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'Government stands with the kanwariyas': CM Yogi assures security to pilgrims, urges discipline

Agencies, Lucknow : Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday urged kanwariyas to maintain discipline and uphold Lord Ram's 'maryada' (dignity), Lord Krishna's values and Lord Shiva's simplicity, while warning against anti-social elements allegedly seeking to create disturbance.

Yogi Adityanath was in Shamli district for the inauguration and foundation-laying ceremony for 89 development



projects worth over 581 crore.

"Today, no one stops the Kanwar Yatra. It is

progressing peacefully and with enthusiasm.

The government stands with the

kanwariyas, and the administration and security forces are

Continued on Page-4

'Sheer recklessness': Ex-Japan minister slams India for delays in bullet train project, MEA hits back

Agencies, New Delhi : India on Friday hit back on a former Japanese minister's statement blaming New Delhi for delays in the high-speed bullet train project, calling it "an individual opinion" at "considerable variance with facts".

Continued on Page-4

'Even though BJP not in power here...': PM Modi's big rail, road push in Punjab ahead of elections



Agencies, Chandigarh : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of rail and road infrastructure projects worth 5,470 crore in Jalandhar at an official function, and said at a BJP rally later that the Centre would continue to push development in Punjab even though his party is not in power

in the state. "Although BJP is not in power in Punjab, the Centre is leaving no stone unturned to ensure the state's development," Modi said at the rally, as per news agency. "Only the BJP can bring real change in Punjab," he added. He claimed that the BJP, which has never held power on its own in the Sikh-majority

state, will work to make Punjab developed and self-reliant: "New investments will come to Punjab, new employment opportunities will be created in Punjab, products made in Punjab will reach every corner of the world — these tasks will be accomplished by the BJP alone." Modi said, as per posts on the BJP's *Continued on Page-4*

How much does an ISRO scientist earn? Salary, eligibility explained amid resignation reports

Agencies, New Delhi : The Department of Space reportedly issued a memorandum to major Indian Space Research

Organisation (ISRO) centres, tightening the rules governing resignation and voluntary retirement of scientists and engineers working

in critical missions including 'Gaganyaan'. The memorandum directed these centres not to routinely accept *Continued on Page-4*

From Income-tax to National Honour: What are the 7 bills that will be tabled in the monsoon session of Parliament?

Agencies, New Delhi : The Monsoon session of the Parliament is set to begin on Monday, with the government lining up at least 7 major bills for approval, including *Continued on Page-4*

'You ignored because she was poor?': Supreme Court lambasts doctor for denying care to 4-year-old rape victim

Agencies, New Delhi : The Supreme Court on Friday heavily reprimanded a private Ayurvedic doctor and a hospital from Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad over their alleged failure to provide medical assistance to a four-year-old rape victim, questioning if the child was ignored as she came from a poor family. The three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana

also questioned the doctor and the hospital's empathy and directed them to consider paying compensation to the bereaved family. Expressing anguish over the conduct of the medical professionals, the CJI questioned the doctor's right to use the title if he failed to discharge his basic duty. "You have no business writing 'doctor' (with your name) if you don't perform your duty! If you had sensitivity, you

would have gone with the child to another hospital if you didn't have the facility...you ignored because she was poor? Couldn't afford your fee?" the bench was quoted by LiveLaw as saying. The apex court was hearing a plea filed by the child's father alleging serious lapses in the investigation and the medical response following the incident, which happened in March this year. The *Continued on Page-4*

2020 riots case: HC notice to Delhi Police on bail plea by Sharjeel Imam in UAPA case

Agencies, New Delhi : The Delhi high court on Friday issued notice in the bail application filed by student activist Sharjeel Imam in the larger conspiracy case linked to the February 2020 Delhi riots. A bench of justices Prathiba M Singh and Vikas Mahajan sought Delhi Police's response and fixed August 27 as the next *Continued on Page-4*

'Will study SC order, take appropriate steps,' says collector on Bhojshala issue

Agencies, New Delhi : Dhar Collector Rajeev Ranjan Meena on Friday said the district administration would first obtain and study the Supreme Court's order in the Bhojshala case and then all necessary measures would be taken to maintain peace and harmony in the district. The Collector highlighted that the Apex Court had uploaded its order on its website today and would examine the contents before taking any further action. "The Supreme Court has uploaded its order on its website today. We will obtain a copy of the order and study it. After examining the directions issued by the Court, necessary steps will be taken to implement them," Collector Meena told agency. On being asked about security arrangements, he said the administration would consider all aspects of the directions issued by the apex court and make necessary preparations accordingly. "All aspects of the Supreme Court's directions will be considered. Whatever preparations are required from the administration to maintain

peace and law and order will be made, and ensure a peaceful atmosphere in Dhar," he said. Earlier in the day, Bhojshala Mukti Yagna Convener Gopal Sharma said the Muslim community should accept that the Bhojshala complex is a temple and respect the judicial process, while welcoming the Supreme Court's interim arrangement regarding Friday namaz. Speaking to agency Sharma said they have been offering prayers at the site every day since the Madhya Pradesh High Court recognised the disputed Bhojshala-Kamal Maula complex as a temple. "We respect the country's judicial system. When the High Court gave its verdict and accepted it as a temple, we have been worshipping there since then. We are not looking at any specific day; we worship all seven days. The Supreme Court's order is welcome, but I say that Muslims should accept that this is a temple and respect the order," Sharma said. He further alleged that repeated demands to offer namaz at the *Continued on Page-4*

Badrinath temple donation theft: Retired BKTC employee arrested by SIT

Agencies, Dehradun : A special investigation team (SIT) of Uttarakhand's Chamoli police on Friday arrested a retired employee of the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) for allegedly stealing cash from the shrine's donation room. Police said CCTV footage captured him pocketing money on three occasions before his retirement on June 30. "We have found the involvement of former temple officer Rajendra Chauhan in the Badrinath temple do-

nation theft case. He was found pocketing cash on three occasions on June 22, 25 and 29 in the CCTV footage examined by us. He retired on June 30," Station House Officer (SHO) of the Badrinath police station Mahadev Uniyal said. SHO Uniyal said they arrested Chauhan on Friday afternoon and will produce him before a court on Saturday. Police have arrested suspended BKTC employee Pramod Nautiyal, who was serving as a personal assistant in the office of

the BKTC chairman, in connection with the case. "Primary evidence suggests that the two accused conspired in the case. However, we will interrogate him further to ascertain the full extent of his role," the SHO said. He added that the police will approach the sessions court on Saturday to seek police custody of Nautiyal, who was arrested on Sunday and subsequently sent to 14-day judicial custody. "We examined footage covering four donation *Continued on Page-4*

Terms of Trade: BJP's different approach to different oppositions

Agencies, New Delhi : The Parliament will assemble for the monsoon session next week. It will meet in very different circumstances compared to its last sitting in April. The Budget session of Parliament ended with the government failing to muster a two-third majority to pass a bill that clubbed the rollout of women's reservation with the delimitation of constituencies. It was the first time the Narendra Modi government actually lost a vote since it assumed

power in 2014. To be sure, the loss was pre-ordained, as it did not have the required numbers, but the fact that it pushed for a vote suggested a political motive, which this column had then described as a political decoy. What was also remarkable during that vote was the opposition preventing any attrition from its ranks. The opposition, three months later, is a significantly emaciated beast. The TMC, the third-largest opposition party after the Con-

gress and Samajwadi Party, has seen parliamentary atrophy of sorts after its loss in the West Bengal elections. One after another, its MPs and MLAs continue to desert ship to join the BJP directly or indirectly. The DMK, the fourth-largest opposition party, has parted ways with the Congress and the INDIA bloc after Congress and DMK's smaller allies broke a pre-poll alliance to support the debutant TVK government in Tamil Nadu. Another two opposition

parties, namely, the Shiv Sena (UBT) and AAP have seen their MPs deserting to the BJP or its allies. Another party, the NCP(SP) is sending out mixed signals on its legislative stance in the house. These developments have resurrected the question of whether the BJP will actually be able to engineer the required majority to push the bills it wanted to in the Budget session. India's opposition, which was crying about the BJP stealing

elections has become so vulnerable to the BJP stealing or wooing its MPs that this question cannot be dismissed outrightly even though the existing numbers demand that it be. While parliamentary opposition seems to be atrophying, an extra-parliamentary opposition seems to be resurrecting. Unless things change in the next few days, it will be the first time under the Modi government that Parliament will be in *Continued on Page-4*

Funding the climate burden

In a major leap forward, countries attending the UN Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai agreed at the opening plenary of the first day to set up the Loss and Damage fund -- a hard-won victory that came after years of disagreement between developed and developing countries over who should contribute to the fund, and a year after it was established in principle at the “breakthrough” COP27 in Egypt. But progress in Dubai since has been slow, with commitments from most countries falling short of expectations. Last week, it was agreed that the World Bank would host the fund with an initial pot of \$429 million. Till December 5, according to an online pledge tracker by Natural Resources Defense Council, the fund had pledges totalling \$655.9 million, including a paltry \$17.5 million promised by the US, historically the worst greenhouse gas emitter. In comparison, the UAE – this year’s conference host and a developing country – has pledged \$100 million. This was slightly topped by Italy and France, both promising \$108million. But irrespective of the initial contributions, the amount is meagre considering the scale of the challenges that developing countries face. For instance, the damages in Pakistan after the 2022 floods were estimated to be around \$16 billion. According to UN estimates, developing countries will need over \$300 billion annually by 2030 to fight the climate crisis. And the costs are rising, with poorer nations demanding that these funds be given as grants instead of loans. It is called the loss and damage fund because it is expected to deal with situations in which communities can no longer adapt to climatic impacts or prepare for it because the damage has already been done; essentially, a situation where there is no scope to mitigate or adapt. However, countries have divergent views on who contributes to the fund. Some developed countries led by the US, argue that developing countries including India and China, whose economies have grown manifold in the last three decades, should also contribute to the fund. India has strongly objected, arguing that its current high level of emissions is still lower than the historic emissions of developed countries. This newspaper reported on November 27 that India’s responsibility for the climate crisis is likely to be 15% lower than previously thought if the period of British colonial rule is accounted for. There are also differences over the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), as enshrined in the UN Convention on Climate Change, which allows for equitable sharing of the burden of climate change. The second week of negotiations is likely to be long. India is yet to sign some of the key agreements over similar concerns. For instance, Delhi did not sign the pledge to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030 over disagreements on the coal phase-out. While developed nations have agreed on ending new investments in coal but not all fossil fuels, nearly 75% of India’s energy needs are provided for by fossil fuels. Can developing countries be forced to do something that developed nations have not fully committed to yet? In the absence of a consensus, the agenda will be pushed to the next year, a time by which the world may have already breached several thresholds, pushing humanity into an abyss.

