the nets. Just next to the enclosed nets was a viewing area where fans, thousands of them stood in line, to get a glimpse of their sporting stars. As it did in 2018-19, a clipping of Virat Kohli batting with the sound of his bat did the rounds on social media. Meanwhile, Rohit faced a lot of side-arm throwdowns from Nuwan Senewiratne along with usual stuff from the right-arm specialist Raghavendra and Dayanand Garani. The skipper made a conscious effort to leave deliveries on length but whenever anything short was dug in, he would pull effortlessly.

Bengal fast bowling duo of Akash Deep and Mukesh Kumar (reserve pacer) looked impressive during the session. While Mukesh got his deliveries to move in the air creating some sort of a challenge for Virat Kohli, Akash did ask probing questions to Gill, who looked comfortable.

While there are a few questions left to be answered on India's combination for the second game, some of them might get clear when a member of the team/support staff address the media on Wednesday.

Umesh Yadav reacts to Jayden Seales breaking his record of most economical spell

New Delhi India's veteran speedster Umesh Yadav reacted to West Indies fast bowler Jayden Seales, breaking his record of the most economical spell in Test history. Umesh congratulated Seales for his achievement and was elated to witness Test cricket thrive. The West Indies pacer delivered an extraordinary bowling performance in the 2nd Test vs Bangladesh at Kingstown. He bowled the most economical spell in the history of Test cricket by a speedster. Seales bowled 15.5 overs, including 10 maidens, conceding just five runs while claiming four crucial wickets. He economy rate was 0.30, which is the second best in Test history. "Congrats to Jayden Seales on an amazing performance - 4 wickets with an economy of 0.31! You've broken my record, and I couldn't be happier to see Test cricket thriving with such talent. The purest form of the game tests skill, patience, and character, and you've shown it all," Umesh tweeted. Earlier, the record was



held by the Indian pacer whose economy rate clocked 0.42 vs South Africa in 2015 Test match. Until Seales' spell, Umesh Yadav's 0.42 (21-16-9-3) was the best - both among pacers and among any bowler since that Nadkarni spell. Apart from Umesh, the only other 21st-century entry in the top ten is Nathan Lyon's 0.45, set across his 22-17-10-0. Umesh Yadav's tweet Seales scripted his name into the record books by delivering the

most economical spell since 1977.

Operating at an incredible economy rate of 0.31, the right-arm pacer did not concede a single boundary. Only six bowlers in Test history (with at least 60 deliveries bowled) have managed a better economy rate than Seales. His wickets included key dismissals of Litton Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taskin Ahmed, and Nahid Rana.

Bangladesh script history Seales economical spell helped West Indies bundle Bangladesh out for

164 runs in 1st innings. However, this did not prove to be enough. Bangladesh secured a historic victory in the Caribbean, defeating the West Indies by 101 runs at Sabina Park to draw the Test series. This marked their first Test win in the West Indies in 15 years. Set a challenging target of 287, the West Indies fell short, all out for 185 in less than two sessions.

We don't talk anymore: Harbhajan Singh's shocking remark on equation with Dhoni

New Delhi Former India spinner Harbhajan Singh said him and MS Dhoni do not talk to each other. Speaking to News18, Harbhajan has revealed that while he does not have a problem with MS Dhoni, him and the former India captain are not friends anymore.

Harbhajan and MS Dhoni were integral parts of the Indian team that won the 2007 T20 World Cup and the 2011 ODI World Cup. While Dhoni captain the team in bot editions and was the team's brains, Harbhajan shined with 7 and 9 wickets in respective tournaments. The spinner revealed that he and MS Dhoni did not speak outside the field during their years at the Chennai Super Kings as well. Harbhajan played for the Chennai-based franchise between 2018-2020. He further added that he only rings those people who pick up his calls. "No, I don't speak to Dhoni. When I was playing at CSK, that's when we spoke, but otherwise,



we haven't spoken. It's been 10 years and more. I have no reason; perhaps he does. I don't know what the reasons are. When we were playing in the IPL at CSK, that's when we used to talk, and that, too, was restricted to the ground. After that, he did not come to my room, nor did I go to his," Harbhajan Singh told News18. "I don't have anything against him. If he has something to say, he can tell me. But if he did, he would have told me by now. I never tried to call him because I have a lot of passion. I only ring up those

