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Fraudster poses as ACB official, swindles Tahsildar of Rs.3.3 lakh in Yadadri Bhongir

Bhongir: A fraudster posing as an Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) official, tricked a government official into believing that he would be arrested for corruption and fleeced him of Rs.3.3 lakh. Rajapet Tahsildar Damodar, who fell victim to the fraudster, had received the call from the purported ACB official on Saturday, accusing him of involvement in corrupt practices and threatening him of action. The caller then demanded a hefty sum to avoid arresting Damodar. Fearing arrest, the Tahsildar promptly transferred Rs.3.30 lakh online to the fraudster. Later realizing he had been duped, Damodar filed a complaint with the Rachakonda Cybercrime Police.

Revanth Reddy meets Rahul Gandhi, invites him to attend public meeting in Telangana



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy met Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi on Saturday and briefed him about the caste census and SC classification and extended an invitation to participate in one of the public meetings to be held in the State soon. During the meeting with the Congress MP, the Chief Minister informed that the State government would introduce a Bill on SC classification in the budget session. Time was extended for examining the objections from SC sub castes and the Commission was examining the same, he

said. Stressing that there was no political interference in the caste survey and SC classification, the Chief Minister said the one-man Commission's report on SC classification would be implemented in true spirit.

The caste survey taken up by Telangana government was a road map for the nation. Opposition parties were trying to mislead people over the caste survey, besides instigating them, he charged. "No mistakes were committed in the caste survey. A resolution will be passed in the Assembly and the same will be sent to the parliament," Revanth Reddy said. After the meeting with Rahul Gandhi, the Chief Minister held an informal chat with media persons in the capital. On the turnout MLAs issue, he said the Supreme Court orders would be followed. Even before the verdict was delivered, the BRS was stating that bye-elections were inevitable, he said. Sticking to his comments on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's caste, the Chief Minister said he had not defamed the Prime Minister. "I did not demean the Prime Minister either personally or politically. I spoke facts," Revanth Reddy said and charged that BJP MPs were blowing things out of proportion. All the hopes of MLAs and other leaders aspiring for a cabinet berth were dashed as the Chief Minister clarified that there was no discussion on the issue. "It would not be my own decision but high command would take a call on the cabinet expansion," he said. Stating that he was implementing the tasks entrusted by Rahul Gandhi, the Chief Minister said: "A few people might not like me and are conducting false campaigns against me and deriving devilish pleasure. I made promises to people and they will question me if I fail."

Vehicle carrying devotees from Gujarat crashes into truck during return trip from Mahakumbh, 4 dead

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

vehicle carrying Mahakumbh devotees crash. The first response team in the case was from the highway patrol that rushed the injured persons to the hospital and the bodies of the deceased persons to the Limkheda community health centre. Four persons were killed and four injured when a tempo traveller crashed into a stationary truck in Limkheda under Gujarat's Dahod district while returning from the Mahakumbh Mela in Prayagraj in the wee hours of Saturday. The driver of the tempo traveller, Devrajsinh Rathod from Surat, was among the injured.

MB Vyas, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Limkheda, said, "The truck had been stationary on the Limkheda-Palli road since 7 pm on Friday. At around 3 am, on Saturday, the tempo that was returning from Prayagraj crashed into the rear of the truck at high speed, killing four persons and leaving four others injured... The injured were rushed to the Zydsu hospital (civic hospital) in Dahod while the bodies of the deceased were sent for a post-mortem."

The deceased have been identified as Ankleshwar residents Devrajsinh Nakkum, 47, and Jashuba Nakkum, 49, and Dholka residents Siddhrajsinh Jitendrasinh Dabhi, 32, and Rameshghiri Goswami, 47. The injured persons have been identified as residents of Ankleshwar GIDC, Jaypalsinh Nakkum, 25, Savita Patel, 63, and Keshavlal Patel, 65, as well as Dholka resident Jagatsinh Nakkum, 50. Vyas added that the Limkheda police station had lodged an FIR of rash



and negligent driving as well as culpable homicide not amounting to murder against the driver of the tempo and a probe had been initiated. The first response team in the case was from the highway patrol that rushed the injured persons to the hospital and the bodies of the deceased persons to the Limkheda community health centre. The FIR, lodged on Saturday morning, based on the complaint of Sahdevsinh Nakkum – the son of deceased couple Devrajsinh and Jashuba Nakkum – states that Rathod "drove at top speed and crashed the tempo in the stationary truck with an impact" that resulted in the death of his parents along with their other friends and acquaintances. The complainant also identified one of the injured, Jaypalsinh Nakkum, as his brother.

10 devotees en route to Maha Kumbh killed in Highway accident



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Prayagraj: Ten persons travelling in a Bolero car were killed in a head-on collision with a bus on a highway in the Meja police station area of Prayagraj late on Friday night, police said on Saturday. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Vivek Chandra Yadav said the devotees from Chhattisgarh's Korba district were heading to the Maha Kumbh to take a dip when the Bolero they were travelling in collided head-on with a bus on the highway. All the 10 people travelling in the Bolero died in the accident, while those in the bus suffered minor injuries, the DCP said. While four of the deceased were identified based on their Aadhaar cards, six were identified on the basis of information provided by their relatives. The deceased include Somnath (28), Ishwari Prasad Jaiswal (56), Bhagirathi Jaiswal (43), Santosh Soni (55), Saurabh Soni, Ajay Banjare, Ganga Das Verma, Shiva Rajput (60), Deepak Verma and Raju Sahu.

The bodies have been sent to the SRN Hospital in Prayagraj for autopsy, the DCP said. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident. In a post in Hindi on X, the Chief

Minister's office said, "UPCM @myogiadityanath has expressed deep condolences on the loss of lives in a road accident in Prayagraj district. He has expressed condolences to the bereaved families." "The injured have been sent to the hospital and the Chief Minister has directed the district administration to provide them with proper treatment. He has wished for the speedy recovery of the injured," it said.

Former DSP Praneeth Rao gets bail in phone tapping case

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hyderabad: A local court granted bail to a former Deputy Superintendent of Police, an accused in a phone tapping case. First Additional Sessions Court here allowed the bail petition of D Praneeth Rao on Friday after he executed a personal bond for Rs One lakh with two sureties each for the like sum. The court further directed Praneeth to appear before the SHO of Panjagutta police station on every Monday for a period of eight weeks, surrender his passport before the court, and cooperate with the investigation agency. Praneeth who earlier worked as a DSP in Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) in Telangana was among the four police officials, who were arrested by Hyderabad Police since March 2024, for allegedly erasing the intelligence information from various electronic gadgets as well as for alleged phone tapping during the previous BRS regime. Seeking bail the petitioner had contended that he was falsely implicated in the case due to political reasons and he cannot be targeted and victimised for performing official duties. All other persons arrested in the case have already been granted bail. The former chief of SIB T Prabhakar Rao, and another accused in the case are absconding and are suspected to be in the US.

Mid-day meals, infested with worms, served to students at Kondapur govt school

Hyderabad: The mid-day meal served to children at the Government School Kothaguda in Kondapur on Saturday was found to include undercooked rice and worms. Angered over this, parents, along with wards, staged a protest in front of the school and questioned the school management about the worms in the undercooked meals. They raised concerns over children falling ill frequently. Despite repeated complaints from parents earlier highlighting the plight of their children in the schools, there has been no change in the meals served, they said. Recalling that the mid-day meals were once nutritious and well prepared, parents expressed their ire over the deteriorating quality of the meals due to lack of supervision on meal preparation that was being done with cheap quality ingredients.

Honour to welcome PM Modi back to U.S.: Intel chief Tulsi Gabbard



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

U.S. Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard has said that it was an "honour" to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi back to the U.S. and look forward to strengthening the friendship between the countries. Indian-American Ms. Gabbard met Mr. Modi hours after he landed in the U.S. on Wednesday (February 12, 2025) to have a bilateral meeting with President Donald Trump. "It was an honour to welcome India's Prime Minister @narendramodi back to the United States, and look forward to continuing to strengthen the US-India friendship," Gabbard posted on X.

After meeting Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Modi called her a "strong votary" of India-U.S. friendship. "Met USA's Director of National Intelligence, @TulsiGabbard in Washington

DC. Congratulated her on her confirmation. Discussed various aspects of the India-USA friendship, of which she's always been a strong votary," Mr. Modi posted on X on Wednesday. Discussions also focused on enhancing intelligence cooperation in counter-terrorism, cybersecurity and emerging threats. On Wednesday, Ms. Gabbard was sworn in as director of national intelligence in the Oval Office, hours after the Senate confirmed her, The Hill reported. Attorney General Pam Bondi administered the oath of office to Ms. Gabbard, who Mr. Trump called "an American of extraordinary courage and patriotism." He noted that she was deployed three times in the Army National Guard and that she is a former Democratic congresswoman, riffing "Can you believe that?" Ms. Gabbard, 43, a former Democratic congresswoman from Hawaii, had faced bipartisan scepticism about her suitability for overseeing the spy agencies.

Ms. Gabbard thanked the President for his trust in her and vowed to "refocus our intelligence community" after she was sworn in. "Unfortunately, the American people have very little trust in the intelligence community, largely because they've seen the weaponization and politicization of an entity that is supposed to be purely focused on ensuring our national security," the new intelligence chief said. The Senate confirmed her in a 52-48 vote, following two months of deliberations over whether Ms. Gabbard is qualified enough to lead the intelligence agencies and prepare Trump's daily intelligence brief.

India takes on reciprocal tariffs, cuts duty on bourbon whiskey in latest move

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hyderabad: US President Donald Trump has asserted that Washington will not spare India from reciprocal tariffs. The US President, at a joint media briefing with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 14, said both sides are looking at striking a major trade deal soon while calling import duties imposed by India on certain US products as "very unfair" and "strong." "Whatever India charges, we will charge them," Trump said, adding "We are being reciprocal with India."

During 2021-24, the US was the largest trading partner of India. During April-November 2024-25, the bilateral trade in goods between the two countries stood at \$ 82.52 billion (\$52.89 billion exports, \$29.63 imports). The trade gap was \$23.26 billion, which is in the favour of India. The US accounts for about 18 per cent of India's total goods exports, 6.22 per cent in imports, and 10.73 per cent in bilateral trade. Trump has already announced a 25 per cent duty on all steel and aluminium imports. It will come into effect from March 12.

Moody's Ratings have stated that Indian steel producers will face increased challenges in exporting their products following the US decision to impose the 25 per cent tariff. India's average tariff rate of 17% is one of the highest among the big economies, as compared to 8% for China, 13% for South Korea, 11% for Brazil, and 5% for the European Union. The US has 3%. According to the economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), the US itself imposes high duties on several goods to safeguard its domestic markets.



Citing data from the World Trade Organisation's World Tariff Profiles 2023, the GTRI has highlighted the significant tariffs the US places on products such as dairy (188 per cent), fruits and vegetables (132 per cent), cereals and food preparations (193 per cent), oilseeds, fats, and oils (164 per cent), and beverages and tobacco (150 per cent). Other goods, including coffee, tea, cocoa, and spices, face tariffs of 53 per cent, while fish products and chemicals are taxed at 35 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively. GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava has noted that some countries, including the US, Japan, and South Korea, impose steep tariffs on certain goods, with rates as high as 350 per cent, 457 per cent, and 887 per cent, respectively. The Budget presented earlier in the month has already cut customs duties on quite a few items making imports entry cheaper. Here's what steps India has taken so far:

Government will take up Musi Rejuvenation project at any cost, says Bhatti

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hyderabad: Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said the State government was committed in executing the Musi River Rejuvenation project. "The Congress government is committed to transform River Musi into fresh water river and turn it into a boon for Hyderabad. Irrespective of the hurdles and expenditure, government will take up the project," he said at the Telangana Builders Green Summit organized here on Saturday. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the Fourth City would be Hyderabad's Future City. It would be developed as a global hub and centre. As part of construction of Net Zero city, the government would take policy decisions to ensure there would not be any kind of problems in future in the region, he said. The State government under its new energy policy had set a target to generate 20,000 MW green power by 2029-30 and it would be scaled up to



40,000 MW by 2035. An amount of Rs 10,000 crore has been allocated in one year to Hyderabad city for development works, he said, adding that all the diesel vehicles in Hyderabad city would be gradually changed into electric vehicles.