BJP leaders hail ‘Modi

Agencies, New Delhi : As Prime Minister Narendra Modi was ranked as the most popular leader in the world by a US-based decision intelligence company, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders asserted that “Modi’s magic” has been endorsed even by an international survey. According to the survey by ‘Morning Consult’, Modi has a global approval rating of 76 per cent. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said after the recently concluded assembly election results in five states, even an international poll has given a thumbs up to Modi’s guarantee and magic, which is about his model of governance and delivery. He also noted that Modi scored high ratings even during an inter-

Who can stop Narendra Modi from a third term in office?

Pradeep Gupta

The BJP’s phenomenal victory in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh as well as the surge in Telangana has once again demonstrated the unparalleled connect Prime Minister Modi has with the people of the nation — a bond which transcends geographies, caste, creed, community, language and gender. Under PM Modi, the nation is seeing a pro-incumbency sentiment never seen before in India’s history. It must be noted that post-Independence, Congress governments were returning to power because their political opponents were structurally incapable of countering them in terms of size or resources. After 1989, when India’s political atmosphere opened up, the dominant trend was anti-incumbency. The UPA’s track record of retaining power was equally mixed — their wins in states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana in 2009 were more due to fragmented Opposition, a fact seen in the vote-share numbers. Compare this with the BJP: In 2019, PM Modi became the first sitting PM since Pandit Nehru who headed a clear majority government and returned to power after completing a full term. Those who believed 2014 was an aberration were shocked to see the tally of the BJP rise even further in 2019. BJP has retained state governments and that too with very convincing numbers in key states like Uttar Pradesh (where it bucked a 40-year trend), Gujarat (where it set a record of seven consecutive Assembly poll wins), Uttarakhand, Haryana, Goa, Assam and Tripura. In Maharashtra and Bihar, too, the verdict had been in favour of the NDA and BJP. This pro-incumbency is based on solid grounds and is linked to two dominant sentiments — trust and track record. Today, when people across India say “Modi hai toh mumkin hai”, we are seeing the unprecedented trust that people have in

the Prime Minister’s words and intent. Today, 140 crore Indians are aware that this is a man who will never lie or make false promises. Second is the exemplary track record in governance — something which PM Modi has gained after 22 years’ experience as the head of state and central governments. Very few leaders have such a rich experience. Firmly rooted in the principle of “Sabka saath, sabka vikas”, PM Modi has shown how governance can be compassionate, inclusive, just and futuristic. His key schemes have addressed problems that were unaddressed for decades, be it banking the unbanked, providing electricity to villages left in the dark, drinking water and housing for all or improved connectivity in remote areas. In a political climate dominated by the “If you vote, I will work” attitude, PM Modi has preferred a saturation approach. When it comes to governance, the Modi way is not to see where electoral gains lie — it is to see where real impact can be made. It is due to this trust and track record that PM Modi has endeared himself to the poor, down-trodden, youngsters, farmers and women. When he unequivocally said that the only caste which mattered to him was poverty, it connected with people. When he highlighted how his government has boosted growth, it connected with youngsters. From smoke-free kitchens to representation in Parliament and state assemblies, for the women of India, Narendra Modi is their sole leader, and they are his suraksha kavach. The recent electoral cycle is yet another reminder that the best politics is the politics of development and the undisputed champion of this brand of politics is Narendra Modi. His election speeches did not deviate from the core messaging — development, development and more development. The issues he raised formed a connect, whether it be the lack of housing in Chhattisgarh, better irrigation in Rajasthan, a

double-engine government in Madhya Pradesh, to name a few. PM Modi explained that a vote for Congress is a vote for perpetuating a few dynasties but a vote for the BJP is a vote for furthering the aspirations of every child. A lot of muck was thrown at him, names were called, but the PM kept his electoral discourse free from such negativity. This is also something which must be lauded. This sentiment towards PM Modi’s own popularity was evident when the Axis My India team covered the length and breadth of these five polling states and interviewed over 1.32 lakh people. Our numbers were rightly predicted for all the states (a track record that is unparalleled), and in case of Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Mizoram, the projection was spot on. Even in the cases of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the current mandates were not out of the realm of possibility. As per Axis My India projections, the BJP would cross the majority mark with 100 and 46 seats respectively in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, though we had given Congress an edge. For a government that has completed nine years at the Centre and is in power in several states, such an electoral performance is unique. In Chhattisgarh, the BJP received the highest-ever vote share any party has received since 2003. In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP enjoys an eight per cent gap from Congress. These are linked to a strong belief in PM Modi and the confidence that he will continue to deliver. And, with PM Modi’s call to work towards a hat-trick, it is certain that the BJP is stating that the 2024 elections will not be between PM Modi and the Opposition — it will be the people of India who will decide. I have always maintained that in the convoluted dance of Indian politics, it is neeyat (intention) and neeti (policy) which decides niyati (fate). The question is, in current circumstances, who can stop Narendra Modi from a record third term in office?

Man in a man’s world: ‘Animal’ is not just banal. Its provocations are tepid and boring

Pooja Pillai

The sins of Sandeep Reddy Vanga’s *Animal* are many: It glorifies violent masculinity, violates the dignity of women characters and is far too reliant for humour on jokes about sex and scratchy underwear. But its worst sin is that it dares to be the one thing that no film should be — boring. On the wafer-thin premise of a son’s unhinged love for his emotionally withholding father, Vanga has constructed a 201-minute homage to his favourite directors, Ranbir Kapoor’s body hair and more sunglasses than you’re likely to see on Lenskart dot com. There is an early 2000s music-video quality to the whole film, especially to the much-vaunted action sequences — the stylised slo-mo, perfectly toned bodies in

tight suits and, above all, the loud, often deliberately incongruent music that jostles with Kapoor for the audience’s attention. It makes *Animal* feel less like a movie and more like something that might have played on MTV or VH1. *Animal* is only the most recent movie in the last couple of years that features an ultra-macho, “alpha” male in the lead, revelling in an orgy of violence to, somehow, hit a chord with the masses of film viewers. But the film tries to set itself apart from the others in two key ways. The first is by attempting to delve into the psychology of its protagonist — Rannvijay could never get his father’s love, attention, validation and therefore he became what he did. In an interview about the film, Vanga claimed that the film is really the story of fathers and sons and that its plot has been shaped by the longing for absentee fathers that he saw in his friends. Yet, any such analysis remains superficial. In a scene at the end of the film, where Rannvijay asks his father Balbir to roleplay one of the moments when he lets his son down, he tells the older man, “You’re the greatest father. But you were never the best father.” We are expected to believe that this contradiction is what lies at the heart of Rannvijay’s fanatical filial devotion and leads to the violent trajectory of his life, but it never quite comes off. We are never shown a convincing explanation for how Balbir is the “greatest” father while not being the “best” (Balbir lands a few slaps on his son but, unfortunately, it’s not like we haven’t seen worse fathers in Hindi

cinema). The other way in which the film has tried to distinguish itself from the herd is through its self-awareness. With lines that establish the superiority of “alpha men” and reduce women to objects of male violence defined by their capacity to carry healthy babies, *Animal* is not only aware of its transgressions of the moral codes of our enlightened (some would say “woke”) times, it is constantly, gleefully drawing attention to this. It is the filmmaking equivalent of the bombastic declaration: “I’m not here to make friends”. There is a history here, familiar to those who followed the polarising reactions to the filmmaker’s last, Kabir Singh (2019), a remake of his Telugu debut Arjun Reddy (2017). The arguments — both for and against. Just

like back then, this time too critics have, correctly, picked on the film’s troubling, misogynistic world view and celebration of violence as major weaknesses, while the opposing side — the so-called “Vanga stans” — have used precisely these things to shore up their belief that the film depicts a singular directorial vision rooted in the realities of love and life.

Sadly, Vanga is no genius and *Animal* is no masterpiece. In fact, in focusing exclusively on the performance of violence without adequately explaining how any man can reach such levels of psychopathy as to slaughter hundreds and feel no remorse, he outs himself as being ill-equipped to tell this story. In the hands of filmmakers like Quentin Tarantino, David Fincher and, closer home, Ram Gopal Varma and Anurag Kashyap, violence is a tool, used to tell stories of greed, grief and fear — in *Animal*, it is the whole story. It makes one wonder what proportion of the reactions hailing the film and the director rests on pre-release hype. *Animal* takes the age-old, but still promising premise of a man’s daddy issues and squanders it with poorly realised characters and an unwarranted faith in the filmmaker’s ability to provoke. This timidity is, in fact, the most disappointing thing about *Animal* — after promising to provoke, it cannot even bring itself to commit to that. Its attitude to sex is juvenile and the scenes that supposedly prove the protagonist’s virility are ridiculously tame.

magic’ as PM tops list of most popular global leader with 76% rating

in his approval percentage as he received a 78 percent approval rating till November 20. The latest approval ratings by the US-based company are based on a seven-day moving average of adult residents in each country, with sample sizes varying by country. In India, the sample size ranges from roughly 500 to 5,000. The data has been collected from November 29 to December 5. According to the survey, after Modi, Mexican leader Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador secured second place in the popularity chart with a 66 per cent approval rating, followed by Swiss leader Alain Berset with a 58 per cent approval rating. cadecades coupled with empathetic leadership has found him place in hearts of millions of Indians,” he added. BJP leader CT Ravi lauded Modi as a “karma yogi” who has been notching up high approval ratings due to his hard work, vision, and dedication to transforming the country. “Today, the entire world looks up to PM Modi for guidance and advice in solving its problems,” he said. Meanwhile, BJP leader Prakash Javadekar said: “My PM... My Pride ! World’s Most Popular Leader !” Modi has remained the most popular leader among the surveyed government leaders in the past as well. However, the current survey also indicated a minor dip

A group of officials are seated around a large, light-colored wooden U-shaped conference table in a meeting room. There are seven people visible: four men and three women. They are dressed in formal attire, including white shirts and a patterned sari. The room has a modern design with a large whiteboard on the wall and a dark wood-paneled wall on the right. Microphones and papers are placed on the table in front of each participant. The atmosphere appears to be a formal discussion or meeting.

