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INDIA IS A TOP 10 DEEP TECH MARKET BUT FACES A MAJOR FUNDING GAP, SAYS A REPORT

India has emerged as a top 10 global region for deep tech funding but faces a significant gap compared to leading nations.

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India has emerged as one of the top ten regions in the world for funding deep technology startups. However, the gap in funding between India and other leading nations remains significant, highlighted a report by Speciale Invest and Oister Global. The report stated that while Indian startups received USD 3.4 billion in funding between 2016 and 2023, their counterparts in China secured 12 times more (USD 37.6 billion), and those in the United Kingdom received four times as much (USD 13.4 billion). It said "Indian Deep Tech sector has been among the top 10 well-funded deep tech regions in the world. The gap between Indian deep tech fund-



ing and other leading nations is humongous." The United States leads the global deep tech funding landscape with a massive USD 177.4 billion raised during the same period. China follows with USD 37.6 billion, while the UK,

France, and Sweden secured USD 13.4 billion, USD 8.6 billion, and USD 7.8 billion, respectively. Other countries in the top 10 include Israel (USD 7.8 billion), Germany (USD 6.2 billion), Canada (USD 5.6 billion), India (USD 3.4 billion),

and Japan (USD 3 billion). While India's funding in the sector is still modest, the report noted that a growing number of startups are scaling up to higher valuations. However, the country has yet to witness large-scale exits, such as significant ini-

tial public offerings (IPOs) or acquisitions, which are crucial for building investor confidence. These exits play a pivotal role in attracting more capital and fostering innovation within the deep tech ecosystem. The report believed it is only a matter of time before India sees big exits in the deep tech space. For this to happen, the country needs to build a robust ecosystem that supports innovation, investment, and scaling opportunities. Successful exits will not only instill confidence among investors but also set the stage for India to bridge the funding gap and compete with global leaders in the deep tech sector. India's deep tech journey has begun on a promising note, and with the right ecosystem in place, the country could soon play a larger role on the global stage.

Universal Sompoo and Sompoo Care partner on global health initiatives

TBG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Universal Sompoo and Sompoo Care have been successfully making collaborative efforts at enhancing health and wellbeing across borders, in alignment with the Skill India Mission. The project under this collaboration is being implemented throughout 2024 and will continue through 2025. This project involves providing Indian nursing care personnel with nine months of comprehensive training in India. Upon completion of the training and the acquisition of a residence status as a specified skilled worker in Japan, these professionals can work as full-time employees at Sompoo Care facilities in Japan. The significant cost of training, including tuition fees and living expenses, poses a challenge for many aspiring candidates. To address this challenge, Universal Sompoo has stepped forward to support the "International Mobility Program". Until now,



this initiative supported 75 eligible healthcare workers from India by providing them with comprehensive training in Japanese language (Level N4) as well as nursing care and offering them rewarding careers in Japan. The training is being conducted by experienced Japanese and Indian trainers, delivered in an offline format at designated centres. Sharad Mathur, MD & CEO, Universal Sompoo General Insurance said, "We are pleased to be part of the Skill India Mission along with SOMPoo Care Inc. The 'International Mobility Program' will boost the skills of Indian healthcare personnel and give them a chance to experience global culture.

This opportunity will help them grow as individuals and achieve great milestones in their careers. We wish them all the best for this new journey." Speaking about the collaboration, Geetanjali Vikram Kirloskar, Chairperson & Managing Director, Kirloskar Systems Private Limited said, "This partnership is a significant step towards strengthening the bond between India and Japan. By addressing the global demand for skilled nursing professionals and filling the gap in healthcare services, the Skill India Mission will empower Indian nurses and contribute to the global healthcare ecosystem."

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TOP OF THE DAY

MEDTECH LINKS HEALTHCARE STAKEHOLDERS

New Delhi: The MedTech (medical technology) industry is not just a component of healthcare but is acting as a catalyst to link patients, payors, providers, and regulators to create a stronger and more equitable healthcare system, stated MoS (Health) Shri Anurag Patel at the 21st Health Summit of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Thursday. Addressing the plenary session on "Charting India's MedTech Revolution: MedTech Expansion roadmap to 2047", the Minister said, "It is this unique positioning of MedTech that holds the promise of revolutionizing healthcare delivery and outcomes, both in India and globally." Patel said that the medical device sector in India is recognized as a sunrise sector because of its immense growth potential, driven by the country's increasing healthcare needs, technological innovations, government support, and emerging market opportunities.

SHIMLA SNOWFALL PREDICTED DEC 27

Shimla: Himachal Pradesh is set to experience dry weather in the coming days, with no snowfall expected across the state, predicted the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday. IMD has forecast that an active western disturbance will bring wintry conditions to the region around December 27 and 28, likely leading to snowfall in higher-altitude areas. Most parts of Himachal Pradesh have remained dry over the past 24 hours. However, regions like Bilaspur, Mandi, Hamirpur, and Una, where a cold wave warning was issued, experienced cold conditions.

SC NOTICES GURUDWARA DEMOLITION

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday issued notice on a petition seeking contempt proceedings against officials of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai in connection with demolition of Gurudwara. A bench of justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan also directed to maintain the status quo in the matter till the next date of hearing and issued notice to concerned respondents in the matter. The petitioner Pravin Jivan Walodra was represented by Advocate Soumya Priyadarshinee.

Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai inaugurates Raipur-Ambikapur flight service

TBG NETWORK
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai today marked the launch of the Raipur-Ambikapur air travel route as a significant achievement for the state, calling it "a historic day." At the launch event, he emphasized the broad impact the new service would have on the state's development. "This will bring development in the tourism, industrial, and economic sectors," Sai said, adding that the new route would not only improve connectivity but also boost economic and industrial growth, making it easier for business and tourism to flourish in the region. CM Sai also responded to Congress's protest against Union Home Minister Amit Shah's comments regard-



ing Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. "History should be seen to know who actually insulted Ambedkar ji," Sai remarked, defending the BJP government's actions. "The Congress government did not consider putting up a portrait of him in Parliament. Our government did the work of conferring that respect to him. Our government built Panchsheel," he

said, referring to the memorials dedicated to Ambedkar's legacy across India. Regarding the ongoing Naxal insurgency in Chhattisgarh, CM Sai outlined the state's security achievements. "More than 220 Naxalites have been killed in the past year, and more than 1500 have either surrendered or been arrested," he said.

■ P2

DAHD Secretary urges dairy federations to adopt circulara economy practices

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Alka Upadhyaya, Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), on Thursday, advised the dairy federations to work on circular economy in the dairy sector and be proactively involved in getting the benefits in consultation with National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). During a review meeting on Milk Situation in the country, Secretary stated that during the Department's upcoming conference on circularity in the Dairy sector, every State should come up with at least one project on Biogas to join the circularity movement. She added that the move will help in reducing the carbon footprint of the



dairy sector and at the same time also help in enhancing income of Dairy Farmers. The discussion also included the use of water within the dairy value chain and approaches to ensure its efficient utilisation. It was pointed out that the integration of automation could lead to a considerable reduction in water consumption at processing plants, thereby aiding the efforts of the National Water Mission and the National Action Plan on Climate Change. Upadhyaya emphasised that

India holds the top position globally in milk production, generating approximately 239.3 million metric tons in the year 2023-24. She emphasized that Dairy Federations should focus on enhancing milk procurement and increasing the price paid to the farmers, while also considering consumer interests. Secretary DAHD said that the overall milk situation in the country is stable and the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) & Consumer Price Index (CPI) with the year-

on-year inflation rates for milk recorded at 2.09 and 2.85 respectively for the month of November 2024. There is an adequate commodity stock of Skimmed Milk Powder, Whole Milk Powder, White Butter, and Ghee. At the same time, there has been an improvement in milk procurement and milk procurement prices over the year. Secretary (DAHD) advised, all Milk Federations to take up active participation in the Midday Meal and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programs of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD), as these represent the largest institutional domestic market for the dairy sector.

Reverie unveils RevUp, a voice API platform supporting 12 Indian languages

TBG NETWORK
BENGALURU

To mark their 15th Foundation Year, Reverie Language Technologies, leaders in AI first language technologies announces the launch of their RevUp platform. The platform aims to democratize Reverie's Voice APIs like Speech to Text, Text to Text and Speech to Speech technologies to serve the arena of new tech professionals, be it developers, product leads, OEMs or app builders. At the back of Reverie's voice engines lie years of data and domain training for 12 Indian languages including Indian English. Reverie's APIs are already delivering population scale use cases with their largest customer



clocking over 20 lakh STT calls on a daily basis. Multilingual Voice Interface is a fast-emerging trend and Reverie's voice capabilities are poised to support use cases across industries like

BFSI, Healthcare, Education, Hospitality, and E-commerce. Proven Use Cases through Reverie's APIs By integrating multilingual voice search capabilities

Ecommerce stores can simplify and accelerate the customer journey from searching for a product to easy cart fills. Viewers can quickly search for a series or movie

of choice on an OTT platform using short voice commands rather than going through a long list of recommendations. The BFSI sector can expedite loans processing and provide 24/7 customer support by harnessing the power of Reverie's multilingual voice based GenAI bots that are powered by deep learning algorithms, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, and natural language processing enabling them to handle both routine and complex queries. Reverie's recent win at the Sahamati (account aggregator) hackathon showcased their voice bot capabilities to take consent for sharing financial data with lending BFSI companies. The Sahamati use case demonstrated how BFSIs can bring in

personalization and bolster customer trust by integrating voice capabilities in their processes. The Healthcare sector can utilize speech-to-text capabilities to transcribe audio and video calls and analyse information for both medical practitioners and patients. This is particularly relevant in the Indian context where people interact on calls in various native languages. Reverie's Speech-to-text API can transcribe doctor consultations from one language to another and generate a summary of the conversation with important details like symptoms, medication, and future line of treatment enabling automatic generation of prescription with all relevant details after an online consultation saving considerable time.

AMIT SHAH: NAXALISM TO BE ERADICATED BY MARCH 31, 2026

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has reaffirmed his commitment to eradicate Naxalism from India by March 31, 2026.

TBG NETWORK
BASTAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday reiterated his resolve to "completely eradicate" Naxalism from the country by March 31, 2026. Addressing the public during the closing ceremony of the Bastar Olympics-2024, Shah highlighted the significant progress in combating Naxalism over the past decade, citing a 73 per cent reduction in the deaths of security personnel and a 70 per cent decrease in the deaths of security personnel and a 70 per cent decline in civilian casualties in regions once dominated by Naxals. "In the last 10 years, we have



fought Naxalism on multiple fronts. Today, there is a 73 per cent reduction in the deaths of security personnel and a 70 per cent decrease in the deaths of security personnel and a 70 per cent decline in civilian casualties in regions once dominated by Naxals. "In the last 10 years, we have

country," Shah asserted. The Home Minister credited the enhanced effectiveness of anti-Naxal operations to the formation of a BJP government in Chhattisgarh. He remarked that during the initial five years, the campaign lacked support from the

state government, but after the BJP assumed power, the operations gained significant momentum. "In the first year of the BJP government in Chhattisgarh, 287 Naxals were killed, 932 were arrested, and 837 surrendered," Shah said. He also appealed to Naxals to surrender, abandon their weapons, and join the mainstream to contribute to the nation's progress. "I urge all Naxals to surrender, give up arms, and become part of the mainstream to work for the welfare of the country. I can proudly say that Chhat-

tisgarh's surrender policy is the most attractive in the country," he added. Earlier in the day, Shah reiterated the commitment of the Centre and the Chhattisgarh government to eliminate Naxalism. He commended the Chhattisgarh Police for their achievements in the fight against Naxals. Shah arrived in Chhattisgarh on Saturday for a three-day visit, scheduled from December 14 to 16. During his visit, he will chair a high-level security review meeting in the state capital, Raipur, to assess the security situation and related developments.