Amid Mahakumbh, Yogi Adityanath to open climate conclave to see role of religious leaders

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Prayagraj: Amid the Mahakumbh Mela 2025, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will inaugurate a climate conclave on Sunday that will see the role of religious leaders in environmental protection and climate change mitigation. Also, the sacred rivers, besides water security and climate change are the prominent topics of the discussion. The participation at the 'Faith of Kumbh and Climate Change' conclave of religious thought leaders like Gaur Gopal Das, Swami Mukundananda, Shalini Mehrotra from Shri Ram Chandra Mission, Sister Manorama from Brahma Kumaris, Prof Chandramauli Upadhyay of Kashi Vishwanath Temple, Swami Atmashradhananda of the

Ramakrishna Mission, Acharya Hari Das Gupta of Kailash Mansarovar and many others will be witnessed. Academics like Upendra Tripathi of the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science; Rajendra Ratnoo of the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM); and R.R. Rashmi of TERI will also participate in panel discussions. The panel discussion topics also include environmentally sound religious centre and congregations with a focus on Mahakumbh, the role of governments in supporting faith-based organisations in climate action and the Promotion of Mission LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment) by religious organisations, besides the role of religious organisations in disaster relief, and climate adaptation and mitigation.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Biren Singh must own up

Finally, President's rule has been imposed in Manipur, four days after Chief Minister N Biren Singh's resignation. The Manipur Assembly, which has tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation.

For the last 20 months, the opposition as well as civil society organisations had been demanding the imposition of President's rule in Manipur to stop the ethnic violence. However, the Centre has done so not to put an end to the prolonged violence that crippled the State, but due to constitutional compulsion arising out of the failure of the State BJP leaders to choose a suitable and acceptable leader for the CM's post.

Biren Singh's resignation was fuelled by growing disaffection within the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and the opposition Congress' plan of a no-confidence motion in the Assembly. Another reason is the direction of the Supreme Court to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory to provide a "sealed-cover report" on "leaked audio tapes" that it is examining. Singh, in the audio tapes, is allegedly featured as an instigator of the conflict between the two ethnic groups of Manipur. Article 355 of the Constitution, which is considered a step below the President's rule, had been in force in Manipur since ethnic clashes broke out in May 2023 between the hill-majority Kuki tribes and the valley-majority Meiteis over disagreements on land, resources, political representation and affirmative action policies. However, the Chief Minister revealed its application only in January 2024. Article 355 says the Centre must protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance to ensure government stability. It allows the Centre to take charge of a State's law and order enforcement without dismissing the government. By applying Article 355 in the State, the Centre passively acknowledged the prevailing acute law and order situation in Manipur.

'Strong criticism' may have 'devastating impact on officials': Delhi HC expunges remarks against Crime Branch



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

delhi high court, Delhi Police, Delhi Police Crime Branch, Delhi HC expunges remarks against Crime Branch, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs Justice Mahajan recorded that while it was apparent the trial court's remarks were "made in regard to the failure on the part of the investigating agency to carry out the investigation in a proper manner," he said. Accepting that the "anguish" of trial court orders is "not without reason", the Delhi High Court has, however, ruled in favour of Delhi Police while directing the expunging of critical remarks made by the trial court against the Crime Branch and its officers in three cases. Justice Amit Mahajan, in a February 7 order, recorded that "strong criticism, vituperative remarks, may have a devastating impact on the reputation and career of officials involved in the case". The Crime Branch, in a bunch of petitions filed in 2022 and 2023, had sought that the remarks, observations and strictures made by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate of Northeast district's Karkardooma court, in nine orders in 2022 — ranging from July until October — in relation to three FIRs, be expunged. These include one from 2007 (for offences of forgery under IPC) and two others from 2020 — one for offences under the Emblems and Name (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950 and another for offences under the Arms Act. In these orders, the trial court had ruled the non-compliance of directions issued by the court to Crime Branch officers. Justice Mahajan recorded that while it was apparent the trial court's remarks were "made in regard to the failure on the part of the investigating agency to carry out the investigation in a proper manner," he said, "the anguish of the learned trial court is not without reason, yet the use of disparaging remarks that tend to lower the credibility of the investigating authority ought to be avoided". "If the learned trial court was concerned with the manner of the conduct of investigation, the court could simply have recorded the fact. However, use of castigating remarks, showcause notices to the Commissioner of Police seeking action taken against the officers, manner of enquiry, etcetera, in the opinion of this court, cannot be sustained... It is not in doubt that the orders of the court must be obeyed and complied with. Further, no individual shall be allowed to diminish the authority and majesty of the court. However, scathing remarks tend to have lasting consequences. It cannot be overlooked that every word that forms part of the record/judicial order gains permanence," Justice Mahajan recorded.

Singur Hydroelectric Project logs fourth highest generation of 20 million units

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Sangareddy: The Singur Hydroelectric Project generated 20 million units so far beginning April 1, 2024. Most of the power was generated during September and October. While TG Genco generated 7.27 MU in September, it generated 5.7 MU until October 17. The project has two 7.5 MW capacity hydropower units which were installed after the project was constructed across River Manjeera at Singur village in Pulkal mandal in 1998. Since the hydropower units were commissioned, TG Genco has generated more power only three times than this year. Genco generated a record-breaking 30 MU in 2022-23. Until this year, the 25.68 MU generation in 2010-11 was the highest ever.

'Hybrid court is still a court': HC after lawyer attends hearing from park



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hybrid court, delhi Hybrid court, Delhi HC Bar Association, delhi high court, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs In a January 30 order, the HC noted specific directions to maintain court decorum are not being followed by advocates while appearing virtually. After an advocate was found attending a case hearing from a park, mobile phone in hand, the Delhi High Court has requested the HC Bar Association (DHBCA) as well as bar associations of all districts of Delhi to "sensitise members of the Bar with regard to appearance in hybrid courts".

In an order on January 30, Justice Girish Kathpalia emphasised that "hybrid courts also are courts" while noting that specific directions to maintain court decorum are not being followed by advocates while appearing in court

virtually. "It has been repeatedly observed in a number of cases that appearance through video-conferencing must be encouraged because it is extremely difficult for advocates to run around different court complexes in Delhi and the establishment has already incurred substantial expenditure on electronic infrastructure. Further, when an advocate sitting in her/his office wants to appear through videoconferencing before different court complexes on the same day, she/he can assist the courts with convenience and in a better manner.

"But for that, the counsel has to understand that decorum of the court must be kept in mind. Quite often, on account of connectivity issues at the end of counsel appearing through videoconferencing, the counsel remains inaudible. Often, the video is not switched on. The hybrid courts also are courts only. Even in the daily cause list of this court, specific directions to maintain decorum while appearing through videoconferencing are circulated every day. But to no avail," Justice Kathpalia recorded. The court made the observation while dealing with a matter where, during the course of dictation of the order, the advocate appearing in the case switched off his video. The advocate was also in a park, with a mobile phone in hand. "In these circumstances, I am not marking the appearance of that advocate as a counsel in the present case. Although that can call for dismissal of the appeal in default, doing so would cause harm to the litigant who is not at fault. As such, I have examined the record," the court reasoned.

Govts come & go, relationship continues: Aadiya Thackeray after meeting Arvind Kejriwal



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Aadiya Thackeray, Aadiya Thackeray Arvind Kejriwal meet, Arvind Kejriwal, Uddhav Thackeray, Aam Aadmi Party AAP, AAP, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aadiya Thackeray meets AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal in New Delhi. Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's son and Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aadiya Thackeray met Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday, days after the party's defeat in the Delhi polls. Thackeray, representing one of the principal players of the INDIA bloc of opposition parties, called the current

electoral process "neither free nor fair" and stressed the urgent need for the alliance to strategise its next move. "It is clear in the heart of the Shiv Sena (UBT) that governments come and go, but our relationship will continue as it is. That is what we came here to convey. The work that Kejriwal and the AAP have done for Delhi over the past 10 years is well known to the people," Thackeray said. "In this election, the Election Commission played a significant role. The BJP had the 'blessings of the Election Commission', and the BJP should be grateful for that," he added. Thackeray said on Wednesday, he spoke with senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and on Thursday, discussed with Kejriwal issues related to the way elections were being conducted. "We will continue to fight in the interest of the nation. We will continue to raise the voice of the people. If we have to take to the streets for the country's welfare, we will do so," he said. He added that while the AAP and the Congress will conduct their own reviews of the Delhi elections, the "friendship within the INDIA bloc will remain intact". "We are raising the issue of how Maharashtra's voter count suddenly increased by 47 lakh. Who cast the 76 lakh votes after the final deadline? Is there any video footage or token for this? The Election Commission is completely unwilling to discuss this... Anyone can win or lose an election, but it is essential for elections to be free and fair. We will continue to fight and refine our strategy," he added.

MCD presents Rs 17,000-cr budget, highest allocation for sanitation

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

delhi budget, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), MCD, MCD budget, Ashwani Kumar, delhi sanitation, sanitation budget, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs At MCD's special budget meeting, The Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Ashwani Kumar, Thursday presented a budget of Rs 17,000 crore for the next financial year with sanitation receiving the highest allocation of Rs 4,907.11 crore. This is the third time that the budget has been presented by the commissioner due to the absence of a Standing Committee.

According to budget estimates, MCD will earn Rs 16,701 crore in financial year 2026, an increase from this year's Rs 15,686 crore. It is expected to incur an expenditure of Rs 17,002 crore, an increase from Rs 16,684 this year. The allocation for education saw a jump from Rs 1,609 crore to Rs 1,693 crore for the following year. The MCD runs 1,531 primary schools, 43 grant-aided schools, and 809 recognized schools. Also, Rs 3 crore was allocated for building stadiums and sports grounds. Allocation for the health sector saw a decrease from Rs 2,061 crore to Rs 1,833 crore. The expenditure for sanitation, meanwhile, witnessed a massive increase of over Rs 300 crore — a jump from Rs 4,593 crore to Rs 4,907 crore. The budget allocated Rs 25 crore each to set up bio-methanisation plants at Nangli Sakrawati and Goyla Dairy. It also proposed to start work on a 3,600-tonne per day waste-to-energy plant at Narela Bawana and a 3,000-tonne per day plant at Ghazipur. They



are expected to become operational in December 2027 and 2028, respectively, following which, the MCD claimed, there will be no need to send waste to landfills. While the budget proposed a 50-tonne per day capacity Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) for plastic waste disposal in Dwaraka, three bio-CBG/CNG plants are set to come up in Okhla, Ghogha Dairy and Ghazipur, to process 750 metric tonnes of vegetative waste daily. Of the Rs 4,300 crore target for 2024-25, only Rs 1,908.06 crore or less than half in property tax revenue has been collected till January this year. Also, while income from property tax is expected to decrease to Rs 4,000 crore the following year, income from advertisement is supposed to go up from Rs 300 crore to Rs 800 crore. The budget sanctioned Rs 37 crore to develop Rawta and Daurala villages in Najafgarh as model villages.