Following the market visit, the Minister, accompanied by District Commissioner Rahul Kumar Gupta, IAS, Superintendent of Police Sanjeev Kumar Saikia, APS, officials of the Silchar Public Works (Roads) Divi-

Directions were also issued for earmarking dedicated parking spaces for vehicles belonging to attendants of admitted patients. The Minister also reviewed the existing biomedical waste disposal mechanism and in-

Detailed discussions were held on enhancing the quality of municipal services, strengthening urban infrastructure, improving cleanliness, solid waste management and sanitation, as well as issues relating to drinking water supply, drainage and road development. Minister Kaushik Rai also directed the officials to take various measures required for the

convenience and welfare of the citizens and directed the concerned departments to ensure effective implementation of the projects within the stipulated timelines. The Minister emphasised the importance of coordinated efforts among all implementing agencies to ensure that development works are completed efficiently and public services are delivered in a timely manner. He also reviewed the progress of ongoing initiatives and issued necessary directions to the concerned officials for expediting the works. While in his concluding remarks Minister Kaushik Rai said "The Government of Assam under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, continues to accord priority to transforming Silchar into a modern, clean and citizen-friendly city through sustained investments in urban infrastructure and civic amenities. The review meeting was attended by District Commissioner, Cachar, Rahul Kumar Gupta, IAS, Superintendent of Police, Cachar, Sanjeev Kumar Saikia, APS, Director, Municipal Administration, Tonkeshwar Das, ACS, Commissioner, Silchar Municipal Corporation, Ankur Das, IAS and other departmental officials. (DDIPR Silchar Release)

Three members, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Sushmita Dev and Prakash Chik Baraik, resigned from the Upper House in June and joined

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SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS			
Lot No.	A) Name of the Branch B) Name of the Account C) Name & addresses of the Borrower/ Guarantors Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's Name (mortgagers of property(ies))	A) Dt. Of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFESI Act 2002 B) Outstanding Amount as on (in Rs.) C) Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFESI Act 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbol/ Physical/Constructive A) Reserve Price (Rs. in Lacs) B) EMD C) Bid Increase Amount Date/ Time of E-Auction Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors 04/08/2026 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM Not known to Bank
1	A) Badarpur (003820) B) Mr Sajal Kumar Das C) Borrower-1) Mr. Sajal Kumar Das, S/o-Late Jaladhar Chandra Das, Vill-Siddheswar Part-II, P.O-Katirai, Dist-Cachar, Assam-788705.	The property is a Land & building property at Mouza-Siddheswar Part-II, Pargana-Kaligorah, Cachar measuring an area of 5 Katha under Dag No.192, 2nd RS Patta No.72 in the name of Sri Sajal Kumar Das. Bound by: North : 12ft common passage leading to Kalain Badarpur Road. South : Common passage. East : Land of Joy Kishor Kahar West : Land of Sukhamay Das.	A) 10.02.2022 B) Rs.9,96,892.00 with further interest from 01.02.2022 C) 05.05.2022 D) Symbolic Possession. A) Rs.53.00 Lakh B) Rs5.3 Lakh (on or before 03.08.2026) C) Rs.0.10 Lakh
2	A) LALA (004020) B) Tarun Krishna Nath C) Borrower- 1) Tarun Krishna Nath, S/o Late Tamal Krishna Nath, W/No.-9, Surya Sen Sarani, Lala, Hailakandi, Assam-788163 Guarantor : 1. Nityananda Suklabaidya, S/o Lt Radhacharan Suklabaidya, At- Surya Sen Sarani, W/No -9, Lala, Hailakandi, Assam-788163.	Land & Building located on Dag No. 94,95,96,97 of Patta No. 30 vide Sale Deed No. 110/112 of date 29.02.2012 in Mouza Lala Town Vernerpur of Area 4 Kathas in the Name of Tarun Krishna Nath. Bound by: North : Property of Prabhas Chandra Dhar. South : Surya Sen Road. East : Property of Tanuj Kumar Dey. West : Property of Tarun Krishna Nath.	A) 22.01.2018 B) Rs.9,34,684.59 with further interest from 21.01.2018 C) 05.05.2026 D) Symbolic Possession. A) Rs.31.82Lakh B) Rs 3.182 Lakh (on or before 23.08.2026) C) Rs.0.10 Lakh
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Sd/- Authorized Officer Punjab National Bank Secured Creditor			
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STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) & Rule 9 (1) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002			

A bench of Justices Anil Kshetarpal and Shail Jain in its verdict delivered on Wednesday opined that the Centre while taking the decision, relied on undisclosed comparative standards, made unexplained deductions under objective evaluation criteria, and adopted inconsistent marking.

The court said that these deficiencies struck at the very heart of transparency, fairness and equality in the public procurement process. "The use of undisclosed comparative standards, unexplained deductions under objective criteria, inconsistent marking and complete absence of recorded reasons strikes at the heart of transparency, fairness and equality in public Procurement. Therefore, exclusion of a lower bidder on the basis of an arbitrary evaluation process, is not merely an individual grievance but also raises concerns of public interest under Article 14 of the Constitution," the court said in its verdict.

It added, "The impugned technical evaluation

processes are set aside. Consequently, award of tender in favour of the private Respondents shall also stand nullified. The respondent numbers 1 and 2 are directed to issue fresh RFP for procurement of CPV Services across all four Missions, namely, Abu Dhabi (UAE), Kuwait, Singapore and Canberra (Australia), within a period of one month from the date of this judgment and make sincere efforts to conclude the process at the earliest.” The verdict was delivered on petitions filed by two unsuccessful bidders—E Trav Tech Limited represented by senior advocates Sanjay Jain, Sacchin Puri, briefed by advocate Nakul Sachdeva, from Luthra and Luthra Law Offices and Verasys Limited. The firms had participated in the tender process but were disqualified at the technical evaluation stage, since they had failed to secure minimum 70% marks to qualify for opening of their financial bids. They then challenged the communications declaring them unsuccessful. It was E Trav and Verasys Limited's case that the criteria wise evaluation of their technical bids is arbitrary and the marks awarded to them under the respective parameters was unsupported by any reasons. The Centre's lawyer additional solicitor general Chetan Sharma, opposed the petition, saying that the same was a “belated attempt” to reopen a concluded tender process.

Deputy commissioner of police (east) Manish Chaudhary said the former NSG commando was identified as Ratan Singh, a resident of Jodhpur's Ramzan Ka Hatha. Police officers said they raided his house late on Thursday night. Singh tried to flee after seeing the team but was caught after officers surrounded the area. During the search, police recovered ₹1.60 crore in cash, 8 kg of opium latex and also seized a car. The DCP said Ratan Singh had earlier served in the Assam Rifles and was later posted as a commando with the NSG. The raid, which began late at night, continued until Friday morning. Police were questioning Singh to find out the source of the large quantity of opium and the origin of the cash recovered during the raid.

FROM PAGE - 1

‘Government stands

serving them," he said. Appealing to the Kanwar pilgrims to maintain discipline, he said, "We are descendants of Lord Ram, belong to the land of Lord Krishna and are devotees of Lord Shiva. We must uphold Ram's 'maryada', Krishna's values and Shiva's simplicity. There should be no unruly behaviour over trivial issues."

Alleging that some people attempted to create disturbances during the pilgrimage, Adityanath said, "Some anti-social elements try to provoke violence and tarnish the image of the Kanwar Yatra. If anyone tries to create trouble or disturb the atmosphere, such persons should be isolated immediately. We must not allow anyone to compromise the sanctity and dignity of this pilgrimage."

He said the state government would continue to provide every possible support to ensure the safety, convenience and smooth conduct of the Kanwar Yatra.

The Kanwar Yatra will start on July 30 and conclude on August 11. During this period, devotees of Lord Shiva will collect holy water from the Ganga in Haridwar, carry it back on foot and offer it to Lord Shiva in temples across Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, and western Uttar Pradesh.

Accusing the Congress and Samajwadi Party of being worshippers and followers of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the UP Chief Minister said, "Those who were changing the demography -- the people from the Samajwadi Party and the Congress -- are worshippers of Jinnah. That is why the exodus from Kandhla and Kairana was taking place. In contrast, we are the worshippers of the farmers. Whenever these followers of Jinnah get the chance, they will divide you. They will divide you on the lines of caste and region. They will spread anarchy, and compromise the safety of daughters and the business community."

Adityanath also claimed that a "job syndicate" had allegedly deprived deserving youths of government employment before 2017 and added that the network had been dismantled, asserting that recruitment was now being carried out transparently.

In an apparent swipe at the Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav over government jobs, Adityanath branded the alleged network as the 'Syndicate of Saifai', a reference to the native village of Yadav.

"Now, when government jobs are advertised in Uttar Pradesh, the syndicate of Saifai that once snatched away the employment rights of the youth can no longer do so. Today, every family and every section of the society gets an opportunity to secure government jobs," he said.

The chief minister also alleged that before the BJP came to power in the state in 2017, people faced action for expressing their religious beliefs. "Before 2017, people were lathi-charged and even fired upon for raising the slogan 'Jai Shri Ram'. Kanwar Yatras were stopped, routes were blocked, and Ramleela processions were not allowed," he said. Claiming that the situation had changed, Adityanath said the BJP-led NDA government was working for farmers and the youth. "Today, we can proudly say that the vision Chaudhary Charan Singh had for farmers and young people is being realised by the BJP and NDA government. On the one hand, farmers are being empowered, while on the other, employment and job opportunities are being created for the youth," he said.

'Sheer recklessness':

Hideki Makihara, who is Japan's former Justice Minister and a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, had blamed India for delays in the Indo-Japanese Shinkansen project.