Uttarakhand CM Dharam Singh thanks PM Modi for UCC emphasis in parliament

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Sunday expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for highlighting the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and presenting 11 commitments for the nation during his speech in the Lok Sabha. Dhami noted that Uttarakhand has already passed the UCC bill under the guidance of PM Modi and feels honoured to have initiated its implementation. "I thank the Prime Minister for discussing the Uniform Civil Code and outlining the 11 promises for the nation. Uttarakhand has already passed the UCC bill under the guidance of PM Modi. We feel privileged that the process of implementing the UCC in the country began with our state," he said.



The Chief Minister also emphasised the BJP and NDA's commitment to upholding the Constitution and respecting the nation's values. "When PM Narendra Modi was speaking in the Lok Sabha, Congress leaders appeared unenthusiastic, and this deserves criticism. BJP and NDA are known for their unwavering faith in the Constitution and their respect for the country's principles and values. As far as the UCC, Babasaheb Ambedkar had underlined the need for a Uniform Civil Code, which has

been enshrined in Article 44 of the Constitution," he added. On Saturday, PM Modi reiterated his government's determination to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), asserting that efforts were being made with "full force" to establish a "Secular Civil Code." Participating in the Lok Sabha discussion on the "Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India," the Prime Minister noted that the idea of a Uniform Civil Code had been deliberated upon by the Constituent Assembly.

Shri Ram Mandir project in Ayodhya wins 'Sword of Honour' for Safety

TBG NETWORK
AYODHYA

The 'Ram Temple project' of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya has been awarded the 'Sword of Honour' by the British Safety Council, Chairman Construction Committee Nripendra Misra said in a statement on Sunday. In a statement, Misra said that this award was one of the highest recognitions in safety management and that the British Safety Council evaluates the safety processes, practices, and on-site activities during its audits, and only those who receive a five-star assessment were eligible for the 'Sword of Honour' award. "Shri Ram Mandir project in Ayodhya has won the prestigious 'Sword of Honour' award given by British Safety Council. It is one of the prestigious accolades in safety management. British Safety Council conducts the audit



of the process, practices, and finally on-site activity assessments," the statement read. Larsen and Toubro, the company responsible for the construction of the temple, was also awarded a 'Golden Trophy' by the National Safety Council for its safety measures during the construction process, the statement added. The temple has been built under close coordination between Larsen and Toubro and Tata Consulting Engineers, with effective supervision by the Construction Committee of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

The statement said that the construction of the first and second floors, including the Shikhar (spire) of the temple, was in its final phase, with completion expected by June 2025. The temple is being built using Bansi Paharpur stone from Rajasthan, with a total of approximately 15 lakh cubic feet of stone, along with significant marble cladding, the statement added. Earlier this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led rituals at the Pran Pratishtha ceremony in the sanctum sanctorum of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple of Ram Lala. The magnificent Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir is constructed in traditional Nagara style. Its length (east-west) is 380 feet; its width is 250 feet, and its height is 161 feet, and it is supported by a total of 392 pillars and 44 doors. The pillars and walls of the temple showcase intricately sculpted depictions of Hindu

deities, gods, and goddesses. In the main sanctum sanctorum on the ground floor, the childhood form of Bhagwan Shri Ram (the idol of Shri Ram Lala) has been placed. The main entrance to the Mandir is situated on the eastern side, which can be approached by ascending 32 stairs through the Singh Dwar. There are a total of five Mandaps (Halls) in the Mandir: Nritya Mandap, Rang Mandap, Sabha Mandap, Prathana Mandap, and Kirtan Mandap. Near the Mandir is a historic well (Sita koop), dating back to the ancient era. In the southwestern part of the Mandir complex, at Kuber Tila, the ancient Mandir of Bhagwan Shiv has been restored, along with the installation of a statue of Jatayu. The foundation of the Mandir has been constructed with a 14-meter-thick layer of roller-compacted concrete (RCC), giving it the appearance of artificial rock.

London Organisation of Skills Development's Transformational Event in the USA in December 2024

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

USA. London Organisation of Skills Development (LOSD) will host a landmark event at the Science Center in Cambridge, MA, USA. Led by Prof. Dr. Parin Somani, CEO and Director of LOSD, the gathering aims to inspire personal and professional growth under the theme 'Reach Your True Potential. Seven Transformational Initiatives of LOSD: • Global Research Conference and Journal • Sharing groundbreaking research globally • LOSD Publishing House • Supporting intellectual growth through publishing • Skillflex - A cutting-edge online learning platform • Skillcast Podcast • Informative discussions on key topics • LOSD Skills Live - Talks on



leadership and innovation. • LOSD Excellence Awards - Recognising outstanding contributions. • Skill-Up Wellbeing Retreat - Combining skill-building with balance. Event Highlights: The four-day event includes the LOSD Networking Experience in Boston, where global leaders and innovators engage in meaningful dialogue across industries. On December 7-8, LOSD Skills Live 2024 featured inspiring 8-10 minute talks by experts on entrepreneurship, leadership, emotional intelligence, and technological innovation. Chief Guest H.E. Baron