Impounded vehicles to be claimed within a month, no more safe custody for 90 days

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Impounded vehicles, delhi Impounded vehicles, Delhi Transport department, Delhi Parking and Management Rules 2019, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs At present, the authorities concerned tow away vehicles parked illegally in a no-parking zone and keep them in a safe pit. A registered vehicle, which has been impounded by authorities in the Capital, will be put up for auction if not claimed by the owner within a month as compared to the 90-day window earlier, the Delhi Transport department has said in its latest notification. The move comes in the wake of a shortage of space for safekeeping of such vehicles, said officials.

According to a notification issued by the department on Monday, if a registered vehicle is not claimed within 30 days, the owner will receive a final notice with an additional seven-day deadline to retrieve it. If not claimed before the deadline, it will be put up for auction. The department has made changes in the Delhi Parking and Management Rules 2019, stating that if such a vehicle is kept for more than seven days, the safe custody charges will be doubled. At present, the authorities concerned tow away vehicles parked illegally in a no-parking zone and keep them in a safe pit.

To get the vehicle released, the owner has to pay towing charges, which range between Rs 200 to Rs 1,500 (depending on the category of vehicle). In case it is not released within a period of 90 days, a notice of 15 days is issued to the owner. If the registered owner fails to get the



vehicle released within the period of notice, such vehicle is put up for public auction by the agency concerned. "But due to the 90-day period, vehicles were piling up at the pit and there is also a space issue..."

So, keeping this in mind, now, the department has made changes, according to which the window period has been reduced from 90 days to 30 days," said an official. For unregistered or de-registered vehicles (used to carry goods or passengers), a 10-day window is set with an additional deadline of seven days. If not claimed within the stipulated time, it will be put up for public auction or for scrapping units. On average, 50 e-rickshaws are seized daily. There are parking spaces for seized vehicles at three places in Delhi and the towing charges are between Rs 200-1500.

Denied to use sound box at Bhagwat meet for Board exams, RSS moves HC



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

The West Bengal unit of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Thursday approached a single judge bench of Justice Amrita Sinha of the Calcutta High Court alleging that they were denied permission to use sound boxes in a meeting to be addressed by the RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat at Talit Burdwan's Sai Complex on February 16. The meeting in question is for Karyakartas of the RSS as part of Bhagwat's 10-day tour in West Bengal.

The petitioner claimed that the Sub-Divisional Officer of the area had denied permission citing the ongoing secondary examinations by the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) being underway. However, the petitioner countered that since the event was scheduled for a Sunday, the use of sound boxes would not disrupt any exams. At a press conference earlier, the RSS leaders had said that Bhagwat would meet senior Sangh members, and hold an important meeting with the central leadership of the Sangh at Kolkata's Akhil Bharatiya Toli Baithak on February 11 and 12. They had said he would head for Burdwan on February 13 and inaugurate a new Sangh office the day after.

Abhishek hits out at BJP for criticising state Budget: 'Union Budget anti-Bengal, deceptive'

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Trinamool Congress (TMC) general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Thursday hit out at the Opposition BJP for criticising the state Budget, presented in the Assembly a day ago. "The same people who once said they would scrap 'Lakshmir Bhandar' are now making promises to increase the amount. This is the victory of the 'Maa-Mati-Manush' ideology," Abhishek said, referring to the BJP announcing to increase the monthly stipend under the scheme to Rs 3,000 after the 2026 Assembly elections in the state. After the state government kept the allocation for Lakshmir Bhandar same in next financial year's Budget, the BJP accused the TMC of failing to address the economic uplift of the women of poor households.

Hitting out at the state BJP chief and Union minister Sukanta Majumdar, Abhishek said: "They (BJP) have faced setbacks due to their caste and communal-based politics. Sukanta Majumdar should introspect. Had he received 5,000 fewer votes this time, he would have lost his seat. Next time, he will not be able to retain his seat (Balurghat). He should explain what he has done for Bengal in the past nine months since the NDA government made him a minister," the TMC MP added. He called the Union Budget, presented by Nirmala Sitharaman on February 28, "anti-Bengal" and alleged that the Centre was deliberately depriving the state. "Nirmala Sitharaman's budget is designed to stall Bengal's progress. Bihar has been showered with allocations, while Bengal has been sidelined. It's a classic case of political discrimination. They offer 'laddoos' if you vote for them and neglect you if you don't," he said, adding the Union Budget was nothing but deception. "The BJP has 12 MPs here, the same as in Bihar. They allocated crores of rupees to Bihar. We have no objection; other states should receive funds. But why not Bengal? Is it because we did not vote for them or because we did not compromise our principles or sell our spine?" he said. Criticising the Centre's income tax relief measures, Abhishek said, "They talk about tax relief up to Rs 12 lakh, but GST is imposed on almost everything except water. Whatever they give with one hand, they take away with the other." On Wednesday after the presentation of the state Budget, TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had drawn comparisons between her government's social welfare schemes with that of the BJP-led government at the Centre, saying "while we deliver, the Union Budget only makes promises." "On one hand, there is the Central budget. They promise only ahead of elections. Their budgets are based on elections. We don't do that in our budget. Ours is based on what we say." "The Central Budget contains only promises... We allocate funds from our own revenue, and what we say in our budget, we deliver," she asserted. "Our vision is very clear; it is to create more and more development," she added.

Revive murder cases of 2007 Nandigram land stir: High Court

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

2007 Nandigram murders, 2007 Nandigram deaths, 2007 Nandigram murder cases, Calcutta High Court, Indian express news, current affairs "A state must exhibit zero tolerance towards any form of violence," the bench said.

The Calcutta High Court has held that accused persons in ten criminal cases pertaining to murders in Nandigram and Khejuri during an anti-land acquisition movement in 2007 must stand trial, directing that the cases be revived and they should be prosecuted. Declaring the West Bengal government's decision to withdraw prosecution in the cases involving murder of at least ten persons as bad in law, a division bench presided by Justice Debansu Basak directed that appropriate measures be taken by the prosecution to revive the cases. The cases had been withdrawn under section 321 (withdrawal of prosecution against any person by the prosecution with the consent of the court concerned) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) in 2020. Holding that murders did take place, the bench, also comprising Justice Md Shabbir Rashidi, said in its judgement delivered on Monday that the accused in the ten criminal cases must stand trial. "Allowing the prosecution to withdraw under Section 321 of the Criminal Procedure Code will not be in public interest. In fact, it would cause public harm and injury," the bench observed.



Union Home Secretary reviews execution of Centre's flagship schemes in Delhi

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Govind Mohan, Union Home Secretary, Delhi flagship schemes, flagship schemes, One Nation One Ration Card, Smart Cities Mission, PM SVANidhi, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana, Delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs "Earlier, a lot of projects faced problems due to pending approvals from ministers... But with the BJP now in power in both Delhi and the Centre, work will be expedited." With the newly-elected BJP government likely to be sworn in next week, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Thursday held a meeting with Delhi Chief Secretary Dharmendra and senior government officials to review the progress and implementation of the Centre's flagship schemes in the Capital, sources told.

"The Union Home Ministry holds meetings from time to time to review the progress of flagship schemes of the Union government... Many such schemes funded by the Centre are yet to be implemented in Delhi... For instance, the outgoing AAP government did not implement Ayushman Bharat Yojana," a senior government official said. One Nation One Ration Card, Smart Cities Mission, PM SVANidhi, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana are some of the 35-odd flagship schemes of the Union government. "Some of the schemes have already been implemented in Delhi... There are some that are yet to be implemented or are in the implementation stage... or the progress is slow... For instance, a memorandum of understanding has been signed for PM SHRI Schools' implementation in Delhi... In the meeting, it

was discussed how to speed up the project, and implement it effectively," the official said. Another senior official said, "We have been directed by the Union government to expedite work for timely achievement of goals and effective implementation of the Centre's flagship schemes in Delhi." "Earlier, a lot of projects faced problems due to pending approvals from ministers... But with the BJP now in power in both Delhi and the Centre, work will be expedited." With the newly-elected BJP government likely to be sworn in next week, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Thursday held a meeting with Delhi Chief Secretary Dharmendra and senior government officials to review the progress and implementation of the Centre's flagship schemes in the Capital, sources told.

Earlier this week, the Chief Secretary had directed the Health department to prepare a Cabinet note on the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana in the Capital. The health insurance scheme has been implemented in all states except West Bengal and Delhi. Sources said the health department has also been asked to prepare draft notes for the implementation of four other components of Ayushman Bharat — Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, Health Information Management System, and Ayushman Arogya Mandir.

All those schemes/programmes of the Central government, which have not yet been implemented in Delhi, may be taken up for implementation. The departments may take urgent action on these schemes/programmes for taking requisite approval of the competent authority," read the minutes of the meeting Dharmendra had held with all department heads on Monday.

'Footpaths not meant for driving': Delhi court sentences man to 10 years in jail for killing 2 sleeping on pavement

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Nigam Both Ghat, Nigam Both Ghat murders, Nigam Both Ghat deaths, car accidents, Delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs The court noted that testimonies of the three witnesses were "clear, cogent, credible, trustworthy and consistent and have been corroborated by other prosecution witnesses, medical (and) scientific evidence on record..." A Delhi court Wednesday sentenced a man to 10 years in prison for killing two and injuring 10 people, who were sleeping on a pavement near Nigam Both Ghat in August 2014.

In his order dated February 12, Additional Sessions Judge Virender Kumar Kharta of Tis Hazari Court said, "It is true that footpaths are not meant for sleeping and... are meant for walking for pedestrians but it is also true that footpaths are also not meant for driving vehicles." "Due to extreme poverty, the vagabonds do not have any other option except to sleep on footpaths as proper and sufficient places for sleeping/residing for such people are not available in Delhi," Judge Kharta added. On January 18, the court convicted Rishi Kumar, the man driving the car, under sections 304 II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide) of the IPC, along with section 185 (driving by a drunken person) of the Motor Vehicles Act. The probe had found that Kumar was driving in an inebriated condition. "The convict was aware that vagabonds used to sit/remain present at the spot of incident i.e. on the said footpath and this fact has been duly proved by the prosecution. Despite having knowledge, the convict voluntarily consumed liquor and started driving a vehicle in such a condition and he had the knowledge that



his act could cause the death of persons and the innocent victims had no knowledge in this regard," the court said. All the victims in the case were homeless and the families of most could not be traced. The families of only three injured could be traced. The three later went on to become eyewitnesses in this case. The court noted that the testimonies of the three witnesses were "clear, cogent, credible, trustworthy and consistent and have been corroborated by other prosecution witnesses, medical (and) scientific evidence on record..." In his order, Judge Kharta also cited the 'Road Accidents in India, 2022' report published by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, according to which over 4.61 lakh road accidents had been reported in the country in 2022. These resulted in 1.68 lakh deaths and 4.43 lakh injuries, the report added. "In the world, India has the highest number of road accident deaths. Despite enhancement of fines and punishments in Motor Vehicles Act, the violation of traffic rules has become a norm," Judge Kharta said.

Dummy schools can't replace educational experience offered by full-fledged school system: CBSE

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Dummy schools, Delhi dummy schools, CBSE, CBSE board, Central Board of Secondary Education, Delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs CBSE Building at Preet Vihar, in New Delhi. Express photo by Praveen Khanna Success in competitive exams should not come at the cost of quality education and overall development, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) said in a statement Thursday, warning against the rise of dummy schools — institutions where students are enrolled on paper but skip regular schooling to focus on private coaching, had reported on Thursday that Harsh Jha (17), a student, had scored 100 in Paper 1 of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main after enrolling in FIITJEE's coaching programme while attending a dummy school in Nangloi. In a statement, the CBSE said that Jha had enrolled at S G N Public School in Nangloi, an institution that was disaffiliated last year after a surprise inspection found it was sponsor-



ing non-attending students, besides violating multiple other Board norms. The statement asserted that while coaching institutes may aid preparation, "they cannot replace the comprehensive educational experience offered by a full-fledged school system".