"The Shinkansen project in India is something I was involved with myself, but what stood out in international meetings and negotiations was the sheer recklessness of the Indian side, repeated over and over. They just don't keep promises, no matter what. Even if they make a promise, they flip it right away," he wrote.

Makihara also blamed the minister-in-charge for being 'awful'.

"They keep pushing their own self-interest right up to the very end. The minister in charge was especially awful—if the top guy's like that, there's no way to have any decent dealings. For the honour of all the Japanese folks who poured their hearts into this, I have to say it: I feel 100% that the reason this hasn't moved forward is entirely on the Indian side," he added.

MEA hits back

The ministry of external affairs rejected Hideki Makihara's claims on Friday, saying it was an "individual opinion" and at a "considerable variance with facts".

"We have seen the post. This is an individual opinion and is at considerable variance with facts. India-Japan discussions on Mumbai-Ahmedabad HSR are progressing well," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a press briefing.

Union railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has announced that India will begin operations of the first phase of its first bullet train service from August 15, 2027. Vaishnaw said the speed rail corridor will open in phases, beginning with the Surat–Bilimora section.

In a later written statement, the MEA gave a progress report on the bullet train project.

"India-Japan discussions on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed train are progressing well. Japan will provide the E10 series train in the early 2030s. The train is still under development. Meanwhile, construction work has rapidly progressed. The first section will be opened in 2027. Therefore, both sides agreed to start the operations with the Indian high-speed train. The project execution is in line with the common goal of starting the high-speed train project at the earliest," the MEA statement read.

‘Even though

official X handle.

Modi also launched attacks on the ruling AAP and the main opposition Congress in Punjab.

"The chair-politics in Congress in Punjab never ends. They are not fighting for what benefits Punjab; their fight is over who gets to keep the chair," he said, apparently referring to a rift between state Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring and a camp led by former CM Charanjit Singh Channi.

‘Kattar be-imaan’ dig at Kejriwal-led AAP

Targeting the AAP government led by CM Bhagwant Mann, and the party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal, Modi also tok a dig at Kejriwal's self-description as "kattar imaandar".

He said, "The party that is in government in Punjab today has neither a clear intention nor is it honest. Its very identity is that of a 'kattar beimaan' (staunchly dishonest) party."

He also raised the law and order situation in the state.

Focusing on the development of railways, the main theme of his official engagements in Punjab and Haryana on Friday, Modi also took aim at the previous Congress-led government at the Centre, saying it had made false announcements about new trains and then "sat back" without following through.

Friday's visit was his second to Jalandhar this year, after he visited the Dera Sachkhand Ballan, a prominent centre of the Dalits who form the Ravidassia sect, in February.

It is being read as political outreach ahead of the 2027 Punjab assembly polls, which the BJP is preparing to contest on its own as its alliance with the Shiromani Akali Dal broke during the farmers' protest of 2020-21.

Modi reached Jalandhar after unveiling projects in Chandigarh and in Haryana's Jind, where he had earlier in the day flagged off India's first hydrogen-powered train.

Railway stations and new lines

In all, physically and mostly virtually, PM Modi inaugurated 75 redeveloped railway stations across 20 states under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Four of these are in Punjab: Jalandhar Cantonment, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Sri Muktsar Sahib and Sri Anandpur Sahib.

The prime minister also inaugurated the Daulatpur Chowk-Kartoli new rail line, built at a cost of around ₹830 crore as part of the Nangal Dam-Talwara-Mukerian New Rail Line Project. Officials said the line would strengthen rail connectivity between Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, benefiting the districts of Hoshiarpur and Una, and would improve access to religious destinations including Shri Anandpur Sahib and the Maa Chintpurni Temple.

Modi flagged off the Kartoli-Ambala train service, which officials said would improve connectivity across Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

Sant Ravidas Express

He flagged off the Sant Ravidas Express too, linking Amritsar and Varanasi. The direct service has been a long-standing demand of the Ravidassia community in Punjab, coming ahead of Guru Ravidas's 650th Parkash Purab celebrations at his birthplace, Seer Govardhanpur, in Varanasi.

After arriving in Jalandhar, Modi was seen at the Jalandhar Cantt railway station with Sachkhand Ballan Dera chief Niranjan Dass, who was given a Padma award recently.

Road push

Besides the railwat projects, the PM inaugurated or laid the foundation stones of national highway projects worth over 3,070 crore.

He inaugurated the 30.9-km-long 'Package 6' of the four-lane greenfield Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway. He laid the foundation stone for a 25.2-km six-lane greenfield Southern Ludhiana Bypass.

From Income-tax to

2 legacy bills. The monsoon session of the parliament will begin on Monday, July 20, and run till August 13.

According to officials quoted in a report by news agency ANI, the resolution of two legacy bills will be prioritised during the Eighth Session of the 18th Lok Sabha. These are the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment (FCRA) Bill, 2026, introduced earlier this year, and the long-standing Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025, introduced in Lok Sabha on 15 December, 2025, and referred to a Joint Committee.

The government is further set to advance its legislative agenda during the upcoming Session, with plans to also introduce five new bills alongside two previously tabled measures. These five are:

The Income-tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026

The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026

The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026

The government has convened an all-party meeting on Sunday, July 19, where it is expected to outline its legislative agenda, and opposition parties are likely to outline the issues they intend to raise during the session.

The all-party meeting, held ahead of every parliament session, is likely to begin at 11 am.

The opposition agenda

While the government is preparing its legislative plan for the monsoon session, the opposition is also gearing up with an agenda of its own.

The leaders of opposition parties in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha will meet on Monday, the opening day of the parliament session, to chalk out a joint strategy for the duration of the session.

The opposition is expected to formulate its strategy for the Centre's legislative agenda and the issues it plans to raise during the session.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said on Thursday that the party would strongly oppose the proposed Delimitation Bill if it were reintroduced during the Monsoon Session, alleging that the Centre was attempting to secure support for a measure that had earlier failed to obtain the required two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha.

Ramesh also said the Congress would oppose several other legislations likely to be introduced during the session, including the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, and proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) and the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.

How much does

resignation or voluntary retirement requests from Group 'A' scientific and technical personnel, news agency reported. This comes amid reports of more than 100 ISRO employees quitting the space agency across various centres in the country.

The recent spate of resignations has put the spotlight on the job roles at the space agency, including their salaries and eligibility criteria.

What is the eligibility criteria to become an ISRO scientist or engineer? How much do they earn? We looked at recent job postings on the ISRO careers portal to break down the educational qualifications, age limit, salary, and selection process.

Scientist/ Engineer-SC

Eligibility

Any candidate with a BE (Bachelor of Engineering) or BTech (Bachelor of Technology) or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks or CGPA 6.84/10 can qualify for the job role with a valid GATE score. These candidates are shortlisted for an interview on the basis of their GATE score itself. The upper age limit for this is

28.

Any candidate with a BE (Bachelor of Engineering) or BTech (Bachelor of Technology) with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks or CGPA 6.84/10 and above, and a degree in Master of Science, can qualify through a written test and interview. The upper age limit for this is 28.

Any candidate who has an engineering degree with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks or CGPA 6.84/10 and above + MBA in First Class can also qualify by giving a written test and interview. The upper age limit for this is 30.

Any candidate with an ME (Master of Engineering) or an M Tech (Master of Technology) degree or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 60% marks or CGPA 6.5/10 and above can qualify. These candidates must have a pre-eligibility qualification of BE/B Tech/MSc or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks or CGPA 6.84/10 and above. They can qualify through a written test and interview. The upper age limit for this is 30.

Salary - The salary for the role of Scientist/ Engineer- SC in the pay matrix is between ₹56,100 and ₹1,77,500 (Level 10-17). It can progress up to 'Distinguished Scientist' in Level 16 (₹2,05,400-2,24,400) through Merit Promotion Scheme, subject to satisfactory performance.

Scientist/Engineer - SD

Eligibility

Candidates with PhD qualification are considered for the post of Scientist/Engineer-SD in Level 11 on requirement. A live register is maintained in the ISRO Website for registration of PhD candidates. The candidates are selected through an interview. The upper age limit for qualification is 35. The pre-eligibility conditions include:

1. ME/M Tech/MS/MSc or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 60% marks or CGPA 6.5/10 and above
2. BE/B Tech or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks or CGPA 6.84/10 and above
3. B.SC or equivalent with an aggregate minimum of 60% marks or CGPA 6.5/10 and above

Salary - The salary for the role in the pay matrix is between ₹67,700 and ₹2,08,700 (Level 11). It can progress up to Distinguished Scientist in Level 16 with a salary range between ₹2,05,400-2,24,400 through Merit Promotion Scheme, subject to satisfactory performance.

Technician - B

Eligibility

Candidates must have an SSLC degree + ITI / NTC / NAC from NCVT (minimum two years course). The selection is done through written test and skill test, with the selection being based on primarily on the written test marks. Skill test is only of qualifying nature. The upper age limit for this is 35.

Salary - The salary for the role in the pay matrix is between ₹21,700 and ₹69,100 (Level 3). It can progress upto the post of Assistant Engineer in Level 12 with a pay range between ₹78,800 and ₹2,09,200 through Merit Promotion Scheme, subject to satisfactory performance.

Technical Assistant

Eligibility

Candidates must have a Diploma in Engineering with first class, from a State recognized Board, in the required discipline as per the job nature of the post in the Centre.

The selection is done through a written test and skill test (curriculum based). The selection is based primarily on the written test, with the skill test only being of qualifying nature. The upper age limit for this is 35.

Salary - The salary for the role in the pay matrix is between ₹44,900 and ₹1,42,400 (Level 7). It can progress upto the post of Technical Officer-SG in Level 13-A, between ₹1,31,100 and ₹2,16,600 through Merit Promotion Scheme, subject to satisfactory performance.

Scientific Assistant

Eligibility

Candidates must have a degree in B.Sc with first class from a recognized university/institution, in the required discipline as per the job nature of the post in the Centre.

The selection is done through a written test and skill test (curriculum based). The selection is based primarily on the written test, with the skill test only being of qualifying nature. The upper age limit for this is 35.