Alec Stern, Worshipful Mayors Cllr Salim Chowdhury (Harrow) and Cllr Mohammad Amirul Islam (Enfield), and Guest of Honour Jesmin Chowdhury (Harrow) and Roshana Afroze (Enfield) joined Dr. Parin Somani and 50+ speakers to share insights on overcoming challenges and driving growth. At the Global Research Conference (GRC) 2024, 10 researchers discussed "Generative AI for a Green and Inclusive Future." Notable presentations included Guests of Honour Dr. Hari Krishna Maram and Dr. Shivam Arun Kumar Patnaik,

keynote speaker Dr. Yusuf Oluwaseyi Olayinka, and preliminary speaker Dr. Debra Marock. The LOSD Excellence Awards 2024 recognised 23 exceptional individuals for contributions across social, educational, and business fields. LOSD also launched the Coffee Table Book: 25 Global Thought Leaders of the Year 2025 and A Book of Gratitude, edited by Dr. Parin Somani and Marlene Davidson, showcasing 24 authors' transformational stories of thankfulness. Join the Journey This transformational event offers unique opportunities for networking, inspiration, and growth. Registration is now open for LOSD's next event, March 9-11, 2025, in Cambridge, UK. For details, visit www.losd.co.uk or contact admin@losd.co.uk.

"MDH Mere Gaon Ki Mitti" awareness campaign reached in Nagaur; big announcements for farmers

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

MDH family's Suresh Rath and the entire team warmly welcomed the awareness campaign "Mere Gaon Ki Mitti" Shuddh Ugao, Shuddh Khilao, which reached Nagaur from Delhi to make the farmers of the country aware of the ill effects of pesticides and how to increase the income along with the quality of the crop. On this occasion, Suresh Rath made very important announcements for the farmers of the country. He said that MDH will pay an extra price over and above the market rate to those farmers whose produce will be in accordance

with the foreign market and the country's set market standards and in which almost no pesticides will be found.

Suresh Rath said that MDH Group will buy PPM quality cumini at 15% more price than normal cumini and fenugreek leaves at 20% more than market price. Along with this, Rath said that MDH Group Chairman Rajni Gulati wishes that the facility of pesticide testing should be available in Nagaur at the time of crop purchase, for which an appeal was made to the Rajasthan Government, District Administration, and ICAR for necessary cooperation in setting up the lab. Chairman of Rajasthan



Kisan Aayog and former MP CR Chaudhary said that MDH's awareness campaign has to be made a campaign of public awareness so that every farmer of the country becomes aware and the common people get healthy

food. Nagaur District Magistrate Arun Kumar Purohit assured that the administration is ready to provide all possible help for the pesticide lab test. Arun Kumar said that Nagaur's Kasuri Methi is known all over the world for

its fragrance, color, and taste. ICAR Director Dr. Vinay Bhardwaj said that MDH's initiative 'Mere Gaon Ki Mitti' is a commendable step. If the farmer grows agricultural products with less pesticide, then he will definitely get

the best price for the crop, and the elements of the soil of the field will also remain intact. The only need is for the farmer to be aware, and ICAR is with "Mere Gaon Ki Mitti" a noble cause. The total export of spices from India in the year 2023-24 is \$4.46 billion, which shows that if the spice industry and the government together educate the farmers about pesticides, then by 2030 the Indian spice business can be worth \$20 billion. That is, a 5-fold increase in 5 years. Rajasthan has an excellent crop of Jeera, Lal Mirch, Dhaniya, Methi Dana, and Methi Patla. The farmer also wants his products to be sold at a fair price in foreign markets.

Shardad Rath said that MDH already processes only low-pesticide spices, because Rajni Gulati, Chairman, MDH following the ideals of his father, the late Mahashay Dharampal Gulati, is committed to social work along with providing the highest quality spices to the society. Now the time has come that more and more farmers of the country should use pesticides, adopt natural agricultural techniques, and join the campaign for pesticide-free crops. In this direction, the 'Mere Gaon Ki Mitti' Jagrukta Abhiyan has been started in the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of organic India. This Rath will make the farmers of the

whole country aware of the ill effects of pesticides, and agricultural scientists will tell them how to get quality crops without pesticides. On this occasion, the Additional District Magistrate of Nagaur, Champalajinagar, Director of ICAR-NRCS Ajmer, Dr. Vinay Bhardwaj, Secretary of Krishi Ujjam Mandi, Raghunathram Chaudhary, Senior Scientist of Agricultural Science from ICAR-NRCS Ajmer, Dr. Ravindra Singh, Senior Scientist of Entomology from ICAR-NRCS Ajmer, Dr. Krishna Kant Gupta, Chief Medical and Health Officer Jugal Kishore Saini, and Rupa Mehta from Market Times were present in the program.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DAHD Secretary urg

During the meeting, the initiatives undertaken by the State Milk Federations such as Amul (Gujarat), Nandini (Karnataka), Saras (Rajasthan), and Megha (Jharkhand) were commended, and it was recommended that other Federations should undertake similar efforts. DAHD is also consistently collaborating with MoWCD and MoHRD to promote the inclusion of milk in the Midday Meal and ICDS programs. It was observed that commensurate to the production, consumption of processed dairy has increased by 20 per cent. During the review, a presentation on Circular Economy was made by NDBB highlighting the interventions made in the area with respect to the dairy sector. In its presentation, the National Dairy Development Board demonstrated three models of bio gas generation namely the Zakariyapura Model (The Household level bio gas

based Manure Value Chain model), the Banaskantha Model (Dung based large capacity biogas plant to produce Bio CBG and Organic Fertilizer) and the Varanasi Model (Dung based large capacity biogas plant to suffice Steam and Power needs of Dairy Plant), the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying added in a release. These biogas plants are giving a boost to the circular economy by promoting sustainable green fuel energy and producing organic fertilizers. Till date more than 27,000 household biogas plants have been installed in 19 states across the country under various schemes/CSR initiatives/through NDBB support etc.