Gujarat govt identifies 21 key lion corridors for Gir Protected Area



The Gujarat government has identified 21 important lion corridors as per the management plan for Gir Protected Area. The information was shared in Rajya Sabha by Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Kirti Vardhan Singh, while replying to an unstarred question raised by MP Parimal Nathwani.

shared in Rajya Sabha by Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Kirti Vardhan Singh, Thursday while replying to an unstarred question raised by MP Parimal Nathwani.

"As informed by the State Government of Gujarat, 21 important corridors have been identified as per the management plan for Gir Protected Area," the minister replied. "The Project Lion is being implemented in the Gir landscape in Gujarat. The Project envisages landscape ecology based conservation of the Asiatic Lion in Gujarat by integrating conservation and eco-development. The Project Lion document titled 'Lion @ 47: Vision for Amrutkal' has been prepared with the following objectives: i. To secure & restore lions' habitats for managing its growing population ii. Scale up livelihood generation and participation of local communities iii. Become a global hub of knowledge on big cat disease diagnostics and treatment iv. Inclusive biodiversity conservation through project lion initiative," stated the reply. It further added, "As per the information available with the Ministry, the Government of Gujarat has conducted comprehensive studies on lion corridors using modern technologies like radio collaring and GIS mapping. In the process, the relevant institutions are engaged. Various initiatives have been taken up to mitigate habitat fragmentation and human wildlife conflict, which includes habitat restoration efforts, community engagement programmes and scientific research for ensuring the long-term conservation efforts."

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Gir Protected Area, Gir Protected Area lion corridors, lion corridors, Gir lion corridors, Gujarat government, Ahmedabad news, Gujarat news, India news, Indian express, current affairs Project Lion is being implemented in the Gir landscape in Gujarat. The Gujarat government has identified 21 important lion corridors as per the management plan for Gir Protected Area. The information was

21-year-old man critically hurt after ticket checker 'pushes' him off train; case lodged



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

ticket checker pushes man off train, man critically hurt, Valsad, Vapi GRP Police, Ahmedabad news, Gujarat news, India news, Indian express, current affairs The Vapi GRP has registered a case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 110 (attempting to commit culpable homicide) and 352 (intentional insult with the intent to provoke a breach of peace) against the accused. A 21-year-old man sustained serious injuries after he was allegedly pushed out of a running train when the ticket checker found that he was travelling — on a local passenger train going from Bhilad to Vapi in Valsad — without a ticket, said police on Thursday. The Vapi GRP Police has registered a case against the accused, Ashok Kumbhare, and started a probe. According to police sources, victim Sandeep Arya, and Ajay Kumar, who work

at a factory in Vapi, had gone to Bhilad to buy some parts required for repairing a boiler. On Tuesday night, when the duo reached Bhilad railway station, they found that the Mumbai-Valsad local train was about to leave and boarded the train without buying a ticket, said police sources.

On the way, the ticket checker caught them travelling without a ticket following which he asked them to pay Rs 1,000 each as penalty, to which they refused, leading to heated arguments between them. The duo also made Kumbhare talk to their firm owner, Sarfaraz Malavikya, but the former was not convinced, said police. Later, Kumbhare allegedly took away Arya's mobile phone as he was trying to reach out to other people. When the train arrived at Vapi station, both attempted to get down but were stopped by Kumbhare, who told them to accompany him to Valsad railway station to be handed over to the Railway Protection Force. Both started arguing with Kumbhare, angered by which he allegedly pushed Arya from the running train at Balitha railway crossing, said sources. Ajay immediately pulled the emergency chain and reached the spot where Arya was lying severely injured, following which he was taken to Valsad Civil Hospital, said police. Sandeep is undergoing treatment in the ICU ward and his condition is said to be critical. The Vapi GRP has registered a case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 110 (attempting to commit culpable homicide) and 352 (intentional insult with the intent to provoke a breach of peace) against the accused.

11 held for opening bank accounts using fake Aadhaar cards to commit cyber crimes

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Eleven members of a gang were arrested in Ahmedabad for allegedly forging Aadhaar cards to open "benami" accounts in multiple banks to commit cyber crimes, said the police, adding that gang kingpin is absconding. The Cyber Crime Police station received a tip-off about the gang operating from Ahmedabad's Chandkheda area. Based on the information received by Inspector NB Nakum, a police team raided the premises and arrested nine of the total 11 accused. During investigation, the police found out that one of the accused, Suresh Jagdish Bishnoi, was leading this operation.

All the accused belong to Rajasthan's Jodhpur. A statement from the Cyber Crime Police Thursday stated that the "employees" allegedly revealed that they would go to different branches of multiple banks, open up accounts and hand over their account details to Bishnoi and another person named Sunil Dhirani, who was based in Jodhpur. The accused used to submit fake Aadhaar cards while opening up their bank accounts, said the statement. During the probe it was found that several Aadhaar cards had the same phone number but different addresses. The accused had, using the phone number, allegedly received OTP from UIDAI and changed the original address of Rajasthan to those in Chandkheda (Ahmedabad), Morbi and Rajkot on the said Aadhaar cards, according to the statement. During the raid, the police seized 12 mobile phones, 21 identity documents (Aadhaar cards, PAN cards and cheque book), 10 bank passbooks, 43 ATM debit cards and 15 SIM cards, said DCP (Cyber Crime) Lavina Sinha. Further interrogation revealed that 109 complaints were filed on the National Cyber Reporting Platform (NCRP) against the accounts opened



by them in 21 states, out of which four complaints were registered from Gujarat. The accused had opened bank accounts across 26 branches, said the police. The nine accused arrested during the raid include Suresh Jagdish Bishnoi (19), Anil Ugrasain Bishnoi (20), Kailash Khamoram Bishnoi (43), Hukamram Bhagwanram Bishnoi (19), Manish Hajariram Bishnoi (20), Vikas Punaram Bishnoi (18), Rakesh Sukhram Bishnoi (22), Rakesh Sahiram Bishnoi (22) and Mankul Sahiram Bishnoi (25). Notably, when accused Rakesh Sahiram Bishnoi was searched, the police found a pistol with seven live cartridges from his person. Based on the inputs given by the nine accused, two more accused, Lalit Shankarlal Bishnoi and Kuldeep Hanumanram Kichar, were arrested from Rajasthan. The alleged leader of the gang, Sunil Dhirani, remains absconding, said the police. A case has been registered against all the accused in the cybercrime police station under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 318(4) (cheating), 316(2) (criminal breach of trust), 61(2)(a) (criminal conspiracy), 54 (abetment present) and Sections 66(c), 66(d) of the IT Act.

Sanjaynagar slum redevelopment scheme not complete yet, Congress leader demands blacklisting of contractor

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Chandrakant Shrivastav, Sanjaynagar slum redevelopment, Sanjaynagar slum redevelopment scheme, Dilip Rana, Ahmedabad news, Gujarat news, India news, Indian express, current affairs Officials of the VMC that a fresh notice had been served to the contractor for the "serious lapse" in the case. Even as the Sanjaynagar slum redevelopment scheme for 1,841 slum dwellers, commissioned by the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) in 2017, remains incomplete after eight years, Opposition Leader Chandrakant Shrivastav on Thursday demanded that the contractor be blacklisted for "failing to comply with the deadlines". In a memorandum submitted to Municipal Commissioner Dilip Rana, Congress leader Shrivastav said that not only has the developer failed to complete the project — originally meant to have been handed over in 18 months and thereafter, by January 1, 2025 after a 2022 resolution of the General Board awarded it 36 months' time — it has also defaulted in paying the rental allowance of Rs 2,000 promised to the beneficiaries.

Shrivastav's memorandum stated, "The contract for the project was awarded in March 2016-17 with a deadline

of 18 months to finish the in-situ rehabilitation project for about 1,841 slums that were erroneously shown, instead of the original number of 2,200 to 2,300 slum units that should have been rehabilitated... Thereafter, under the guise of Covid-19 pandemic and monsoon, the work has been suspended..." The Congress has claimed that the contractor has not responded to at least 50 notices served by the civic body. "On January 1, 2022, the General Board resolved to complete the work within 36 months and re-tendered the work. However, only 22% of the work was completed in 36 months... The contractor has not only violated the tender clause but also ignored notices and left the work incomplete," according to Shrivastav's memorandum. Shrivastav has said that a rental allowance of Rs 2,000 a month, that had been decided to be paid to the beneficiaries in the interim, has not been given with the outstanding amount rising to Rs 11 crore. The memorandum stated, "This amount should be recovered from the contractor, along with the due interest. The (36-month) deadline for the project ended on January 1, 2025, but the Municipal Commissioner, Executive Engineer and other officials concerned have not initiated an inquiry or blacklisted the contractor."

PNB loan fraud: Court allows valuation, auction of unsecured properties of Mehul Choksi's Gitanjali Gems

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

PNB loan fraud, Prevention of Money Laundering Act, PMLA, Gitanjali Gems, Mehul Choksi, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairs The court said that the liquidator will be allowed to open fixed deposit (FD) with the ICICI Bank (being the lead bank for GGL consortium and Nakshatra World Limited- NWL consortium), with respect to proceeds from the sale of the asset A special court designated under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Thursday permitted the liquidator to carry out valuation and conduct an auction of unsecured properties of Gitanjali Gems Ltd (GGL) related to the money laundering in the alleged PNB loan fraud case against its promoter Mehul Choksi. The properties include seven flats in Santacruz, a commercial unit in Bharat Diamond Bourse in Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) and office units and a shop in Diamond Park in Surat, Gujarat. "Post undertaking the aforesaid valuation process, the applicant liquidator is allowed to auction the unsecured properties which are held by Gitanjali gems ltd by following due process under the applicable law, and the same be facilitated by ED," an order by special court judge S M Menjoge stated while allowing the plea.

The court said that the liquidator will be allowed to open fixed deposit (FD) with the ICICI Bank (being the lead bank for GGL consortium and Nakshatra World Limited- NWL consortium), with respect to proceeds from the sale of the asset. It added that if the properties are kept idle without

maintenance, the same will reduce their value.

The judge noted that the sale proceeds shall be deposited as FDs (in favour of special court) after deducting all associated costs and expenses incurred for the purpose of carrying out valuation/auction. Disposing of the application of GGL filed through its liquidator Shantanu Ray, the court added that the sale proceeds will be distributed as per the final outcome in the case. The Committee of Creditors (COC) had initiated liquidation proceedings through a resolution of April, 2019 and Ray was appointed as liquidator by National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). In September, last year, the special court allowed liquidators to conduct valuation of secured properties of GGL. Thereafter, the liquidator moved court for valuation and auction of unsecured properties. Special Public Prosecutor Kavita Patil for ED said the agency had no objection to the plea.

As per Enforcement Directorate (ED), the multi-crore fraud was allegedly perpetrated by billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi and his uncle Choksi, the promoter of Gitanjali Gems. The two have been accused of acquiring letters of undertaking (LOU) and foreign letters of credit (FLC) based on fraudulent claims of Rs 12,636 crore issued in favour of foreign branches of Indian banks. Nirav Modi was declared an Fugitive Economic Offender by a special court in December 2019 and the extradition process against him is underway. Earlier this week, Choksi's lawyer told the special court that his client is suspected to be suffering from cancer and is presently undergoing treatment in Belgium.

Will Trump change the world?



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

U.S. President Donald Trump second term will likely see the domestic and foreign policy priorities enacted in his first term as President revived and sharpened, institutions reformed further in line with his administration's vision, and Americans' socio-cultural response to the Trumpian paradigm.