Former India spinner Harbhajan Singh has said that he does not talk to MS Dhoni. In a shocking claim, Harbhajan has said that friendship is a two-way street, and he only rings up people who pick up his calls.

who pick up my calls. I don't have the time otherwise. I stay in touch with the ones I am friends with. A relationship is always about give and take. If I respect you, I hope you will respect me back. Or you respond to me. But if I call you once or twice but don't get a response, I will probably only meet you as much as I am needed to," the spinner added. The last time Harbhajan and Dhoni represented India together was in 2015 - in an ODI against South Africa. After the 2015 World Cup, Harbhajan and Yuvraj Singh were sidelined from Indian team. While Harbhajan did not play after 2015, he announced his retirement from all forms of cricket in 2021.



and displace Dhruv Jurel from the playing XI. KL Rahul has batted in a total of 5 positions for India in Test cricket. Apart from the 2 opening slots, Rahul has batted at No.3, No.4, and No.6 as well. "I just want to be in the playing XI, go out there and bat and play for the team. I just go there and try and see what I need to do to get runs in a particular situation. Luckily I have batted in different positions. Early on, when I was asked to bat at different positions, it was a bit of a challenge mentally. How to play those first 20-25 balls? how early can I attack? Those things were a problem earlier, but it has gotten easy with the experience of playing in different formats," KL Rahul said. The right-hander batted brilliantly in the second innings of the Perth Test match alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal, where they notched up a partnership of 200+ runs, the first by any Indian opening pair. Rahul said that he was told by the Indian team management that he might open in the Perth Test match quite early.

WI vs BAN: Taijul stars as Bangladesh draw series with 101-run win in 2nd Test

Bangladesh secured a historic victory in the Caribbean, defeating the West Indies by 101 runs at Sabina Park to draw the Test series. This marked their first Test win in the West Indies in 15 years.

New Delhi. Bangladesh secured a historic victory in the Caribbean, defeating the West Indies by 101 runs at Sabina Park to draw the Test series. This marked their first Test win in the West Indies in 15 years. Set a challenging target of 287, the West Indies fell short, all out for 185 in less than two sessions. Bangladesh had lost their previous seven Tests in the Caribbean, including the first match of this series in Antigua, but their performance in

this match brought them level in the short series.

Taijul Islam was the star performer for Bangladesh, taking 5-50 in the West Indies' second innings. It was his best overseas bowling performance in 2 1/2 years and his best figures in the West Indies since his Test debut in 2014. With the pitch offering grip and occasional low bounce, Taijul's spin caused the West Indies' collapse, with the last six wickets falling for just 42 runs. Taijul Islam was the star performer for Bangladesh, taking 5-50 in the West Indies' second innings. It was his best overseas bowling performance in 2 1/2 years and his best figures in the West Indies since his Test debut in 2014. With the pitch offering grip and occasional low bounce, Taijul's spin caused the West Indies' collapse, with the last six wickets falling for just 42 runs. In Bangladesh's second innings, Jaker Ali played a crucial role, scoring a career-best



91. His innings included five sixes and eight boundaries, and he was the last man out just before lunch, giving West Indies a challenging target. Jaker's aggressive batting ensured Bangladesh's total was competitive, despite a lower-order collapse.

West Indies' Struggle in the Chase West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite led a positive start to the chase but could not form a lasting partnership. He was dismissed for 43, and the team struggled to build

momentum. Mikyle Louis and Keacy Carty fell to Taijul and Taskin Ahmed, and Brathwaite's departure further hindered the chase. Kaveem Hodge, who scored a half-century, tried to keep the West Indies in the game, but once he fell for 55, the rest of the team quickly followed. Taskin Ahmed, Hasan Mahmud, and Nahid Rana joined Taijul in dismantling the West Indies' lower order. Taijul's brilliant spell earned him his 15th career five-wicket haul, trapping Joshua Da Silva to seal the victory for Bangladesh. The West Indies' chase began with promise, but they failed to maintain consistency. Brathwaite's 43 and Hodge's 55 were the highlights, but they were unable to sustain the required partnerships. Bangladesh's bowlers, particularly Taijul, exploited the conditions expertly, and the West Indies were bowled out for 185, falling 101 runs short.