Reverie unveils RevUp

Vivekananda Pani, Co-founder Reverie Language Technologies said "The Indian market comes with its unique challenges. With smartphones and internet penetration many smart language speaking Indians are now accessing information on the internet

using voice commands in native Indian languages. There is a pressing need for businesses to digitally transform their channels to cater to non-English speaking Indians. We're thrilled to launch RevUp - a self-serve Voice API platform which gives easy access to Reverie's ready to use APIs and empowers developers with an API playground to explore multiple APIs based on specific use cases. RevUp will be a game-changer in the way language technologies are implemented and utilised. It will take us closer to our mission of impacting 500+ million Indians daily and be the language technology platform of choice." The key features that make RevUp a great experience for developers and product leads: • Free credits to test the platform's various APIs • Dedicated API Playground where users can test all APIs (STT, TTS, NMT, NLP) • SDKs, ready API keys and code examples to integrate the APIs in no time • End-to-end API support for 12+ Indian lan-

guages including Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Gujarati, Punjabi, Odia, and Assamese to name a few • Speech-to-Text and Text-to-Speech APIs for high-accuracy synthesis and natural-sounding voice transcription for Indian languages, enabling localised voice interactions • Extensive library of FAQs and troubleshooting guides enabling users to solve common issues quickly and independently • Multilingual platforms built using RevUp will be capable of identifying intent, entity, negative and positive sentiment, inappropriate or harmful content, and automatically detect and redact sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from text. Developers can get first-hand experience of RevUp (<https://revup.reverieinc.com>) by setting up an account for free with generous credits on sign-up. They can track usage and progress with our smart dashboard and get access to our detailed documentation and integration guides.

NIELSEN IQ APPOINTS JOE ELLIS AS MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR INDIA

NielsenIQ (NIQ) has announced the appointment of Joe Ellis as the new Managing Director for its India business.

TBG NETWORK
MUMBAI

NielsenIQ (NIQ) has announced the appointment of Joe Ellis as the new Managing Director for its India business. This announcement follows a year after NIQ and GfK merged to form the world's largest consumer intelligence firm, with significant investments in omnichannel coverage, business intelligence tools, and predictive analytics. This appointment highlights NIQ's commitment to its India unit, which operates three regional commercial offices, and includes the world's largest traditional trade measurement panel as part of its offerings. Across its local business and Global Capability Centers, NIQ employs over 10,000 associates in India.

A seasoned industry veteran, Joe has held several pivotal leadership roles during his 25-year career at NielsenIQ. He began his journey at the Westport (USA) office and has since led multiple regional and global verticals.



"We have longstanding partnerships with many of the largest companies in India built over half a century. We continue to grow and evolve along with our clients. We are also proud of our talent, our capabilities, and my role is to ensure we stay a step ahead in helping our clients achieve their growth objectives with our world class suite of products and services," said Joe.

Based in Mumbai, Joe's experience includes two previous assignments in India, where he established the company's proprietary simulated test marketing division, BASES, in 2004, and later spearheaded the expansion and

digitization of NIQ's retail measurement services in 2013.

"The pace of change in India is unprecedented. With a diverse economic base, a vast untapped consumer market, a significant demographic

advantage, rapid digitization, substantial FDI inflows and a deeply ingrained spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, India is an energizing and exciting market for us," Joe Ellis, Managing Director - India, NielsenIQ.

"We have longstanding partnerships with many of the largest companies in India built over half a century. We continue to grow and evolve along with our clients. We are also proud of our talent, our capabilities, and my role is to ensure we stay a step ahead in helping our clients achieve their growth objectives with our world class suite of products and services," Joe further added. NielsenIQ (NIQ) is the world's leading consumer intelligence company, delivering the most complete understanding of consumer buying behavior and revealing new pathways to growth. NIQ combined with GfK in 2023, bringing together the two industry leaders with unparalleled global reach. Today NIQ has operations in 95+ countries representing 97% of the world's GDP. With a holistic retail read and the most comprehensive consumer insights-delivered with advanced analytics through state-of-the-art platforms-NIQ delivers the Full View™.

JSW Infrastructure targets 400 MTPA cargo-handling capacity

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

JSW Infrastructure Limited (JSWIL), part of the JSW Group, aims to expand its cargo-handling capacity to 400 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) by financial year (FY) 2030, the company said on Thursday. India's second-largest private port operator stated that it has an estimated Capex of Rs 30,000 crores for FY25-30 to achieve 400 million tonnes per annum capacity which will drive capacity expansion. The company has undertaken key initiatives which include Brownfield projects: Goa, Dhamtar, and Jaigarh capacity improvements. New ports at Jatadhar, Keni, and Murbe are examples of greenfield developments, the company stated.

JSWIL has strengthened its end-to-end logistics solutions through acquisitions such as Navkar Corporation and a slurry pipeline project, as per the company. JSWIL further added that it has made significant progress in diversifying its customer base. The share of third-party cargo increased from 5 per cent in FY19 to 48

per cent in the first half of financial year 2025 (H1FY25). It aims for an equal mix of group and third-party customers, enhancing operational stability and profitability, JSWIL added.