Salary - The salary for the role in the pay matrix is between ₹44,900 and ₹1,42,400 (Level 7). It can progress upto the post of Scientific Officer-SG in Level 13-A, between ₹1,31.100 and ₹2,16,600 through Merit Promotion Scheme, subject to satisfactory performance.

Indira’s past, Sonia’s push, Rahul’s parallel: How Gandhis’ Congress has 3-track policy on Wangchuk and CJP

Agencies, New Delhi : Three generations of the Gandhi family have now, in different ways, found themselves entangled with Sonam Wangchuk's politics of the fast, even as Narendra Modi's government remains indifferent at best to the protest at Jantar Mantar. As Wangchuk's hunger strike entered its 20th day in Delhi on Friday, the Congress's response to the activist and the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest has moved on three tracks — one rooted in family memory, one of caution as main Opposition, and a third keeping some measured distance for a parallel track. Indira's history The memory being invoked belongs to 1984, a year that's seminal for many reasons. Sonam Wangchuk's father, Sonam Wangyal, undertook a five-day hunger strike that year demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for Ladakh's communities. An ex-MLA from Leh for the Congress, and later minister in the Jammu

and Kashmir government too, Sonam Wangyal was important enough for the prime minister to react. Indira Gandhi was the prime minister; she flew into Leh and persuaded him to end the fast, committing to grant ST status and the benefits that come with that. She was in the middle of many fires at the time, and was assassinated later that year over the military's actions during Operation Bluestar at the Sikh shrine of Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab. Her promise to Ladakh materialised by 1989. Sonam Wangyal himself had a complicated relationship with the party by then, as he was expelled from Congress in 1987 over "anti-party activities". He died in 1998. Sonia's intervention It was this 42-year-old episode involving her mother-in-law that Sonia Gandhi, chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party, is reported to have invoked this week to push her party towards publicly backing Wangchuk's current fast.



The intervention marked a turning point after weeks of conspicuous Congress silence on the CJP protest, even as AAP's Arvind Kejriwal, Samajwadi Party's Dimple Yadav, and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee had already backed him. Congress MPs did so in individual capacities. Party insiders were reported to be concerned over support for a satirical outfit that could confuse the anti-government voice that the Congress intends to lead as the main Opposition party. But a shift became visible on Thursday, when general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal broke the party's silence, ex-

pressed solidarity with Wangchuk, and said the demand for the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan, over alleged irregularities in the NEET-UG examination, was already being made by the Congress too. That was also the day CJP's Saurav Das posted on X about the Indira Gandhi intervention of 1984, citing it as responsible conduct — apparently as opposed to how the NDA regime has launched an attack, with Pradhan himself calling the protesters "B-team of terrorists". Sonia Gandhi chaired a meeting of the Congress MPs the same day, attended also by her son and Leader of Opposition Rahul

Gandhi, and party chief Mallikarjun Kharge plus all other MPs. Friday saw the first in-person Congress presence at the protest site, with Rajya Sabha MP Pawan Khera meeting Wangchuk and other CJP members on the 20th day of his fast. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh separately noted the party had been demanding Pradhan's resignation for nearly two months. That demand is at the heart of what Rahul Gandhi has been doing on the issue. Rahul's parallel track Rahul has not visited Jantar Mantar, choosing instead to press the same demand — Pradhan's resignation

over the NEET-UG paper leak and other issues — through the party's separate 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' student outreach campaign, which moved to Dehradun on the same Friday after Khera visited the protest site in Delhi. He has also met students affected by the CBSE's paper-checking scandal separately. The absence has not gone unnoticed. Wangchuk himself reportedly took a swipe at it, calling it "great pettiness" if Opposition leaders did not back him. CJP leaders have insisted the platform, formed and named after some remarks by the Chief Justice of India, will not align with "existing political parties". Online history now going viral shows they had made unflattering remarks about Rahul Gandhi in the past, including founder Abhijeet Dipke calling his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' "just a travel vlog". Dipke has in recent interviews said "opinions change over time". He also pushed back

on the "where is Rahul" narrative altogether in a post on X, arguing that the Opposition's presence at the site was not the real test. The questions that mattered, he said, were why Prime Minister Modi continued to refuse dialogue and why the education minister had still not been held accountable. "Ask the questions that actually matter," he said in his post. Complicated relationships The Congress's calculated engagement with Wangchuk comes against the backdrop of his dramatic falling-out with the Modi government. In August 2019, when the Centre abrogated Article 370 and created Ladakh as a separate Union Territory by taking away special status and statehood from J&K, Wangchuk was among the most vocal supporters of the move, thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi on X. He even met Pradhan in 2023, and there was mutual praise. That goodwill collapsed as Ladakh's UT status

left it, unlike the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, without an elected legislature. Wangchuk led an agitation but was jailed as there was violence last year — accused of igniting "Nepal- and Bangladesh-inspired Gen-Z protests" — for six months until March this year. His wife then cited his praise for PM Modi in Pakistan in 2025 as proof that he could not be "anti-national". Some of Ladakh's demands for internal democracy have since been accepted in principle by the Centre. Rahul has provided issue-based support to these causes. As for Wangchuk's latest issue against paper leaks, there is no word yet on whether the Congress will join the CJP's march to Parliament planned for July 20, coinciding with the start of the Monsoon Session. PM Modi, meanwhile, was in the northern states on Friday, where he promised to develop Punjab and sought votes for the BJP on the development plank.

How India can become the bank for the Global South

Agencies, New Delhi : In 2007, China's GDP was about \$3.6 trillion. Today, India's GDP is \$3.7 trillion — perhaps more. This parallel is crucial to understanding the big moment that Indian diplomacy, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is recognising. A moment, if supported by India's people, its companies and the state apparatus, will reshape the global order. An appreciation of this moment and putting its lessons into concrete actions is the big legacy of 2023 as India concludes a transformational diplomatic year — the year of its G20 stewardship. Look back at history. In 2007, China was not yet the geo-economic behemoth it is now. But with a GDP lower than India's today, it became the go-to nation during the global financial crisis a year later. Every nation sought to deepen relations with Beijing, and to create a special place in their diplomacy for the People's Republic. Its leaders were the toast of Davos and at business salons. China provided institutional and geo-economic responses — a development bank, a cross-continental lending programme that galvanised infrastructure accretion without the legacy constraints of Western agencies, and a series of economic projects that eventually coalesced into the Belt and Road Initiative. It is true that some of these have run into trouble. Nevertheless, the fact is China used its economic promise in 2008 to gain oversized economic and political influence that continues to stand it in good stead. It did this by offering itself as a vital additionality to the global order. At a time when the US was struggling to recover from the financial crisis and the Eurozone was tearing itself apart, it was China that promised stability and economic dynamism. The world wanted and needed an additional engine of growth and an additional source of investment. And so it also welcomed an additional centre of geopolitical power. India is poised at a similar moment and with a similar GDP. Does it have the same gumption? As we enter 2024, this is the framework within which Indians must understand their place in the world today. The recent past teaches us that an India-sized

economy of about \$4 trillion can exert a huge influence. With vision and skilful diplomacy, it can carve a space for itself alongside economies that are four or five times large, like the United States, the European Union and China. This is a real Indian opportunity in 2024, as Europe stagnates, the US turns inward and China deals with internal problems and its share of the global economy that is shrinking in nominal terms. The agenda for India's next government must simply be this: Demonstrate India's potential, and the additionality that it can provide for global growth, institutions, and security. Additionality does not require extraordinariness. After all, China's growth in recent years has not been extraordinary. But it had momentum, and that is what India has today. It has its own trajectory and the motive force, one better suited to a green and digital future. If China had mass manufacturing, the growth engine of the 2010s, India has its platform economy, the dynamo of the 2020s. But additionality must have attributes. What Beijing offered 15 years ago was not an inchoate promise. There was a system, a schema, to the China proposition. This roadmap excited China's partners. An entire future-focused architecture served as the loudest possible announcement that a \$4-trillion economy would punch with the weight of a \$15-trillion one. Also, a new cooperation architecture needs to be put in place because India, in a very short while, will be spending serious money globally. The private sector is mobilising to support connectivity, supply chains, and resource resilience projects across the world. But public development finance will also grow alongside, and indeed, faster than India's economy. This is the substance behind India's additionality. Even if we assume India grows at only 10 per cent a year in current dollars, below its recent benchmark, it will be a major new source of development finance. If India slowly but steadily raises its development cooperation budget to less than 0.5 per cent of its GDP by 2030, it will still have put around \$70 billion into the global system.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBER

SILCHAR			Redcross-		
FIRE Brigade-	245801		Fire Brigade-	262101	
ASEB Complain-	234400		Municipality-	262085	
Municipality-	233830		ASEB Complian	262006	
Silchar Police Station -	246279		Asirbad Nursing Home -	266938	
Rangirkhari Police Outpost-	225067		Lifeline Hospital-	260046	
Tarapur Police Station -	245846		Karimganj Police Station-	262023	
Malugram Police Outpost-	262173		Badarpur Police Station--	255429	
Gungoor PoliceOutpost -	261825		Ramkrishnagar Police Station --	259429	
Traffic Police-	246336		N ilambazar Police Station -	258422	
Lakhipur Police Station-	287425		Bazarichara Police OutPost-	287955	
Udharbond Police Station -	281424		ENQUIRY		
Katigorah Police Station-	268175		Railway -	262010	
Borkhola Police Station-	286433		State Transport-	222280	
Dholai Police Station -	258422		Telephone--	197	
Sonai Police Station -	274424		HAILAKANDI		
GOVT. AND NON GOVT. HOSPITAL			Fire Brigade-	222101	
Silchar Medical College Emergency-	233819		ASEB Complain --	222223	
Mritanjoy-	108		Civil Hospital--	222423	
Silchar Civil Hospital-	245735		Police Station -	222253	
Redcross---	263107		Municipality-	222248	
Kalyani Hospital-	268460		ENQUIRY		
Shiv Sundhari Nari Shikhasram-	246400		Railway-	222470	
Mediland Nursing Home--	261828		State Transport-	222280	
South CityNursing Home-	240991		Telephone-	197	
Lions Eye Hospital --	231 001		GUWAHATI STD CODE-0361		
Green View Nursing Home-	234043		HOSPITAL		
KC Nursing Home -	234145		Gauhati Medical College & Hospital-	252957	
Nightangle Nursing Home--	242 171		Down Town Hospital-	2331003	
Ellora Nursing Home-	247 854		Mahandra Mohan Choudhury Hospital-	2543998	
Mousawmi Hospital -	230152		B. Barka Centre Hospital -	2472366	
Sudipta Nursing Home-	220255		Asom International Hospital-	2347700	
Cancer Hospital -	268447		Bharmaputra Hospital Limited -	2451634	
Vally Hospital--	242852		Arya Hospital -	2606663	
ENQUIRY			Good Health Hospital-	2268230	
Railway--	263094		Nan care Hospital-	252 8587	
Airport -	282311		Dispur Polyclinic --	2260864	
Air India (City)	245707		Nabajiban Hospital -	2334654	
Telephone--	197		Win--Hospital-	2351986	
TRAVELS			Gauhati Naurogical Research Centre-	2227700	
StateTransport-	268844		East Nursing Home-	2550334	
Capital Travels-	247751		Sankardev Natralaya -	2228879	
Jagannath Travels-	220597		North East &Institute-	9435404988	
BLOOD BANK			Ajaid-- Hospital-	9864070675	
Silchar Medical College-	241229		BLOOD BANK		
Barak Blood Bank-	222185		Marawari Hospital Research Centre -	2733737	
KARIMGANJ					
Civil Hospital-	262025				
Mritunjoy -	108				