Tamannaah Bhatia

Discusses Beauty Standards; Recalls Fan's Reaction Post Kaavaalaa: 'You Were So Big And Fat...'



Actress Tamannaah Bhatia, who was recently seen in Neeraj Pandey's heist thriller *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar*, has been busy promoting her film. The actress recently opened up about unrealistic beauty standards for women, and how she used to earlier put a lot of pressure on herself to look a certain way. She also recalled that post her song *Kaavaalaa* (Jailer song), a lady came up to her at a party and thanked her for making curvy women feel accepted. Speaking with Instant Bollywood, Tamannaah Bhatia said, "I grew up myself on the idea of unrealistic beauty standards for women. So I had that kind of a childhood and upbringing where I felt being skinny was being fit. Growing up while being a part of the movies, I put a lot of pressure on myself to look a certain way. There came a time when I figured it only served a certain utility, but it didn't actually make me feel beautiful. Times that I actually started to feel good about myself had rarely anything to do with how thin I was. I somewhere feel like maybe *Aaj Ki Raat* helped me accept my body."

She then recalled the incident when a fan walked up to her and thanked her for representing curvy women. "When *Kawala* came out, one lady walk up to me at a party and said, 'Thank you! Because of you, us curvy women feel accepted. You were so big and fat and yet you were enjoying.' For the first time I registered that according to this lady, I was fat. I didn't completely understand that till I didn't hear it from a person. I thought it was normal. I thought that was beautiful. That was my understanding. But I understand that today everyone has a phone, everyone has a camera, everyone is posting pictures on Instagram. So, everyone has this pressure. Early on, I was an actor it was a part of my job. I had to look at my body. But today every young girl is doing that," said the actress. She said that now that she is in a position of power, and has agency, she wants to emphasize that beauty has nothing to do with how thin or how fair one is. She then recalled a time when she was dressed to the nines, yet she hated herself because she was uncomfortable and couldn't breathe. It didn't make her feel beautiful. "But I felt beautiful sometimes when I was naturally dressed, sometimes without my makeup or hair done. So beauty has literally nothing to do with all those standards," said Tamannaah.

Paparazzo Holds Sherlyn Chopra's Hand As She Struggles To Walk In High Heels



Sherlyn Chopra and her paparazzi appearance – a love affair that needs no introduction. Often stealing the limelight with her candid conversations with the shutterbugs and head-turning looks, the model and actress dishes out fashion goals with her casual outings. This time around, she decided to take it a notch higher, slipping into a saree as paps captured her in a video. The clip has now surfaced on social media as it shows Sherlyn struggling while trying to walk in high heels. In a kind gesture, one of the paps stationed there extended his helping hand but the struggle was real. The clip opens with a photographer holding Sherlyn Chopra's hands as she tries to step out of a building, wearing a bright yellow saree and high heels. Struggling to walk through the corridor assuming that she may fall, Sherlyn is visibly scared in the clip. Despite the help, she finds it difficult to take a step forward and stops to drink water instead. As the video progresses, another man joins in, holding her another hand but the attempts fail miserably. At the end of the clip, she is seen posing from inside the building and also showcases her beige high heels.

Days before her candid appearance, Sherlyn Chopra sat down for an interview with *Bollywood Bubble*, revealing the illness she has been battling since 2021. The actress shared that she has an autoimmune disorder called Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) which led to her kidney failure in 2021. Her doctor advised her to keep this health disorder under control through medication, as she revealed during the discussion. Sherlyn said, "I take it three times a day, morning, afternoon and evening. They also advised that I should never contemplate getting pregnant because it could be life-threatening for both the baby and the mother".

Despite the illness, Sherlyn Chopra holds a strong desire to be a mother as she added, "I think I was born to be a mother because whenever I think about children, I feel an indescribable happiness. Even before they arrive, I'm so happy. Just imagine how much joy I'll feel after they're here." Sherlyn Chopra made headlines in 2012 as she became the first Indian woman to pose for *Playboy* magazine. Later, she began her career in Bollywood with films like *Time Pass* (2005), *Dosti: Friends Forever* (2005) and *Raqeeb* (2007). She also entered the *Bigg Boss* Season 3 in 2009.