The company stated that JSW Infrastructure Limited has committed to curtail its direct GHG emissions and achieve net neutrality by 2050 to combat global warming and climate change. Commenting on the company's vision, Rinkesh Roy, Joint MD and CEO, JSW Infrastructure said: "We are committed to developing a robust, efficient and integrated ports and logistics ecosystem that aligns with India's economic growth and infrastructure development goals.

By prioritizing capacity expansion and diversifying our customer and product profiles, I am confident we will deliver substantial long-term value to our stakeholders."

Lalit Singhvi, CFO and Whole Time Director, JSW Infrastructure said: "I am excited to share that JSWIL's robust financial foundation, with a solid balance sheet and a zero net debt, fuels our ambitious expansion plans.

Future economic indicators will decide Fed's next steps: UBS

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Federal Reserve's next steps on interest rates will be guided by economic data, according to a report by UBS. While the major global markets reacted negatively to the change in rate cut cycles by Fed for next year the report noted that Fed will continue to monitor the economic conditions and various data before taking any step. It said, "We believe the Fed remains data-dependent, and future economic indicators will continue to play a significant role in shaping the US central bank's next steps".

The report noted that key indicators, such as the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, will play a critical role in shaping the central bank's policy. The PCE index, which is the Fed's preferred measure of inflation, is set to be released this Friday.

The report however expects inflation to moderate in the months ahead, which could influence the Fed's policy outlook. Additionally, jobs data will remain a significant



factor as the central bank evaluates the strength of the labour market and overall economic resilience. The report highlighted positive trends in the US economy. It pointed to resilient economic activity, lower borrowing costs, and broader earnings growth as supportive factors for the financial markets.

It emphasized the increasing monetization of artificial intelligence (AI) and the possibility of greater capital market activity, especially under a potential second Trump administration, as contributing to a favourable environment for US equities.

Although the Fed indicated that the pace of rate cuts may be slower than previously expected, however, it said that the broader direction towards easing rates remains clear, offering some clarity for investors navigating the current economic climate. The report also mentioned that investors should deploy excess cash into high-quality and diversified fixed-income strategies, select equity income strategies, and structure investment approaches. These investments may offer income generation and portfolio diversification, as lower interest rates will likely erode returns on cash next year.

India's Solar manufacturing to grow with Rs 1 lakh crore Capex

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's solar equipment manufacturing capacity is poised for healthy growth over the next 2-3 years, entailing a capex of nearly Rs 1 lakh crore, asserted CareEdge Ratings. Of that Capex, an estimated debt funding of nearly Rs 70,000 crore is expected over the medium term, including investments in polysilicon and wafer capacities, the rating agency said in a report Thursday. India's renewable energy capacity stood at 155 Giga-watts as of September 2024, with the solar segment being the largest contributor at 91 GW, thanks to significant capacity additions over the past 7-8 years. The rising share of renewable energy capacity is due to strong policy focus, improving tariff competitiveness, and strong investor interest.

While India installed 18.5 GW of renewable energy capacity in 2023-24, CareEdge Ratings expects the annual installations to surpass 35 GW over the next two years, primarily supported by a healthy pipeline of more than 100

GW.

The growth in solar capacity in the medium term will be driven by an annual tendering target of 50 GW renewable energy capacity through renewable energy implementing agencies, with the majority expected from solar, the rating agency said in the report. Significant capacity additions of 20 GW will come from rooftop solar, hybrid solar components, and off-grid solar over the next 2-3 years.

The government is proactive in its policy - it supports the industry through tariff and non-tariff barriers to drive demand for Indian players.

To safeguard domestic cells and modules against the predatory pricing of Chinese counterparts, the government imposed a Basic Customs Duty (BCD) of 25 per cent and 40 per cent

on Chinese cells and modules respectively, effective from April 01, 2022. The duty remains a key tool in enhancing the competitiveness of domestic modules.

"The solar equipment manufacturing sector has several tailwinds including healthy domestic demand prospects, rising export opportunities, proactive policy support, and improved lenders' appetite for RE projects," said Jatin Arya, Director, of CareEdge Ratings.

However, Arya argued that lack of integrated solar equipment capacity, supply chain dependence on China, increasing competitive intensity, and delay in renewable energy capacity additions due to systemic issues are some headwinds that remain monitorable over the medium term.



SISL Infotech Empanelled by EDCIL to Drive Digital Transformation

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

SISL Infotech, a leading IT solutions and services provider, is thrilled to announce its empanelment by EDCIL (India) Limited, a Mini Ratna Category-I CPSE under the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Through this prestigious partnership, SISL Infotech will deliver cutting-edge Managed Cloud Services powered by Google Cloud to educational institutions, universities, and government education bodies across India.

As a trusted technology partner, SISL Infotech aims to revolutionize the education sector by enabling institutions to adopt state-of-the-art digital infrastructure. Leveraging Google Cloud's robust, secure, and scalable platform, SISL Infotech is poised to drive transformative outcomes in four key areas:

- Modernizing IT: Streamline operations, reduce costs, and enable scalability with cloud-first strategies.
- Enhancing Collaboration: Foster seamless communication and teamwork through Google Workspace tools.
- Accelerating Research: Harness advanced analytics and machine learning capabilities to power innovative research.
- Elevating Learning: Enable engaging, immersive, and accessible digital learning experiences for students and educators alike. Speaking on this milestone, Hitesh Bhalla, Lead - Cloud Sales at SISL Infotech, said, "We are excited to partner with EDCIL and Google Cloud to transform the way Indian educational institutions operate. With the power of the cloud, our mission is to help

institutions enhance efficiency, foster collaboration, and deliver impactful educational experiences."