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'You ignored

bench also rebuked the Ayurvedic doctor for allegedly refusing to provide primary medical care to the child. "A child is brought before you, and you are so merciless that you did not provide medical care. If you had any empathy, you would have taken her to the hospital yourself," the Chief Justice told the doctor. The Bench similarly censured the private hospital where the child was taken, observing that its conduct had been "most ruthless." "When we impose a penalty, it will have a chilling effect. Think of victim compensation and grant reasonable compensation to the family. You have acted in the most ruthless manner," the court told the hospital, while suggesting that it voluntarily compensate the victim's family. The bench warned the hospital that if it failed to compensate the family, it would consider imposing costs.

2020 riots case: HC

date of hearing. "Issue notice. List on August 27," the court said in its order. Sharjeel through his lawyer Ibrahim and Talib Mustafa moved the high court against the trial court's July 4 order. The trial court on July 4 had denied Sharjeel and Umar Khalid's bail holding that there were no grounds to "entertain" the fresh plea as it could not even examine whether circumstances had changed since the Supreme Court rejected their pleas in January. Additional sessions judge (ASJ) Sameer Bajpai of the Karkardooma Courts, observed that the divergence of opinion between the January 5 Supreme Court judgment in the Gulfisha Fatima case and the subsequent ruling in the case involving Syed Iftikhar Andrabi had already been referred to a larger bench of the apex court. Until that issue is settled, the trial court said, it could not consider the fresh applications on any ground. In that case, the Supreme Court had expressed "serious reservations" about the reasoning adopted in the January 5 ruling and observed that it may not have correctly applied the principles laid down in the 2021 judgment in

Union of India vs KA Najeed, which recognised that prolonged incarceration and delay in trial can override the statutory restrictions on bail contained in Section 43D(5) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The court issued notice after Sharjeel's counsel argued that the trial court had erred in holding that there were no grounds to entertain a fresh bail application. They submitted that the finding was fallacious as the trial had made no progress, with charges yet to be framed. Counsel pointed out that the stage of the proceedings remained unchanged from January, when the Supreme Court had rejected Sharjeel's bail plea.

'Will study SC

disputed site were unnecessary. "Their own place is different, and in exchange for this place, they were already given a mosque in 1942. Asking for a new place time and again, and insisting on offering Namaz at this location, spoils the atmosphere of the city," he said. Earlier in the day, worship of Goddess Vagdevi was performed at the Bhojshala temple. This comes after the Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notice to Centre and the Madhya Pradesh govt on a batch of appeals filed by the Muslim side challenging the High Court verdict, which held the disputed 11th-century Bhojshala-Kamal Maula complex in Dhar district as a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati. The Supreme Court said it will examine the case; as an interim measure, a separate open space adjacent to the complex may be provided to the Muslim community for offering namaz on Friday between 1 pm and 3 pm. The Court also ordered that the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) should not make any structural changes without the apex court's permission.

Terms of Trade

session with a prolonged protest – I am talking about the ongoing hunger strike by "Cockroach Janata Party" – being held in its backyard Jantar Mantar, the historical seat of protest next to the seat of power of the Indian state. While this observation might infuriate many radicals, the protest would never have happened if

the government did not want it. Unlike most protests under the current government, including the 2020 farmers' agitation, nobody has been allowed to set camp in Lutyens Delhi's erstwhile protest capital. To be sure, the BJP and its larger ecosystem are still attacking the protestors and their supporters with polemics, but allowing the protest near Parliament is definitely a departure from the current government's modus vivendi regarding protests. Another political issue which has dominated the news cycle is the alleged theft of donations from the Ram temple in Ayodhya. Here too, the BJP has been on a defensive, as the temple bureaucracy is drawn from its core ideological group. The opposition, both in Uttar Pradesh (which is scheduled for elections early next year) and the country, has spent significant time and energy on this issue. Does the CJP protest and the donation theft issue put the BJP on a political backfoot? Will this manifest itself in forthcoming elections, especially Uttar Pradesh? Only fools try to predict elections in India. But here is a counterpoint. What if neither of the adverse political developments which have triggered the two controversies – the medical entrance test question leaks leading to the CJP hunger strike and the mismanagement of donations in Ayodhya—happened not because the BJP wanted them but because it could not prevent them? Saying this is not offering an alibi or apology for these developments, nor is it denying that perpetrators might be part of the larger or closer BJP ecosystem. It is only to make an important distinction. The BJP's political history and its meteoric rise are full of controversies and polarizations – from the Ram temple movement to demonetisation and even the farm laws – which happened by design and not accident. Both of the current developments are more procedural than political in nature. And if that is actually the case, is the BJP's top leadership willing to allow some democratic venting out on these issues and (there is still a huge) maybe, sacrifice some dispensable soldiers or even lieutenants? My biggest motivation for arguing this comes

from two facts which need to be taken note of. One, the aggrieved parties in these controversies are either BJP's staunch supporters (Ayodhya devotees) or definitely not antagonistic to the party (middle-class young students). So it does not really need to go hammer and tongs against them, like it would go after, say, Muslims protesting against the BJP. Two, if the BJP indeed wants to make a course correction on these issues, it is perhaps not averse to the idea of being seen as doing so after some sort of a democratic pushback, lest the regime is seen as a tone-deaf oppressive beast which has completely co-opted the opposition. To say this is not to demean the protestors, whose struggle in the CJP hunger strike shows no reason to be called insincere, nor to dismiss the political criticism regarding the donation misappropriation. What it perhaps signifies is that the BJP now understands that it is way past its honeymoon period in government and ought to distinguish between inadvertant anti-incumbency and ideological battles. While the former could be waged by a genuinely aggrieved crowd, the latter is led by an ideological enemy.

Badrinath temple

counting days — June 22, June 25, June 29 and July 2. The accused (Nautiyal) was seen stealing money on all four occasions," Uniyal said. Nautiyal used to handle VIP protocol and supervise donation counting at the Badrinath temple. According to the BKTC, he joined the committee in 2003 and was regularised in 2014. The police have so far not recovered any stolen cash, gold or silver coins, except for a Shaligram stone. "During questioning, he is not admitting to the crime and is evading our questions," Uniyal said. The treasurer in charge of the Badrinath temple donation counting centre, Sandish Mehta, was shifted out on Wednesday. BKTC chief executive officer Sohan Singh Rangar said no irregularity was found on Mehta's part, but he was replaced because of "certain deficiencies" in the donation weighing process. Kedar Singh Rawat, an employee attached to the puja office, has now been assigned the responsibility.

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India vs Pakistan: Lahore set to host ICC Champions Trophy showdown clash; PCB seeks BCCI's stamp of approval

Agencies, New Delhi : Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are set to headline India's blockbuster meeting with Pakistan in the 2025 edition of the ICC Champions Trophy. The batting icons bid farewell to the T20I format after guiding India to World Cup glory in the 2024 edition of the ICC event. Though Kohli and Rohit have announced their T20I retirements, the batting stalwarts will continue to feature in the traditional formats of the game. Kohli and Rohit can make their white-ball comebacks for an ICC tournament at the 2025 Champions Trophy hosted by Pakistan. According to the latest developments, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has furnished their draft for the ICC Champions Trophy. Slotting the high-voltage clash between India and Pakistan in the first week of March, the PCB has given hosting rights to Lahore. The



marquee Champions Trophy clash between arch-rivals India and Pakistan can take place in Lahore on March 1 next year. PCB seeks BCCI's stamp of approval Pakistan will host the ICC event from February 19 to March 9. March 10 is taken as a reserve day for the final of the ICC event. According to a report filed by news agency, a senior ICC board member revealed that the PCB is

yet to receive the approval of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for its tentative schedule. PCB submits Champions Trophy draft: India and Pakistan in Group A "The PCB has submitted the draft of the 15-match ICC Champions Trophy. Seven games in Lahore, three in Karachi and five in Rawalpindi," an ICC board member said. As per the Champions Trophy draft, India are

joined by Pakistan, Bangladesh and New Zealand in Group A. Australia, South Africa, England and Afghanistan are in Group B of the Champions Trophy. All India matches in Lahore "The opening match will be held in Karachi with two semifinals in Karachi and Rawalpindi, final in Lahore. All India matches (including semifinal, if the team qualifies) in Lahore," the source added. Pa-

kistan last hosted a major tournament in 2023 - the Asia Cup. The tournament was conducted in a 'Hybrid Model' as India played its Asia Cup games in Sri Lanka. "All board chiefs of the ICC Champions Trophy participating countries (minus BCCI) have assured him of their complete support but BCCI will consult its government and update the ICC," the source added.