Taapsee Pannu Shares How Marketing Lesson By Shah Rukh Khan Changed Her Mindset: 'Billboards Were Used...'



Taapsee Pannu is one of the most versatile actresses in the industry. She has worked with many established actors and has also given hits at the box office. Recently, she shared a valuable marketing lesson she learned from Shah Rukh Khan and it has also changed her mindset. In a conversation with *Connect Cine*, Taapsee Pannu revealed how Shah Rukh Khan's perspective towards marketing helped her rethink. The *Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba* actress revealed that Shah Rukh Khan likes influencers to advertise and think them as advertising tool akin to hoardings or banners which used to promote films in earlier decades. Taapsee shared what King actor said, "Think about it—10 or 20 years ago, billboards were used to publicize films. Now, these individuals are the new marketing tools. Don't see them as people with responsibility; see them as advertising spaces available for sale."

"It's all about perspective. You see it one way; I see it another. Ultimately, it's up to you which side you choose," she said. Taapsee Pannu and Shah Rukh Khan worked together in *Dunki*. The film garnered immense love from fans and critics alike, with its box office success speaking volumes. The movie also marked the first collaboration between Shah Rukh Khan and Taapsee Pannu. Recently, in an interview, Taapsee reflected on her experience working with the superstar. She lauded his vast knowledge, sharp wit, and undeniable charisma, noting how these qualities make him truly stand out among his peers. Taapsee Pannu has carved a niche for herself in the film industry with acclaimed performances in movies like *Pink*, *Thappad*, and *Haseen Dillruba*. She was last seen in *Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba*, alongside *Vikrant Massey* and *Sunny Kaushal*. Directed by *Jayprad Desai*, the sequel premiered on Netflix on August 9. Taapsee's next project, *Gandhari*, is already generating buzz. Netflix recently unveiled an introductory teaser for the film, which appears to focus on a mother who takes extreme measures to protect her children when they are in danger.

Pushpa 2 The Rule:

Sreeleela

Sets The Stage Ablaze With Her Performance On Kissik At Pre-Release Event

Pushpa 2: The Rule, starring Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna and Fahadh Faasil is among the most highly anticipated upcoming films. With just two days to go for the film's release, the excitement among fans is sky-high. Last night, the pre-release event of *Pushpa 2* was held in Hyderabad, and visuals from the grand event have gone viral on social media. One such video shows Sreeleela setting the stage on fire with her performance on the film's song *Kissik*. Dancing queen Sreeleela, who has a guest appearance in the *Pushpa 2* song *Kissik*, was seen grooving to the song during the pre-release event. She left her fans mesmerized with her sizzling dance moves. Sheaced the hook step of the *Kissik* song, while fans cheered for her. She was also seen waving at her fans! Sreeleela looked gorgeous in a white, pink and green striped saree, and left her hair open. Check out the video below!



The foot-tapping number *Kissik* from *Pushpa 2: The Rule* was unveiled by the makers in November. Composed by Devi Sri Prasad, this dance anthem has been sung by Lothika and Sublahshini. Meanwhile, the promotion of *Pushpa 2: The Rule* has been taking place in full swing. Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna and other team members of *Pushpa 2* are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that the film is a huge success. The trailer launch of *Pushpa 2* was held in Patna, followed by pre-release events in Chennai, Kochi and Mumbai.

Meanwhile, at the event in Hyderabad, *Pushpa 2* director Sukumar lauded Allu Arjun for his dedication and hardwork, and it left the actor in tears. The filmmaker said, "Pushpa-1 and Pushpa-2 happened because of the love I have for Bunny. Our bond is like an exchange of energy. For even the smallest expression, Bunny puts in incredible effort—whether it's moving an eyelid or delivering a perfect voice modulation. That level of commitment inspires any filmmaker." The grand event was also attended by Rashmika Mandanna and director SS Rajamouli. The film is set to release in theatres on December 5.