Shobhit Kapoor, Head - Cloud Business at SISL Infotech, added, "This partnership is a testament to SISL Infotech's commitment to driving digital transformation in India's education sector. By leveraging Google Cloud's advanced technologies, we will empower institutions to embrace innovation, streamline their processes, and set new benchmarks in education delivery."

This empanelment by EDCIL represents a significant step forward in SISL Infotech's journey to shape the future of education through technology. By integrating Google Cloud's leading-edge solutions, SISL Infotech will provide institutions with the tools and capabilities to meet the demands of modern education, including improved scalability, cost-effectiveness, and security. A Shared Vision for India's Education Sector

Through its collaboration with EDCIL and Google Cloud, SISL Infotech is uniquely positioned to deliver solutions that align with the government's vision of a digitally empowered education system. As part of this initiative, SISL Infotech will work closely with institutions to:

- Implement cloud-based learning management systems.
- Support faculty with advanced training programs.
- Enable seamless adoption of hybrid and remote learning models.
- Drive the adoption of analytics-driven decision-making to improve institutional outcomes.

Quick and Easy Personal Loans with OneScore App

TBG NETWORK
PUNE

Personal loans offer a swift financial solution for various needs, providing borrowers quick access to funds anytime, anywhere. These loans ensure fast processing and approval, often within hours. Borrowers benefit from flexibility, as no collateral is required, and the application process is straightforward. A good credit score plays a vital role in securing instant personal loans with favourable terms. Borrowers can leverage tools like the OneScore App to monitor and improve their credit scores effortlessly. With better credit health, customers can also access loans up to Rs. 5 Lakh quickly and

seamlessly with the app. Why Choose an Instant Personal Loan? These loans provide a practical solution for customers in need of capital. Here are a few personal loan benefits that borrowers can look forward to:

- Borrowers can use the funds for various personal financial needs
- Ensures quick access to money when required
- Provides a lump-sum amount for larger expenses
- Features lower interest rates compared to credit cards
- Offers higher borrowing limits than credit cards
- Allows flexible repayment terms to suit borrowers
- Timely payments can improve credit scores

Can I Take a Personal Loan and Home Loan at the same time?

one
score



Loan Apps

These apps offer a convenient and efficient way to secure funds quickly. However, borrowers must first understand their functionality, benefits and potential drawbacks before making a decision.

When to Use Before opting for one of these apps, borrowers should consider the following questions: Is immediate access to funds required?

If so, instant loan apps provide one of the fastest methods for securing financial assistance.

Can the borrower manage higher interest rates? It is important to assess whether the loan can be repaid comfortably, considering the added cost of interest.

Is the app trustworthy? Borrowers should choose RBI-approved, reputable platforms to ensure reliable loan terms and avoid potential scams. Which App to Use When selecting a loan app, borrowers should prioritise the following aspects for a seamless experience: Review user ratings and feedback to ensure the app's trustworthiness,

WorkIndia Report Highlights Gender-Specific Trends in Blue-Collar Workforce for 2024 - Telecalling for Women, Delivery for Men

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

WorkIndia, a leading platform in tech-enabled hiring solutions, has unveiled the annual data on job postings, offering a comprehensive analysis of sector specific trends, candidate preferences and recruitment activities across India. According to 25,00,000 job postings between January and December 2024, Delhi emerged as the city with the highest number of opportunities, accounting for an impressive 420,083 listings. Meanwhile, tele-calling stood out as the leading sector with 270,526 postings. The data reveals interesting demographic and sector-wise trends, with delivery jobs topping the charts for postings that prefer male candidates, while telecalling emerged as the sector with the highest preference for women. Among job titles, field sales executive recorded the highest demand, with 50,690 postings, highlighting its critical role across industries. The report also noted

that twelfth-grade qualification remains the most preferred by employers, emphasizing its value in the job market. The report also provided an insight into the interaction between candidates and recruiters. During the year, 17,673,568 WhatsApp messages were exchanged, while 25,729,120 calls were made from the candidate's end, highlighting the active communication between both parties. Candidates submitted an impressive 29,592,283 job applications, with back-office roles leading in job view. The back-office sector scored high in fresher engagement, with 5,827,713 applications. These metrics showcase the immense popularity and demand for back-office positions across the country. The report further analysed candidate behaviour within the first 30 days of registration, revealing that the average call duration is 5.9 minutes, while candidates made an average of three calls and sent approximately 4 WhatsApp messages during the same period.

RBI FLAGS RISING SUBSIDIES BY STATES AS INCIPIENT STRESS

Subsidies provided by the states include farm loan waivers, free/subsidised services and cash transfers to farmers, youth and women.

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday termed increasing spending by states on subsidies as an "incipient stress" and called for rationalisation of such outgoes.

The central bank in a report 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2024-25' said that the states need to contain and rationalise their subsidy outgoes so that such spending does not crowd out more productive expenditure.

Subsidies provided by the states include farm loan waivers, free/subsidised services (like electricity to agriculture and households, transport, gas cylinders) and cash transfers to farmers, youth and women.

Subsidies, sometimes termed freebies in political discourse, are being resorted to

INCIPIENT STRESS

■ States offer subsidies like farm loan waivers, free services, and cash transfers, often ahead of elections.

■ High subsidy spending risks crowding out resources for critical infrastructure and development.

■ RBI urges states to focus on fiscal consolidation and redirect funds towards health, education, and rural infrastructure.



■ States have improved fiscal discipline, maintaining a gross fiscal deficit below 3% of GDP for three years.

■ RBI suggests using data analytics and AI to refine taxation and boost non-tax revenue.

by political parties, specially ahead of polls.