Significant changes are expected in multiple dimensions of the policymaking space. First, on the economy, Mr. Trump has promised to bring back the extensive import tariffs of his first term, particularly those levied on China. India is likely to feature on the broader list of nations impacted by cross-cutting tariffs on critical commodities of global trade, such as steel and aluminium. Mr. Trump is also expected to enact a corporate tax cut or renew the lapsing cuts that his White House had first enacted in 2017. Second, on immigration, during the election campaign of last year, Mr. Trump repeatedly vowed to advocate for a mass deportation of undocumented workers and other categories of migrants, estimated at 11 million at latest count. Third, in terms of foreign policy — and against the backdrop of the first Trump administration's exit from the Paris climate agreement, the Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, UNESCO, UNHRC, NAFTA, and more — the second term of the erstwhile business tycoon will probably lead to Washington continuing its withdrawal from global, multilateral and regional engagements. There is a distinct possibility that America's inward retreat from global politics could have a direct impact on the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, broader conflicts in West Asia and the South China Sea, not to mention rocking the boat so far as a range of bilateral and regional arrangements are concerned. Lastly, Mr. Trump will continue to be seen not only as the only viable, charismatic face of the Republican Party, but also the founder and original leader of the MAGA movement, which began in 2016 as a mixed bag dominated by the economic despair of White America but soon transmogrified into the reassertion of unvarnished racism, misogyny and bigotry in American society.

The Trump 1.0 administration kicked off a trade war with China in 2018 when it slapped Beijing with tariff coverage of nearly 15% of all U.S. imports. Given that there were already several tariffs in place prior to 2018 too, this resulted in overlapping tariffs on a wide range of products. For example, a 25% tariff was imposed that year over and above an anti-dumping tariff of approximately 66% that was already in place. Notwithstanding this apparently ad hoc approach to tariff imposition, it was clear that China was the focus of the trade war on the global stage: the 11.1% import coverage by U.S. special tariffs in 2018 on products originating from that country considerably overshadowed the rate for other exporters to the U.S., including India, at 0.2%. Regarding the specific products targeted, the U.S. special tariffs preponderantly were imposed on intermediate goods, and to a considerably lower extent on final products and capital goods. Basic trade economics would suggest that this pattern of taxation would likely impact the final price of finished goods — typically sold to consumers in the U.S. The impact on U.S. prices is relevant to the second Trump administration — as it will be the true test of whether any policy to hike tariffs has yielded a net benefit to the U.S. middle class — a critical cohort of voters in past elections. During Mr. Trump's 2024 campaign, he said that he planned to impose an across-the-board tariff of approximately 10-20% on \$3 trillion worth of U.S. goods imports and a China-specific extra tariff of 60%. If the new policy continues to target intermediate goods, there would likely be a significant increase from 2018-2020 in terms of the value of goods impacted, possibly to the tune of tens of billions of dollars' worth on commodities such as steel and aluminium and at least \$300 billion worth of Chinese goods. It would be safe to assume that retaliatory tariffs from China, the E.U., India, and other trading partners of the U.S. will follow swiftly.

The second major policy promise that Mr. Trump is likely to deliver on during his second term in office is a corporate tax cut, which could take the form of renewal of the lapsing cuts that he had introduced in 2017, through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The idea of a tax cut is politically powerful, even if, in fact, last time around the Trump-led tax cut policy reduced taxes for most people while disproportionately benefiting the wealthy, according to the non-partisan Center on Budget and Policies Priorities (CBPP). The

CBPP report at the time noted that Mr. Trump's policy would provide households in the top 1% income bracket with an average tax cut of more than \$60,000 if the cuts were maintained, a substantive reduction compared to an average tax cut of less than \$500 for households in the lowest 60% income bracket. Further, the Trump tax cut "was expensive and eroded the U.S. revenue base... and failed to deliver promised economic benefits," the CBPP noted. While absolute clarity on the planned economic agenda of the second Trump term is elusive, additional policy actions — executive or via Congress — that the Trump White House might advocate for include quantitative restrictions on investments into U.S. assets, such as essential medicine production capabilities and infrastructure, by China and a carbon-border adjustment tax.

Mr. Trump's White House would also likely seek to implement the recommendations of the Department of Government Efficiency — led by his supporters in the private sector, Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy — to cut out wastage and inefficiencies within the machinery of the federal government, specifically by rationalising the actions of civil servants and eliminating unnecessary regulations across sectors. While the "tech bros" team has hinted at possibly discovering \$2 trillion in savings via their plan proposal — which includes mass layoffs and closing certain agencies entirely, some have argued that the magnitude of the potential gains that could be made here has been exaggerated. Based on the Trump campaign's policy promises prior to the 2024 election, it would be reasonable to surmise that the new administration will implement a large-scale deportation of undocumented workers, and perhaps several other categories of migrants. However, across several States, key urban hubs have promised to retain their "sanctuary cities" status by passing laws to limit local law enforcement cooperation with the federal government's Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This may make it politically complicated to execute detention and deportation policies on a large scale and limited time frame, blunting the political gains that Mr. Trump's White House would hope to make by enacting such a policy. Second, Mr. Trump's team has not yet shared details on what such operations would cost the exchequer, although the non-partisan American Immigration Council estimates that this immigration action proposal might potentially cost taxpayers considerably more than \$300 billion. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that Mr. Trump will do whatever is in his power to accelerate deportations so that he is seen as fulfilling his campaign promises. It is relevant to note, in this regard, that the first Trump administration deported close to 1.5 million people, and this was the same number during outgoing President Joe Biden's term. Former President Barack Obama turned away nearly 3 million people from U.S. soil during his time in office, although that was over two terms at the White House.

Among Mr. Trump's campaign claims is his promise to end the Russia-Ukraine war imminently and nudge the Israel-Hamas conflict towards an acceptable conclusion. Regarding the former, Mr. Trump in fact vowed to end the war even prior to Inauguration Day, perhaps motivated by the fact that he views the conflict through the lens of halting the "endless flow of American treasure to Ukraine" and his oft-stated intention to get NATO allies in Europe to reimburse the U.S. for the latter's war-related expenses in exchange for future military support from the U.S. against potential Russian aggression. His position on the war also diverges from that of Mr. Biden, given that he considers Ukraine ceding some portions of its occupied territories to Russia to be acceptable and he has also hinted that Kyiv could withdraw its NATO membership bid as an incentive to Putin to end the invasion. However, both Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte have unambiguously opposed these suggestions.

Regarding the Israel-Gaza turmoil, the President-elect has thus far not deviated significantly from the position of the Biden administration and criticised the Israeli government's aggression in Gaza. However, Mr. Trump appeared to tacitly express support for Israel's position by moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. An important fact in this context is that the surprise ouster of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad late last year considerably impacted regional dynamics, perhaps prompting Mr. Trump to say that the war between Israel, Hamas, and Hezbollah is "more complicated" than Russia's war with Ukraine. While Mr. Biden reversed the first Trump administration's decision to exit the Paris Agreement for global action on climate change, it is widely believed that Mr. Trump, in his second occupancy of the White House, will once again pull the U.S. out of the Agreement. However, some experts have argued that the economics of global renewables have changed significantly since 2020 and today work in favour of the clean energy transition in the country. Specifically, clean energy is said to be booming because of investments made under the Biden-era Inflation Reduction Act, a significant part of which have been pumped into regions that elected Republican lawmakers.

India ranks 96 out of 180 countries in Corruption Perceptions Index 2024

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Research has also revealed that corruption is a major threat to climate action, as it hinders progress in reducing emissions and adapting to the unavoidable effects of global heating. Representative file image.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of zero to 100, where "zero" is highly corrupt and "100" is very clean. In 2024, India's overall score was 38 while it was 39 in 2023 and 40 in 2022. India's rank in 2023 was 93. Among India's neighbours, Pakistan (135) and Sri Lanka (121) grappled with their respective low rankings, while Bangladesh's ranking stood further down at 149. China ranked 76. Denmark topped the list of being the least-corrupt nation, followed by Finland and Singapore. The 2024 CPI showed that corruption is a dangerous problem in every part of the world, but a change for the better is happening in many countries.

Research has also revealed that corruption is a major threat to climate action. It hinders progress in reducing emissions and adapting to the unavoidable effects of global heating. While 32 countries have significantly reduced their corruption levels since 2012, there is still a huge amount of work to be done as 148 countries have stayed stagnant or gotten worse during the same period. The global average of 43 has also stood still for years, while more than two-thirds of countries have scored below 50. Billions of people live in countries where corruption destroys lives and undermines human rights. "Huge numbers of people around the world suffer severe consequences of global heating, as funds intended to help countries cut greenhouse gas emissions and protect vulnerable populations are stolen or misused. At the same time, corruption in the form of undue influence ob-



structs policies aimed at addressing the climate crisis and leads to environmental damage," the report said. Protecting climate mitigation and adaptation efforts from corruption will make these life-saving activities more effective and, in turn, benefit people in need, it added. Many countries with high CPI scores have the resources and power to drive corruption-resistant climate action around the world but instead, they often serve the interests of fossil-fuel companies, the report said. "Some of these countries are also home to financial hubs that attract illicit funds stemming from corruption, environmental destruction and other crime. While the CPI does not measure this, dirty money poses a major corruption problem with harmful effects that reach far beyond these countries' borders," it said. Corruption is an evolving global threat that does far more than undermine development — it is a key cause of declining democracy, instability and human rights violations. The international community and every country must make tackling corruption a top and long-term priority, the report said. "This is crucial to pushing back against authoritarianism and securing a peaceful, free and sustainable world."

Hamas hostage deal: Says will release hostages as planned, apparently resolving ceasefire dispute



GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Hamas said Thursday (February 13, 2025) it would release the next group of Israeli hostages as planned, apparently resolving a major dispute that threatened the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. The militant group said Egyptian and Qatari mediators have affirmed that they will work to "remove all hurdles," and that it would implement the

ceasefire deal. The statement indicated three more Israeli hostages would be freed on Saturday (February 15, 2025). There was no immediate comment from Israel after Hamas' announcement.

Hamas' move would allow the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip to continue for now, but its future remains in doubt. Hamas had threatened to delay the next release of Israeli hostages, accusing Israel of failing to meet its obligations to allow in tents and shelters, among other alleged violations of the truce. Israel, with the support of U.S. President Donald Trump, had threatened to renew its offensive if hostages were not freed. Hamas said its delegation held talks in Cairo with Egyptian officials and was in contact with Qatar's prime minister about increasing the entry of shelters, medical supplies, fuel and heavy equipment for clearing rubble into Gaza. Egypt's state-run Qahera TV, which is close to the country's security services, reported that Egypt and Qatar had succeeded in resolving the dispute. The two Arab countries have served as key mediators with Hamas and helped broker the ceasefire, which took effect in January, 15 months into the war.

Trump indicates 'wonderful trade deals' for India and U.S. as he hosts PM Modi in Washington

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

US President Donald Trump announced plans to firm up "some wonderful trade deals" for India and the US as he hosted Prime Minister Narendra Modi for wide-ranging talks focussing on charting a new pathway for broadening the bilateral partnership, including in the areas of defence, energy, and critical technology. At his Oval Office on Thursday, Trump welcomed Modi with a long handshake and a warm hug while describing the prime minister as a "great friend" for a long time. The two leaders made brief statements to the media and answered a number of questions before settling down for the crucial talks, hours after the American President announced a new reciprocal tariff policy for all the trading partners of the US. "We are going to work with India also. We have separate big trade deals to announce in the very near future," Trump said while talking about his administration's trade policy. "We are going to make some wonderful trade deals for India and for the US," he said replying to a question.