Mohammad Rizwan's brutally honest admission on early T20 WC exit: 'Pakistan team deserves the criticism'

Agencies, New Delhi : Pakistan star Mohammad Rizwan opened up on the criticism the team has been facing since their early exit from the 2024 T20 World Cup. The Asian side had a horrible campaign in the USA as they didn't even take the flight to the Caribbean for Super 8 after they were knocked out from the group stage. They started the campaign with a shocking defeat against the USA, a non-Test playing nation, in the Super Over and it was followed by an-

other loss which they suffered against arch-rivals India. Rizwan also had a forgettable tournament on a personal level as he scored just 110 runs in four innings at an average of 36.66 and a strike rate of 90.90, with one fifty, which came against Canada. He faced criticism for his poor shot selection against India, where he threw his wicket away in a crucial situation after facing 44 balls, scoring 33 runs at an underwhelming strike rate of 70.45.

The wicketkeeper bat-

ter made an honest admission that they had let their fan down with their performance in the T20 World Cup and deserve the criti-

cism the team is facing at the moment. "The criticism the team is facing is justified and we deserve this since we didn't perform in

accordance with expectations. Players who can't face criticism won't be able to succeed," he said speaking to the media.

Why people need to sleep – and how there is profit in that

Agencies, New Delhi : To those given to dreaming big, sleeping big might be a necessity. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) seems to have understood this well. At the July 26 to August 11 Paris Olympics this year, the Indian contingent will be accompanied by Dr. Monika Sharma, an expert in optimising sleep for performance and recovery in sportspersons.

The connection between sound sleep and improved cellular repair—and therefore recovery and athletic performance—is well-established. Sport at the highest level is all about thin margins, and if 30 to 40 extra minutes of deep sleep can give an athlete a hairline advantage the next morning, it is something worth looking at seriously. Sleepkillers like the anxiety of competition and a sense of occasion pose potent challenges, which is why having an expert becomes all the more

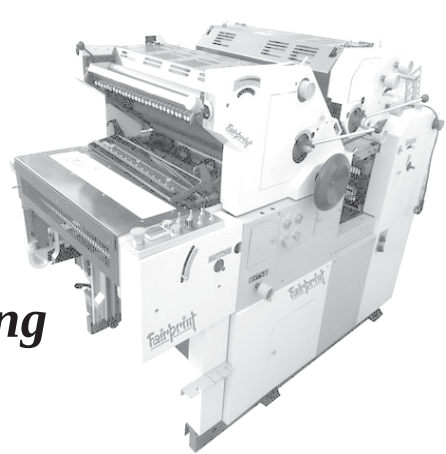
advisable. While reading about Dr. Sharma's appointment in agency, my attention was drawn to an observation by her, one made after some initial conversations with the athletes, in which she said that "ignorance about sleep is quite profound." On consideration, this wasn't particularly surprising. The non-cricket-playing Indian athlete works without much help, let alone scientific help, in their formative years. Most of our Olympians have become what they have become after overcoming various kinds of scarcities. And they have overcome them only by dint of effort and stubbornness. This overcoming can be such a constant enterprise, with hard work its only currency and everything else set in a trade-off against it, that rest and recovery struggle to arrive at the centre. This may happen despite an innate understanding of the two as essential to high

performance. And this may happen till the sportsperson reaches the limit where the simple truth of "what got you here won't take you there" presents itself as a challenge. Leave aside Olympian jousts, this isn't much different from how we as a people behave in any area of achievement. Students studying for competitive exams like NEET are coached into extending their study hours at the cost of sleep. College students (the MBAs are the worst here) gloat about exam-time all-nighters. Corporate workers fetishise long hours, it being no secret where the extra hour or two comes from. Even novelists like myself steal hours from the night when a book nears its meatier parts. None of the activities mentioned—study, work, or creative endeavour—gain from a state of sleep deprivation, yet we are all doing what we are doing. The stresses and anxieties of contempo-

rary life are, no doubt, to blame. But popular culture, with its injunctions of chasing one's goals, its imperatives of burning the midnight oil while doing so, and its narratives of linking success with sacrifice, has its role to play here too. Not everyone is pursuing anything close to an Olympic medal, but the environment ensures we all see ourselves as frantic pursuers. Months ago, I wrote ('Kota's failed promise', IE, September 21, 2023) about student suicides in the coaching centres of Kota, Rajasthan. Sometimes, the sacrifice is total. Sleep deprivation has no benefits—none, even, to the work that putatively causes it. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) described sleep deprivation as a "public health epidemic" way back in 2014, linking it to hypertension, diabetes, depression, obesity and cancer. There is no reason to suspect that

this is only an American phenomenon. What led the world to this point? Sometimes, the conspiracy theorist in me wonders if sleep has been imperilled globally for business reasons—so that good sleep can be sold as a premium product. The conspiracy theory, admittedly, may not find its feet in evidence, but the fact of sleep becoming a product cannot be denied. There is, in fact, a well-defined category called "sleep products" in existence; these include melatonin strips, gummies, face masks, eye oils, eye covers, pills, foot patches, and so on. Since sleep is a product, it might even be up for some tech-based disruption. Online furniture seller The Sleep Company, for example, talks of SmartGRID mattresses and smart recliner beds. Jim Sarbh and Anil Kapoor appear in the (smart?) TV ads. The company raised Rs 184 crore in Series C funding in December 2023, and

mentions 'changing the way people sleep' as part of its vision. The Sleep Company's competitor, Wakefit, talks of XpertGRID™ mattresses. Wakefit's vision talks of "offering highly innovative sleep solutions at affordable prices," thus democratising sleep in India". If one didn't understand company vision statements as vulnerable to dashes of hyperbole, one would imagine a lot of change and democracy in the future of Indian sleep. Perhaps, in time, we will see more businesses grounded in the simple insight that people are willing to pay more to sleep better. It's a simple case of economics, really: The lesser the supply of a thing, the pricier it becomes. One place, however, where one wishes the supply of sleep to be adequate is the Indian contingent at the Paris Olympics. Here's to hoping that Dr. Sharma's efforts aid our athletes to put in their best.



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Rohit Sharma says World Cup trophy coming home as India skipper poses with Suryakumar after hurricane delays departure

Agencies, New Delhi : Champions are coming home. India's T20 World Cup-winning side, led by Rohit Sharma, has finally left the Caribbean for New Delhi after being stranded in Barbados for three days. Team India's travel plans were disrupted by Hurricane Beryl following their historic win over South Africa in the recently concluded edition of the ICC T20 World Cup. India out-classed Aiden Markram's South Africa by seven runs in the summit clash at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Saturday. Taking to Instagram, India skipper Rohit confirmed the departure of the newly crowned T20 world champions from the Grantley

Adams International Airport in Bridgetown. "Coming home," Rohit kept things short in his latest social media post as the Indian skipper posed with his teammate Suryakumar Yadav inside the Air India flight. Rohit and Co. were stranded for three days due to the category four hurricane. Coming home! Hitman poses with SKY As per the latest developments, the special Air India charter flight, named Air India Champions 24 World Cup (AIC24WC) left Bridgetown at 4:50am local time. The flight will touch down the national capital on Thursday at around 6:20 am (IST). The Indian squad, support staff, and players'

families have boarded the flight from the Caribbean. Did you know? Members of the Indian media contingent are also traveling with the World Cup-winning squad. The Boeing 777 arrived from New Jersey, USA on July 2. The flight landed in Barbados around 2am local time. The Indian team was earlier scheduled to leave around 6pm local time on July 2. Members of the World Cup-winning side are set to be felicitated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday. The World Cup heroes will also have a road show in Mumbai. Under the leadership of skipper Rohit, India won its second T20 World Cup title after 17 years.

May rethink over Delimitation Bill if Opposition's amendments incorporated: Sanjay Raut

Agencies, Mumbai : Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Thursday said the Opposition parties will resist the proposed Delimitation Bill, but if the government incorporates amendments suggested by them, then they will sit together and think it over. He was talking to reporters in Nagpur ahead of the Sena (UBT)'s 'Ram Raksha Andolan' on Saturday against the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Notably, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) working president Supriya Sule on Wednesday said if the Delimitation Bill- a key legislative agenda of the NDA government- is based on a uniform 50 per cent increase in seats across all states, "there would be little reason to oppose it". She, however, stressed that any decision on supporting such a proposal would be taken only after discussions within the Opposition INDIA bloc. The government intends to bring the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill proposing to raise Lok Sabha seats to 850 and initiate delimitation in the Monsoon session of Parliament starting July 20.

To a query on Sule's comments, Raut said there's no decision yet on whether the bill will come up in this session. "When the bill does come, we will all sit down and decide, and a collective decision will be taken about what to do." "But the news you're spreading today that the party (NCP-SP) will be split and MLAs and MPs will be poached to show their majority, and things like that have no basis," he said. The Rajya Sabha member further said they will oppose the Delimitation Bill, but if necessary amendments are made to it as suggested by them, then the Opposition can "think it over". Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis recently targeted Uddhav Thackeray over the 'Ram Raksha' recital protest announced by the Shiv Sena (UBT) president. He said staging an agitation without knowledge of Ram Raksha (a Sanskrit hymn of praise dedicated to Lord Ram) is not appropriate. Asked about Fadnavis's remarks, Raut said the issue is not whether one knows Ram Raksha, but that they should respond to

the 'theft' of donations from the Ram temple. "Whether we want to recite Ram Raksha, how we want to recite, we will look at that...do not tell us that. The question for you (Fadnavis) is - a theft occurred at the Ram Temple and a donation box of ₹550 crore was stolen. In the last 12 years, nearly ₹13,000 crore have been looted, do you accept that or not?" he asked. "They don't answer these questions. Whether we know Ram Raksha or not, we will show it to you. But can you speak about your people who were involved in the theft at the Ram Temple?" Raut questioned. Asked about reports that the BJP was preparing to celebrate Fadnavis's birthday (on July 22) at the venue where Thackeray's 'Ram Raksha' programme is scheduled, Raut took a swipe at the CM. He said there was no such public meeting of Thackeray scheduled in Nagpur, and quipped that if Fadnavis's birthday is considered more important than the Ram Temple theft or the temple's prestige, then the Opposition would also be willing to join in the celebration.