In his remarks, Modi congratulated Trump for becoming the president for a second term and recalled the upward trajectory of India-US relations during the American leader's first stint at the White House. "I firmly believe that in your second term, we will work with more speed," Modi said. "President Trump always keeps the national interest of the US supreme and like him, I also keep the national interest of India at top of everything else," he added. In his remarks, the US President said: "We have some very big things to talk about; they (India) are going to be purchasing a lot of our oil and gas (from the US)." "We have more oil and gas than any other country in the world and they (India) need it, and we have it," he said. "He is doing a great job in India and he (PM Modi) and I share a great friendship and we will continue to build on ties between our nations," Trump added. The Prime Minister and the President also answered questions on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. "I support Donald Trump's efforts towards finding a possible solution to end the war. The world somehow feels India has been neutral during the war. But I would like to reiterate that India has not been neutral. In fact, India has been on the side of peace," Modi said. "When I met President Putin, I had even said that 'this is not the era for war'. I had also said that solutions cannot be found in the battlefield. They can only come when all parties sit at the table for dialogue," he added.

Before meeting Trump, Prime Minister Modi held separate talks with US National Security Advisor Mike Waltz,

India, US will be working together like "never before": Donald Trump

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Washington: India and the US have decided to take a big leap in broad-basing their strategic ties in several critical areas, with President Donald Trump announcing after talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Washington is paving the way to provide New Delhi with F-35 fighter jets as part of increasing military supplies by billions of dollars. After holding wide-ranging talks with Modi, Trump said there is a "special bond" between the world's oldest and largest democracies and both sides decided to shore up cooperation in diverse areas such as energy, critical technologies and connectivity.

"Starting this year, we will be increasing military sales to India by many billions of dollars," Trump said at a joint press conference with Modi. "We are also paving the way to ultimately provide India with F-35 stealth fighters," he said. Trump said he and PM Modi have reached an agreement on energy that will make the US a leading supplier of oil and gas to India. The US President also announced that India and the US will be working together like "never before" to confront the threat of radical Islamic terror across the world.

"I am pleased to announce that my administration has approved the extradition of one of the very evil people of the

Paul Kapur nominated to be second Indian-descent top diplomat for India

GNS News Agency, Feb 15

Washington: S. Paul Kapur, who worked previously on relations with India, has been nominated by the Trump administration to head the South Asia bureau at the State Department that conducts diplomatic ties with India and the region. "Paul Kapur, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs," said a statement from the office of Vice-President J.D. Vance, including a huge number of appointments that were sent for the US Senate's consideration and confirmation. Kapur currently serves as a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, specialising in South Asian politics, and security, and international relations. If confirmed, he will be the second Indian-descent top US diplomat for relations with South Asian countries, but unlike his predecessor in this category, he will head a smaller regional spread. Nisha Biswal, the first Indian-descent Assistant Secretary of State, had headed a bureau that was called the South and Central Asia, which included many countries that are now out. According to his bio on the



world," he said, referring to the extradition of 26/11 plotter Tahawwur Rana to India. On the contentious issue of tariffs, the US President said Washington wants a level playing field. On the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, Trump said both sides agreed to work to help build one of the "greatest trade routes" in history globally. Trump also said that India is reforming its laws to welcome US nuclear technologies into the Indian market. Prime Minister Modi said cooperation between India and the US can shape a better world in his remarks. A defence cooperation framework will be prepared for next decade, he said.

Naval College website, from 2020 to 2021, Kapur served on the State Department's policy planning staff, working on issues related to South and Central Asia, Indo-Pacific strategy, and US-India relations. Before this assignment, Kapur taught at Claremont McKenna College, and was a visiting professor at Stanford University. Books authored by him are Jihad as Grand Strategy: Islamist Militancy, National Security, and the Pakistani State; and Dangerous Deterrent: Nuclear Weapons Proliferation and Conflict in South Asia. He has co-authored India, Pakistan, and the Bomb: Debating Nuclear Stability in South Asia; and co-edited The Challenges of Nuclear Security: US and Indian Perspectives. The website further said about him that his work has appeared in leading academic journals such as International Security, Security Studies, Asian Survey, and Washington Quarterly; in outlets such as the Wall Street Journal, the National Interest, and RealClearPolicy; and in a wide variety of edited volumes. Finally, the web resume said that Kapur directs a US-India Track 1.5 strategic dialogue.

India's tariffs a 'big problem'; US sale of oil & gas will bridge trade deficit: Trump

US President Donald Trump on Friday said that Indian tariffs as high as 70 per cent and more on American goods such as cars, which limit access to the Indian market, are a "big problem" and that US sales of oil and gas will bridge the US trade deficit with India. Speaking at a press briefing with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Trump said that PM Modi "in good faith" announced reductions to India's "unfair and very strong tariffs," which are a "big problem, I must say."

"India imposes a 30, 40, 60 and even 70 per cent tariff on so many goods, and in some cases, far more than that. As an example, a 70 per cent tariff on US cars going into India makes it pretty much impossible to sell those cars. Today, the US trade deficit with India is almost \$100 billion, and Prime Minister Modi and I have agreed that we will be negotiating to address the long-running disparities," Trump said at the India-US briefing. "We want a certain level playing field, which we really think we're entitled to, and he does also, in fairness. So we're going to work on that very hard, and we can make up the difference very easily with the deficit, with the sale of oil and gas, LNG, of which we have more than anybody in the world," Trump said.

Trump further stated that India and the US have reached an important agreement on energy that will restore the United States as a leading supplier of oil and gas to India. "India is also reforming its laws to welcome the US to nuclear technology at the highest level into the Indian market. This will bring safe, clean and affordable electricity to millions of Indians and tens of billions of dollars to the US civilian nuclear industry in India," he said. India's goods trade surplus with the US has been rising, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, doubling from \$17.30 billion in 2019-20 to \$35.33 billion in 2023-24, alongside a notable shift in the export basket. While exports of electronic and engineering goods surged, traditional exports such as gems & jewellery and garments remained largely unchanged. The most significant transformation has occurred in electronics exports, driven in part by tariffs imposed by the US during Trump's first term.

A report from Oxford Economics last year examined the impact of the US-China trade war during Trump's first term, highlighting that US trade rerouting was particularly



pronounced in the large electronics market, where China's share had dropped by 19 percentage points since 2017. "India's share in US electronics imports has risen nearly tenfold since then, reaching 2.1 per cent. Electronics now also account for a greater share of India's overall exports, indicating that the government's ongoing efforts to become a high-tech powerhouse have partly paid off," the report stated. India's imports from the US concentrated in five items: India's imports from the US over the past five years have grown at a slower pace compared to its exports. US exports to India reached \$42.19 billion in 2023-24, up from \$35.81 billion in 2019-20, with the bulk concentrated in five categories: mineral fuels (the largest segment), followed by precious and semi-precious stones, nuclear reactors, electrical machinery, and aircraft and parts. While most items imported from the US do not attract high tariffs—duties on the top 30 imported goods, including crude oil, LNG, coal, diamonds and aeroplanes, range from 0 per cent to 7.5 per cent—high-end cars and motor vehicles have historically been subject to higher basic customs duty (BCD). However, these rates were reduced in the Union Budget. In the automobile sector, India has lowered tariffs on motorcycles based on engine capacity. The tariff on motorcycles with an engine capacity below 1,600cc has been reduced from 50 per cent to 40 per cent, while for those above 1,600cc, it has been slashed from 50 per cent to 30 per cent. Notably, US motorcycle exports to India stood at \$3 million in FY2024, and this tariff cut could help expand market access for American manufacturers, according to the think tank Global Trade and Research Institute (GTRI).

Growth in India Inc profits, sales slows down in third quarter: Study



The rise in input costs and moderation in urban consumption slowed down corporate performance in the quarter ended December 2024 with companies listed on the stock exchanges reporting a decline in growth in profits and sales, reflecting the challenging business environment. India Inc registered a growth of 14 per cent in its net profit at Rs 3.37 lakh crore in the quarter ended December 2024, slower than 16.6 per cent (Rs 2.96 lakh crore) witnessed in the year-ago quarter, says a study.

While high inflation impacted many sectors like FMCG, the growth in net sales of corporates also slowed by 5.9 per cent to Rs 28.43 lakh crore in the October-December 2024 quarter, compared to a rise of 7.4 per cent (Rs 26.85 lakh crore) in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. The dip in profitability in the quarter was due to increase in input costs driven by elevated inflation. "Overall net profits growth was in double digits at 14 per cent compared with 16.6 per cent last year. The major factors accounting for pressure in profits growth where growth in sales was steady were related to higher input costs as inflation has been high during this period," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, Bank of Baroda (BoB). The findings are based on the results of 1,899 companies for Q3 FY2025 analysed by BoB. Higher inflation impacted earnings of consumer goods companies. "It's been an extraordinarily high inflationary environment. If you look at the CPI (consumer food price inflation), which is the food inflation, it was almost at double digits in this quarter," Britannia Industries Vice Chairman and Managing Director Varun Berry had said during Q earnings call.

"And if you were to look at some of the key food — so if you were to look at cereals, it was about 6.5 per cent, oils and fats was almost at about 15 per cent, and similarly, vegetables and fruits and everything was pretty high single digits or double digits," he had said. Announcing the Q3 results, Rohit Jawa, CEO and MD, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) said FMCG demand trends remained subdued with continued moderation in urban growth while rural sustained its gradual recovery. HUL reported a 19 per cent rise in the

Three reasons why the Honda-Nissan deal collapsed

Talks between Honda Motor and Nissan Motor for a potential merger, a multi-billion deal that would have resulted in the creation of the world's fourth largest automaker in terms of vehicle units sold, have collapsed. One, the merger, proposed in December, was never a deal between equals, though there was pressure to portray it as one. Honda had started the negotiations from a position of strength, given that it is a popular brand globally and sells way more cars than Nissan. Nissan, on the other hand, is ailing and desperately needed the merger to regain its competitiveness, especially after its divorce from French auto major Renault.

The problem, though, is that Nissan indicated through the duration of the talks that it wants to be seen as an equal partner, spurning any possibility of it being viewed as a junior player or a subsidiary. Jesper Koll, from Japanese online trading platform operator Monex Group, was quoted by the BBC as saying that the "pressure to make it appear like a merger of equals in Japan is very strong." "Having somebody leading this would seem almost offensive to the other party." Honda's chief Toshihiro Mibe had said any merger would be "based on the assumption that Nissan completes its turnaround action". That was a stiff ask: despite Nissan having slashed 9,000 jobs — about 6 per cent of its global workforce — and reducing global production capacity by

20 per cent after having reported a quarterly loss of 9.3 billion yen (over \$60 million) in October.

Second, a partnership by the two companies on electric vehicles, which was announced by them well before the merger talks commenced, will continue. So, technically, the collapse of the merger talks does not upend this crucial EV collaboration. This is important given the popularity of electric and hybrid vehicles made by China's BYD Co. and other Chinese companies such as Xpeng, Nio and Li Auto eclipsed Japan's automakers from the leadership position that they once enjoyed across markets. Honda and Nissan have been losing their share of the Chinese market for some time and both Japanese automakers, according to analysts, were expected to announce large capacity cuts to at least cover some of the fixed-cost exposure they have in China. Nissan and Honda are also facing the prospect of tariffs in the US, another major market. Third, there were more suitors wanting to wriggle into this alliance, making it a somewhat crowded field. Taiwan-based Foxconn, a leading contract manufacturer, said Thursday it is open to buying Nissan shares and exploring collaborations with Renault, which has an over 35 per cent stake in Nissan after rescuing the latter from going belly up in 1999. Renault, on its part, called the terms of the proposed merger deal "unacceptable"

Why you feel a sudden urge to pee the moment you get home

Latchkey incontinence happens when your brain connects going home with bladder relief, which leaves you with a sudden urge to urinate. Experts suggest that this is a "conditioned response" owing to psychological factors where your bladder, always expecting relief, reacts to even little stimuli such as pressure. "Hearing keys jingling or the unlocking of the door will send signals to the brain, making the urge feel more urgent," said Dr Mukund Andankar, consultant urologist, Wockhardt Hospital, Mumbai Central. This incontinence can also occur when patients visualise the door of their house or hear running water, according to a September 2024 report published in The Journal for Nurse Practitioners.