"We will do it (Ram Raksha programme) in front of a temple or nearby roads, we had discussions with the temple authorities. We will decide where to do the programme. We will make a small dais in front of the temple and Uddhav Thackeray will address the people," he added. On urging Fadnavis to take part in the 'Ram Raksha Andolan', Raut said since the programme is scheduled close to the CM's house here, the Sena (UBT) thought it was its responsibility to invite him, "if not as a chief minister, then as a Ram devotee". "We will also invite RSS office-bearers and other Hindutvawadi organisations," the Rajya Sabha member said. He also said that Govind Dev Giri Maharaj, treasurer of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, should be probed in the ongoing investigation into the Ram temple funds. Asked about NCP (SP) leader Jayant Patil's meeting with Fadnavis on Tuesday night and speculation about Sharad Pawar's party joining hands with the BJP-led ruling Mahayuti, Raut said as per his information,

Patil went to meet the CM over an issue about his constituency. Patil is an important member of the NCP (SP) and a key leader in the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi. "I find none of what you're saying to be factual," he said. Raut claimed rumours about the Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP) were being spread by the ruling Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena to divert attention from the main issues. The Sena (UBT) leader said he had spoken to Sule and she would clarify about it at a press conference on Thursday. Raut also raised concerns over the health of activist Sonam Wangchuk, who is on an indefinite fast at the Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. "His health is deteriorating, and it should be an issue of grave concern for everyone," he added. The Cockroach Janta Party has been holding a protest for over 25 days, demanding Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination. Wangchuk joined the agitation on June 28 and has been on an indefinite fast since then.

India now has the funds, the talent and the opening for a research leap

Agencies, New Delhi : The deeper lesson is not that supply chains are fragile, but that they have become instruments of policy — an export licence a lever, a chokepoint a weapon, a technology freely traded one year, an object of denial the next. China spends 2.43 per cent of its output on research and development, three-quarters of it financed by its own companies, with one ambition: To end its dependence on technologies others control and deepen the world's dependence on those it controls. India knows where it stands, because it has taken its own measure without flinching. As of 2023, it spends 0.64 per cent of GDP on research and development — against a global average more than twice that — and barely two-fifths of even that is financed by private enterprise, whereas in China, Korea and America the share is three-quarters or more. However, the state has, for the first time, put real weight behind the proposition. The Anusandhan National Research Foundation, notified in 2024 — a statutory body chaired by the Prime Minister, convening academia, industry, start-ups, philanthropy and the diaspora — exists to change the arithmetic of risk. Its Research, Development and Innovation Fund commits Rs 1 lakh crore over six years to the private sector alone, a fund of funds supplying patient capital built to outlast the quarterly cycle; its ANRF Core adds Rs 50,000 crore over five years for underlying science. The design is catalytic: For every rupee companies invest in pre-commercial research in partnership with the foundation, they are likely to commit five to 10 of their own to commercialise and scale up these research outputs. All-of-government and all-of-society collaboration is a means to higher productivity and impact for all parties. And it goes beyond the cheque,

aligning government procurement and regulation with the landscape it is building. A firm may enter as a limited partner alongside the foundation's anchor capital in a second-level fund manager; participate directly as an eligible technology entity; or do so through a joint venture with start-ups and the global capability centres (GCCs) already here. On the science side, it may partner on a national mission, set a pre-competitive challenge for the foundation to co-fund, route its corporate social responsibility (CSR) through the ANRF Innovation Fund, or share the cost of a single project before committing further. So many doors exist for one reason: The threshold should never be what keeps a willing firm outside. But the argument must move on from what is offered to what is required, for a catalyst is not a substitute, or a crutch. The foundation can lower the risk of the climb; it cannot make it. Three acts remain the industry's own. The first is to mobilise one's own capital behind the public catalyst. The second is to choose, with strategic seriousness, the arenas that matter — the technologies in which dependence is most dangerous and capability most valuable — over the incremental gains a captive market rewards. The third, least glamorous and most important, is institutional: To build inside the firm the machinery long-horizon goals demand — dedicated research units, corporate venture arms, planning functions insulated from the tyranny of the next quarter. India can be the world's research and development partner. All of us have to build it together: The foundation's logic is partnership with academia and deep-technology start-ups that outpace incumbents. Building it yields a dividend, no income statement records: Employment, for the doctoral talent India

trains at cost and too readily watches depart, with the world-class research culture and context. Indian industry can rise to such a challenge and history provides the evidence. When India accepted the World Trade Organisation's intellectual property regime in the mid-1990s, agreeing to honour product patents in pharmaceuticals, the expectation was that the domestic drug industry, built on reverse-engineering molecules others had discovered, would be overrun by the very multinationals whose patents it had worked around. That is not what happened. Indian firms chose to build rather than retreat: They mastered process chemistry and the world's strictest regulatory requirements, and made themselves the pharmacy for much of the world. The inflection now before Indian enterprise is broader; its logic is identical. The climb, moreover, can be swifter than it was for those who went before. India faces the task with the pieces in place at once — a demographic dividend available now, not forever; unmatched digital public infrastructure; funds and architecture now in place; and a global moment that rewards any economy offering an alternative to a single dominant supplier. These are the conditions under which a country does not merely catch up but leaps — from the consumer of intellectual property it has too long been, to the generator its aspirations demand. But the window is the one thing the state cannot hold open alone. Hormuz showed what it costs to depend on others for what one needs; the technological independence that will enhance resilience and, eventually, build indispensability can be achieved only by building capabilities from the ground up. The state has walked the first stretch of that road; the laboratories are ready; the capital is available, and industry's commitment will complete the compact.

'Swastika connects India and Azerbaijan': Indian diplomat invokes ancient symbol amid strained ties

Agencies, New Delhi : As New Delhi seeks to stabilise its relations with Azerbaijan after months of diplomatic friction, India's Ambassador-designate to Baku, Abhay Kumar, has turned to history to highlight a shared civilisational legacy between the two countries. In an article shared on X, Kumar wrote that the sacred Swastika symbol "connects India and Azerbaijan across millennia", arguing that archaeological discoveries and historical records reveal centuries-old civilisational links between the two countries that predate modern geopolitics. Strained ties His post comes against the backdrop of a relationship that has faced significant strain in recent months. Azerbaijan openly backed Pakistan during the India-Pakistan military conflict following the Pahalgam terror attack, prompting a backlash in India. Travel platforms reported a sharp spike in cancellations to Azerbaijan, with many Indian travellers choosing to avoid the two countries. More recently, Azerbaijan al-

leged that India had blocked its bid for full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), an allegation that added another layer of tension to the bilateral relationship. The strategic backdrop has also influenced New Delhi's approach towards Baku. Azerbaijan shares close defence ties with Pakistan and Turkey. In 2021, the three countries institutionalised their strategic partnership through the Baku Declaration, which envisaged deeper cooperation in defence, intelligence, connectivity and economic sectors. The three nations have also conducted the "Three Brothers" joint military exercises, reflecting their growing military interoperability. The declaration also reiterated mutual diplomatic support on issues of territorial integrity, including support for Pakistan's position on Jammu and Kashmir, a development closely watched in New Delhi. A shared history across centuries Kumar's article shifts the conversation to shared history. He

points to Garajamirli in Azerbaijan's Shamkir district, where, according to Kumar, excavations have uncovered pottery and artefacts bearing Swastika motifs dating back to around the second millennium BCE. Kumar argues that these discoveries place Azerbaijan within a wider Eurasian cultural landscape where versions of the symbol appeared across several ancient civilisations. He is careful not to suggest that every civilisation attached identical meanings to the Swastika or that the archaeological evidence represents one continuous cultural tradition. Rather, he argues, it illustrates how communities across Eurasia independently used similar symbols to express ideas of har-

mony, prosperity, and continuity. The Ateshgah link Kumar identifies a more direct historical link at the Ateshgah Fire Temple near Baku, which served as a place of worship for Hindu and Sikh merchants and pilgrims between the 17th and 19th centuries. The temple complex contains inscriptions in Devanagari and Gurmukhi scripts invoking Hindu deities, including Lord Ganesha and Lord Shiva, providing evidence of Indian trading communities that travelled through Persia and Central Asia into the Caspian region. Unlike the prehistoric Swastika motifs found at Garajamirli, Kumar notes that the symbol at Ateshgah belongs to a documented Indian religious tradition carried by merchants and pil-

grims. The article also traces the origin of the Swastika to the Sanskrit word svastika, meaning well-being or good fortune, and notes that it continues to hold religious significance in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Kumar distinguishes the ancient sacred symbol from its appropriation by Nazi Germany in the twentieth century, arguing that the latter represents only a brief episode in the symbol's much longer history. Concluding the article, Kumar argues that the archaeological discoveries at Garajamirli, the Indian inscriptions at Ateshgah and the continuing presence of the Swastika in India's religious traditions together reflect centuries of interaction between India and Azerbaijan.

When gods become memory, and when they remain prayer

Agencies, New Delhi : This is not because Indian myths are "truer" than Greek myths, or because Greek myths are less profound. Greek mythology gave the world some of its most enduring reflections on fate, pride, suffering and moral blindness. Antigone, Oedipus, Prometheus and Odysseus remain permanent inhabitants of the human mind. But the religious world that sustained them was broken. With the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, pagan sacrifice and temple worship were formally restricted and then proscribed. The old gods sur-

vived, but largely as culture. They became a great inheritance, no longer a living faith. India's story is different because its mythology was never sealed off from life. The Ramayana and Mahabharata travelled through recitation, performance, temple ritual, dance, music, sculpture, festivals and family storytelling. They crossed caste, region and language. This is one reason Indian mythology endures. A Greek child may learn about Athena as part of the national or literary heritage. An Indian child may encounter Ganesha through a festival or Shiva through

a family pilgrimage. The story is not presented as a relic. It is embodied in action. There is also a bigger philosophical difference. Greek mythology is often imagined as belonging to a heroic past. Indian sacred imagination moves more comfortably within cyclical time. The yugas suggest that moral decline and renewal are recurring features of existence. This gives the epics continuing relevance. Kurukshetra is not only a battlefield in the Mahabharata. It is also the battlefield of conscience. Ayodhya is not only a kingdom.