Yes, most people experience this condition, though a bit more frequent in people with overactive bladder or anxiety, mentioned Dr Andankar. Dr Hiran S. Reddy, consultant physician, diabetologist, and critical care specialist, agreed and added that 'key-in-lock syndrome' is more common in individuals with overactive bladder (OAB), urinary tract infections, or weakened pelvic floor muscles, particularly affecting postmenopausal women and those who have undergone childbirth. "However, men with prostate conditions may also experience similar symptoms," said Dr Reddy. According to the above journal report, OAB is a "multifactorial clinical syndrome" often not discussed by the patient and significantly impacts the quality of life. Factors such as high caffeine intake, dehydration, and certain medications can worsen the condition. "Strengthening pelvic floor



muscles through Kegel exercises and employing behavioral techniques like delayed voiding and bladder training can help improve bladder control and manage symptoms effectively," said Dr Reddy. Experts urge people to try to distract themselves when they enter the door. To control this response, bladder training can be used as a complement to mindfulness-based techniques," added Dr Andankar.

What to note? If the need is uncontrollable or results in leakage, the bladder may be symptomatic of an underlying medical condition. "Never fail to seek medical attention if this persists," said Dr Reddy.

Looking for a sperm donor online? 4 things to think about first

People looking for a sperm donor can go to a fertility clinic, ask a friend to donate or look for a donor online, including on an app or via social media. Women in same-sex relationships, single women and others are choosing the online option for a number of reasons. But this brings with it various challenges and risks. Here's what to know first.

It's a popular choice. Up to 4,000 children are estimated to have been born over the past ten years via one Australian sperm donation website alone. In just 2022, sperm sourced via one private Facebook group reportedly resulted in 692 births.

Some donors and recipients choose to use online platforms because they want to form connections and friendships with the other party early on. In some cases, donors choose to remain in the lives of the recipient and any child born from their donation. But some sperm donors go online to remain anonymous, an option not usually possible when donating through a fertility clinic. Some people might use online sperm donation because the cost of accessing donor sperm at fertility clinics is too high in Australia. Some clinics charge a sperm donation management fee of about AUD 2,000.

This allows people to access information about the donors they can choose from. Then there is the cost of insemination and of the sperm itself, which is about USD 2,500 out-of-pocket per cycle. Online sperm donation in Australia tends to be altruistic and does not cost anything. People in rural or regional areas may live far from fertility clinics, making access challenging. Then there's often a shortage of donor sperm at clinics. In particular, there's a lack of ethnic and cultural diversity in donors. Whatever the reason for seeking sperm online, here are some issues to consider first.

1. Medical unknowns

Sperm donors at fertility clinics undergo medical, physical and psychological screening to reduce the risk of transmitting disease to a child. However, online sperm donors may provide people with untested sperm that might be carrying sexually transmitted infections or inheritable genetic conditions. This puts the recipient and the potential child at risk because of the lack of medical information about the donor.

2. Psychological, personal, social risks

People might be placed at risk when they agree to meet a potential online sperm donor in person. There have been reported cases where potential donors have pressured people into natural insemination (sexual intercourse) once they meet. This is despite donors initially agreeing to provide sperm for home insemination (using a syringe to inject the donor sperm into the vagina). These safety and exploitation concerns are especially pertinent in cases of same-sex female couples and people who are same-sex attracted who might feel coerced or compelled to have sexual intercourse with a man to try to conceive a child. In fertility clinics, state laws limit the number of individuals or families that can use a single donor's sperm (from five to ten families depending on the state). The nature of online sperm donation means there are no records kept about the number of children a donor contributes to conceiving. With no formal record keeping, one donor could potentially provide sperm to hundreds of people. This increases the chances of donor-conceived siblings unknowingly having children together later in life. There might be cases where donors do



not tell the truth about their identity or background, as happened in a case in Japan when a donor allegedly lied about his identity and education. There might also be psychological harm when an agreement has been made about contact between the parties and that agreement is later disputed or disregarded.

A man who donates sperm to a fertility clinic has no legal rights or obligations to a child born as a result of this donation in Australia. However, conceiving a child using informally donated sperm can be legally precarious. We are not aware of any reported cases in Australia of legal disputes about parentage that have involved online sperm donation. However, if the practice continues to grow, the courts may need to intervene if a donor is seeking to exercise some rights relating to the donor-conceived child against the mother's wishes. There was, however, a 2019 case that relates to sperm donation by a friend. Here, the High Court ruled a man who donated sperm informally to his friend was deemed the legal parent of a child. This resulted in the mother and her same-sex partner being prevented from relocating to New Zealand with the child and their sibling. As each potential case will depend on its own set of unique circumstances, it's best to take legal advice first. Many donor-conceived people want information about, and contact with, their donor. A lack of information, including medical information, can contribute to psychological, medical and social harms. So people should carefully consider how this arrangement might impact any child conceived. This includes their potential desire to meet any siblings conceived using the same donor's sperm.

Where to from here?

The decision to have a child using donor sperm is complex. When deciding how to access donor sperm, people may benefit from speaking to an accredited fertility counsellor about their options. This may include accessing donor sperm through a fertility clinic, which are strictly regulated and licensed, and need to comply with state laws and ethical guidelines. While accessing donor sperm through a regulated fertility clinic may be more costly and time-consuming, it is also markedly safer than online sperm donation. However, some people may not want to access donor sperm through a fertility clinic, or this might not meet their needs. We need to understand why so we can try to do something about it. If a person decides to access donor sperm online, they should have open and honest discussions with the potential donor about: their medical history, what role they envisage in the future life of a child born using their sperm how all parties can keep records and contact information. Before seeing a potential donor in person, they should also tell a family member, close friend or someone they can confide in about the meeting to ensure they are safe. Taking these measures may help make accessing donor sperm online a positive experience for all involved.

Why we need to embrace the Japanese philosophy 'Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima' for a happier life

Discover the Japanese philosophy of Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima—a mindful approach to life that helps reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance emotional well-being. Discover the Japanese philosophy of Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima—a mindful approach to life that helps reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance emotional well-being. (file) In a world that constantly pushes us to chase deadlines, plan for the future, and dwell on past mistakes, the Japanese philosophy of Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima offers a refreshing perspective. This phrase has recently been popularised after being used by the protagonist in Wim Wenders' film *Perfect Days*, focusing on the daily life of a toilet cleaner in Tokyo. Deeply rooted in Japanese culture, this philosophy teaches a valuable lesson in mindfulness and patience. Translating roughly to "That is for then, this is for now," this mindset encourages people to embrace the present moment while acknowledging that certain things are best left for the future. It reminds us that not everything needs to be solved immediately and that sometimes, the best course of action is to let things unfold in their own time.

What does "Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima" really mean? According to Japanese wisdom, life is a balance between action and acceptance. Kondo wa Kondo means "that (or next time) is for then," implying that some things should be postponed or left for another time. Ima wa Ima means "this is for now," emphasising the importance of focusing on the present moment without being burdened by worries



about the future. This philosophy aligns with concepts like mindfulness and minimalism, promoting a way of living that reduces unnecessary stress. Instead of forcing solutions or worrying endlessly about what's to come, it suggests that some matters should be addressed later, allowing individuals to fully experience the present without distraction. Modern life is filled with pressures—career ambitions, personal responsibilities, and an endless stream of information demanding our attention. Kondo wa Kondo, Ima wa Ima offers a way to navigate these challenges with a sense of calm and clarity. How to practice this in daily life: Prioritise tasks mindfully — Focus on what needs immediate attention while setting aside things that can wait. Let go of past regrets — Accept that the past cannot be changed and direct your energy towards what you can control now. i

Prateik Babbar has hurt his late mother Smita Patil by not inviting father Raj Babbar to his wedding, says Aarya Babbar: 'Failed him as a family'



actor Smita Patil, and Aarya and Juhi are the children of Raj and Nadira Babbar. "Somewhere we as a family must have failed him," Raj Babbar's elder son Aarya Babbar said about his stepbrother Prateik Babbar who got married on Valentine's Day in the absence of any member of the Babbar family.

Aarya said, "Not inviting other members of our family, my mother (Nadira Babbar), my sister (Juhi Babbar) or me could be condonable: maybe we have failed him as a family, although we have never treated him as a stepbrother. Lekin chalo, shaayad humse koi bhool ho gayi ho (Perhaps, we made a mistake). But Papa? Not inviting our Papa, his Papa (Raj Babbar)... how can he do this? Papa is very very hurt. By doing this, Prateik has hurt his mother the great Smita Patilji as well. If he stops to think for a moment, he would know that his mother, whom he respects and loves so much, must be very hurt. Would she want this?" He further continued, "We have always considered Prateik an integral part of the family. The doors of our hearts are always open to him. We hope he is happy in marriage and finds his niche as an actor. He has the genes of two great actors. I always believed he had the talent to be another Ranbir Kapoor. But somewhere he has gone astray. We fear someone is giving him wrong advice."

Prateik Babbar married his longtime girlfriend Priya Banerjee in an intimate ceremony at his late mother's house on Friday. But, Prateik did not invite his father Raj Babbar and his half-siblings Aarya and Juhi to the wedding. Now, Aarya has shared that they must have failed him as a family if he did not consider inviting them to the most special day of his life. Aarya also said that this decision has hurt their father Raj Babbar. Prateik is the son of Raj and late

Daveed movie review: Antony Varghese Pepe shines as 'Kerala Rocky' in this poorly-written sports drama

Daveed movie review: The performances and director Govind Vishnu's execution of the action sequences help mitigate much of the Antony Varghese Pepe-starrer's narrative flaws. **Daveed movie review:** Govind Vishnu's actioner, starring Antony Varghese Pepe and Lijomol Jose, is now running in theatres.

Daveed movie review: Although the Malayalam film industry has made many actioners featuring A-listers, only a few have truly defined the genre. Jayan, Babu Antony and Suresh Gopi undeniably stand out as the ultimate action stars. Belonging to different eras, they have constantly cemented their legacies by excelling in roles that demanded high-octane stunts. Now, with Govind Vishnu's directorial debut Daveed, Antony Varghese Pepe has rightfully earned his place among them. Though he has consistently taken on action roles since his debut, his performance as the boxer Ashiq Abu surpasses his previous work. It even evokes strong Rocky (Sylvester Stallone) vibes, and redefines the scope of action choreography in Malayalam cinema. Daveed proves that excessive bloodshed and gore aren't necessary to create compelling stunt sequences.

A lazy, irresponsible man who lives off the income of his wife Sherin (Lijomol Jose), Abu's (Pepe) spends the majority of his time with his little daughter Safa (Jess Kuku) and his uncle aka Kochappa (Saiju Kurup). He also enjoys fishing in the backwaters near their home on poramboke land in Kochi. The closest he comes to having a job is occasionally working as a bouncer at celebrity events; not for the money, but for the chance to take pictures with stars to impress his daughter. However, his life takes an unexpected turn when he reluctantly takes up a gig at an event featuring world boxing champion Sainul Akhmadov (Mo Ismail). There, a heated moment leads to Abu knocking out the Turkish star with a single punch, publicly humiliating him. Furious, Akhmadov later challenges Abu to an official fight. Initially hesitant, Abu eventually accepts, determined to prove himself as a hero to his daughter. He joins seasoned coach Raghavan Aashaan (Vijayaraghavan) and undergoes rigorous training. However, Abu soon realises that Akhmadov never fights just to win, but to finish off his opponent. Though fear sets in, Abu has no choice but to confront it head-on. Although Daveed has a solid premise, borrowing liberally from director John G Avildsen's Rocky (1976), its dramatic moments fail to hold up. But despite the mediocre drama, Daveed's high-energy action sequences partially compensate for its shortcomings.

Though Govind and co-writer Deepu Rajeevan take ample time at the start to establish the setting, introduce the characters and build the atmosphere, the writing remains largely pedestrian, making it difficult to connect with anyone, including the protagonist. Even the father-daughter bond, though charming at first, often feels forced, particularly because the film doesn't provide any real justification for Safa's idolisation of her father. While a child's admiration for a parent doesn't always need a logical explanation, as the script goes to great lengths to highlight Abu's irresponsibility, one is unable to see him through Safa's eyes.

The same issue extends to Sherin as well. While Abu idles away, she bears the burden of managing their impoverished household. Yet, her unwavering support for him comes across as convenient writing rather than an organic choice. The film never establishes why she continues to shoulder these burdens alone while Abu does little to contribute. By failing to explore her perspective meaningfully, Daveed misses an opportunity to add depth to her character and, in turn, to itself. Even as the narrative unfolds and new characters like Raghavan are introduced, the writing

Shark Tank India pitcher met wife on Shaadi.com, took her away to live in a village with him for 2 years: 'It was an extended honeymoon'

A married couple named Prateek and Aishwarya pitched their agro-tech brands Greenday and Better Nutrition on the latest episode of Shark Tank India, which is currently airing its fourth season. They asked for Rs 60 lakh in exchange of 1% equity, valuing their company at Rs 60 crore. Prateek said that he studied economics at SRCC, and then went to IIM Ahmedabad. This left the panel of 'sharks' very impressed. He said that he met Aishwarya on Shaadi.com, and then convinced her to move to a village with him for more than two years. There, they deeply studied the agriculture industry, and began producing grains with exceptional nutritional values.

They said that they partnered up with farmers, and increased their revenue from Rs 80 lakh to Rs 14 crore in a year. They also told the 'sharks' that they have raised Rs 4 crore in funding already, and have commitments for another Rs 6 crore. Prateek and Aishwarya also impressed the 'sharks' by informing them that they got funding from Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, and also got her on board as a brand ambassador. They also got MasterChef Pankaj

Bhadouria to invest and endorse the company. Namita Thapar was impressed, and she became the first 'shark' to make them an offer. But she also asked for royalties.

Kunal Bahl revealed to his colleagues that he had come very close to investing in Prateek and Aishwarya's business a few months ago, but had held back because he wanted him to grow a little more. He praised Prateek as an excellent founder, but said that he still isn't entirely convinced by his approach. He said, "Smart people sometimes get stuck in bad businesses. You need a hard reset." Kunal felt that the founders were caged by the Greenday business, and should focus on building Better Nutrition. Peyush Bansal was also unconvinced by the founders, and said that because of this discomfort, he couldn't back them. Anupam Mittal first made a joke about their stint in the village, and told Prateek, "Be honest, you were just on an extended honeymoon." But on a more serious note, Anupam said that there was no way that he could formulate an offer for them, because their valuation was simply too high and he wouldn't want to rock the boat and upset past investors.

Personal Touch pitchers hit back at Vineeta Singh for 'bashing' them on Shark Tank India, questioning their financials: 'They put cameras in our face'



It isn't easy to stand in front of experts in any field, and lay bare your brainchild for them to analyse, criticise, and if luck is in your favour, appreciate it. But week in and week out, this is exactly what happens on Shark Tank India, which is currently in its fourth season. And one such pitch was analysed and criticised to such an extent that the pitchers were completely overwhelmed. In January, sibling entrepreneurs Aditi and Ashish Jawa walked up to the pitch deck to ask for Rs 1.2 crore in exchange of 1% equity in their skincare brand, Personal Touch. However, they left with accusations of having 'manipulating sales figures,' with Vineeta Singh declaring that 'daal mein kuch kaala hai.'

A month after the episode aired, Ashish and Aditi went on to Ayushman Pandita's podcast to discuss what exactly happened, and why what unfolded was completely unfair. Explaining what happened, Ashish said, "When the questions were raised about our sales figures, I wanted to en-

sure that we don't walk out of the show without proving our credibility. That is why I said that we'd show our Shopify dashboard to show Vineeta Singh and the other sharks that our numbers weren't fake." However, the siblings revealed that they were made to wait for an hour, after which they were confronted by several cameras. They claimed that they weren't told that this segment would be aired.

"When we came in from the green room, we saw that there were camera in our faces, and we were asked to sit and show our Shopify dashboard. You must understand that people can go numb in such situations, especially when we have built a Rs 35 crore business, and we are told that there is something fishy about it. We wanted to show that we were honest people," said Ashish, who reiterated what was shown in the show regarding their sales and figures. When we look at the dashboard, it is clear that it shows 2.48 lakh monthly sessions, 3.74% conversion rate, resulting in almost 10,000 orders a month. "In the heated moment, it is not possible for everyone to pause and look at the dashboard and understand the particulars, right? Vineeta just started assuming, and bashing our startup," said Aditi. Ashish said that they are accountable if anyone can prove that their numbers are fudged. "Without any backing whatsoever, they claimed our per day numbers are our per month numbers, and the whole narrative was changed. See, we can't fight anyone sitting at that chair. It is their prerogative to invest in a company. But why fault others if you are not interested and create a completely different narrative?" A rather emotional Aditi shared that it felt completely wrong to have been blindsided on such a big platform.

"Imagine getting bashed after putting in 20 hours a day for two years straight, and building a Rs 35 crore business. We kept telling them that our numbers weren't fake, but..." On the episode, Vineeta had questioned the spike in their revenue on certain days of the month, and even the 'proof' that they had shared with her following the failed pitch. She said, "From what I know, consumers don't wait for one specific day in three months to shop. I feel they are entering sales themselves, that can either be genuine or they can be fake. They could also be taking orders on calls on launch days. It's impossible to show 100% increase in sales for an online business."

'Salim-Javed sued us for remaking Zanjeer, producer thought giving Javed saab a Nature's Basket tokri would be enough': Apoorva Lakhia

Years before RRR, Ram Charan made his debut in the Hindi film industry with the remake of Amitabh Bachchan's 1973 hit Zanjeer. The film was directed by Apoorva Lakhia, and, in a recent interview, the filmmaker shared one of the many reasons why he has disassociated from the experience. He revealed that he got sued by writers Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar, who penned the original, while making the movie. One of the producers of Zanjeer was Amit Mehra, the son of Prakash Mehra, the producer-director of the original film. Amit claimed that he had the rights to the film and sought Javed Akhtar's blessings with a tokri (gift basket) from Nature's Basket, but Javed instantly told him that this wasn't going to be enough.

Apoorva shared with Friday Talkies, "We got sued by Salim-Javed and we lost the case." He said that since "bad blood and bad karma" was associated with the film, the budget increased by three times. He said that during the court proceedings, Javed Akhtar's daughter, Zoya Akhtar, called him up and asked to stay away since he was the director, since the trouble was actually between the producer and Salim-Javed. He recalled that Amit Mehra went to Javed Akhtar's house but did not get the hint that a gift basket (tokri) wasn't going to be enough. "He took a tokri (basket) from Nature's Basket. And Javed saab told him that this basket wouldn't suffice. That basket was for some Rs 6,000-7,000 and it had some kind of cheese or whatever, things that Javed saab doesn't even eat. He said 'Beta, congratulations, lekin tokri se toh kaam nahi chalega. (Congratulations son, but the basket won't suffice)'. But he didn't



get it," he recalled. Apoorva also said that he thought that casting Ram Charan would be a smart move as the Hindi cinema audience wasn't aware of him at the time. "I don't think people were ready for Ram Charan," he said, and added that he could have either cast Abhishek Bachchan, or a newcomer without any baggage. "If I would have cast Abhishek, that would have made sense because the son is doing the father's role. If I would have cast someone else, then they would have compared him to Amit ji because they must have seen that actor somewhere. But Ram Charan, no one had seen him yet. So we thought this would be an ideal role for Chiranjeevi's son to do an Amitabh Bachchan film and come into the film industry," he said.

'Lagaan exceeded schedule by 220 days, Aamir Khan made budget problems go away, Ashutosh Gowariker directed from hospital bed': Apoorva Lakhia

What connects Ang Lee, Michael Douglas, Mira Nair, Meg Ryan, Tobey Maguire, and Aamir Khan? Well, this could be quite a stumper on any quiz show, but nevertheless, the answer is director Apoorva Lakhia. The filmmaker, who assisted Mira Nair in Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love, and Ang Lee in The Ice Storm, became an integral part of Indian cinema courtesy his work in Ashutosh Gowariker's Lagaan: Once Upon A Time in India. He was roped in by Aamir Khan due to his experience of working in Hollywood. Since then, Apoorva has made a number of Hindi films, like Shootout At Lokhandwala, Ek Ajnabee, Toofan, and Hasena Parkar.

In an interview on Friday Talkies, Apoorva spoke extensively about his 25-year career in cinema, and, of course, Lagaan. Regaling the audience with tales of the intense production, Apoorva spoke about the ways people kept themselves entertained amid extreme climate and no electricity. "When Aamir got bored, he brought in chess champions from across Gujarat to the shooting spot, and played with them during breaks. There were also card games happening all around. People had to keep themselves entertained, right?" asked Apoorva, who also touched upon the now-iconic image of Ashutosh Gowariker directing Lagaan lying on a bed due to a slipped disc. "If you observe those visuals, you would see me standing next to Ashu and relaying his messages through the mic," said Apoorva, who revealed that things went smooth mainly because they were canning big-scale shots during Ashutosh's medical emergency. "Since we weren't canning scenes that required him to go and directly interact with the actors, and speak to them in detail, we could manage despite the hurdle. But yeah, it took a little longer than we had planned."

Talking about the duration of the shoot, Apoorva pointed out that the reason why a film like Lagaan is once-in-a-lifetime experience. "We made a schedule of 80 days, and went on to shoot for 300. There were many reasons for it, including financial ones. Aamir had to intervene and arrange for the funds. And then, an animal died on the set, and Maneka Gandhi's crew came to stop the shoot. We started filming during freezing cold temperatures, and continued to shoot in frightfully hot temperatures too," said Apoorva, who revealed that the "O Re Chori" song, featuring Aamir and Gracy Singh, was shot in 56 degrees Celsius. "We could only shoot from 6 am to 10 am, and 4.30 - 6.30 pm. You could die if you were out there. It was impossible."

The filmmaker also revealed how they had to axe an entire sequence centred around a nighttime match. "People held 'mashals' for the shoot. They were bare-footed and wearing 'dhoti' and 'banian'. I know what the actors went through. It is these sacrifices and commitments that made Lagaan," said Apoorva, who also spoke about how the film left him completely drained. "Lagaan took so much out of me. I distanced myself from cinema for two years, and even went to culinary institute to get a degree." But it was the classic case of all's well that ends well for Apoorva, who became quite the star after the documentary about the shooting of Lagaan was released. "It made me a star," said a beaming Apoorva, who added that since his contract for Lagaan was made in the USA, he was getting paid handsomely for his work on the film. "In the USA, you get paid \$3000 a week as an AD, and I think I was making almost 7,000-10,000 a day in Lagaan. In fact, I made more money than Anil Mehta, the cinematographer of Lagaan."