Several states have announced sops pertaining to farm loan waivers, free electricity to agriculture and households, free transport to a section of people, allowances to unemployed youth

and monetary assistance to women.

"Such spending could crowd out the resources available to them and hamper their capacity to build critical social and economic infrastructure. High debt-GDP ratio, outstanding

guarantees and the increasing subsidy burden require states to persevere with fiscal consolidation while laying greater emphasis on development and capital spending," the RBI report read.

RBI argued that an urgent review of the outgoes on sub-

sides is warranted to free up resources for increasing investment in health, education, agriculture, research and development (R&D) and rural infrastructure, which will help create more jobs and reduce poverty on a sustainable basis.

Asserting that new pressures are emerging from an increasing subsidy burden, RBI said these developments underline the need for deepening fiscal consolidation by the states.

On a macro level, RBI said state governments have made commendable progress towards fiscal consolidation by containing their aggregate gross fiscal deficit within 3 per cent of GDP for three consecutive years (2021-22 to 2023-24) and restricting revenue deficit to 0.2 per cent of GDP in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Sebi defers ESG disclosure deadline under BRSR framework by a year

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has decided to defer the ESG disclosure deadline for value chain partners of listed companies by one year until FY26, giving more time to them to comply with the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) requirements.

Until then, environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting will remain voluntary instead of the current "comply-and-explain" approach.

The proposal, approved by Sebi's board on Wednesday, is aimed at enhancing ease of doing business for listed companies and their value chain partners in meeting BRSR requirements.

The Sebi's board approved several relaxations and updates for ESG disclosures.

These include "deferring ESG disclosures for value chain", as well as "assessment or assurance" thereof,



by one year. Hence, ESG disclosures for value chain shall apply from FY26 (as against the current requirement of FY 2024-25) and "assessment or assurance" thereof shall be applicable from FY 2026-27 (as against the current requirement of FY 2025-26)," Sebi said.

The phased approach by Sebi to ESG reporting strikes the right balance by encouraging immediate action while giving businesses the time they need to adapt.

Smitha Shetty, Regional Director, APAC, Achilles Information, said,

"This strategy fosters a more inclusive and sustainable business environment,

empowering organisations of all sizes to contribute to a greener future for India, she added.

"Availability of value chain information is a recognised challenge all over the world, and this initiative of Sebi grants businesses the necessary time to streamline their preparedness, at the same time allowing a window to encourage their value chain partners to embrace ESG in the right spirit, beyond mere compliance," Dipankar Ghosh, Partner & Leader, Sustainability & ESG, BDO India, said.

A company's value chain includes all activities that add value, from sourcing raw materials and services to distributing and selling products.

It covers both upstream (procurement) and downstream (sales) operations, extending beyond direct activities. This plays a crucial role in the company's sustainability and ESG efforts.

Coal import plunges by 3.1% during Apr-Oct'24

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's coal imports during the April-October period of financial year 2024-25 witnessed a major decrease of 3.1 per cent, reaching 149.39 million tonnes (MT) compared to 154.17 MT in the corresponding period of last year, the Coal Ministry stated on Thursday.

Additionally, the ministry added that the state non-regulated sector (other than power) witnessed a more significant drop of 8.8 per cent during Apr-Oct'24 as compared to the same period of last year.

Pointing out the growth in coal-based power generation, the ministry stated that although there was a significant growth of 3.87 per cent in coal-based power generation from April 2024 to October 2024 compared to the same period last year, imports for blending purposes by thermal power plants decreased



substantially by 19.5 per cent during the same period.

"India, despite possessing the fifth-largest coal reserves globally, faces a significant shortfall in certain coal types, particularly coking coal and high-grade thermal coal, which are not adequately available from domestic sources. This gap in supply necessitates coal imports to sustain key industries, including steel production, and to meet the growing energy demand," the Coal Ministry added in a release.

Moreover, coal pro-

duction during the April-October 2024 period demonstrated a commendable increase, reaching 537.57 MT compared to 506.93 MT in the same period of FY 2023-24, marking a growth of 6.04 per cent.

This upward trend reflects the government's ongoing efforts to streamline coal usage and enhance domestic production, the ministry added.

The Ministry of Coal continues to implement strategic initiatives aimed at bolstering coal production and improving availability.

Backward Classes Centre for Empowerment (BCCE) organised a seminar on Social Reforms, Governance and OBCs in India

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Backward Classes Centre for Empowerment (BCCE) organised a seminar on Social Reforms, Governance and OBCs in India at Ambedkar International Centre, in New Delhi. Chief Guest of the event, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupendra Yadav, K Laxman, National President, OBC Morcha, BJP, Vinay Sahasrabudde, former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Virender Gokhe, Director (BCCE), spoke about how since 2014, there has been a significant shift towards empowering OBCs afresh.

The leaders ponder upon how today, their voices are heard and their rights are fully recognised in governance and policy-making.

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Mr. Bhupen-



dra Yadav said, "Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji gave employment and reservation to the OBC community to move ahead. He said, 'We do not want to discriminate among castes and fight against castes. We want to contribute fully in the discussion of moving ahead. He told the students that you should forget the things of the past decades and think about 2047. We are about to enter a time where the digital revolution is going to happen... You are about to enter a world which will now work in conjunction with digital and artificial intelligence' The Minister said, 'The

Congress government discriminated against the OBC community. The Congress party had withheld the rights and the kind of environment that should have been given to the OBC community for 70 years have also been denied. Vinay Sahasrabudde, former Rajya Sabha member, while talking about justice for the neglected sections, said, 'Every Indian should have the feeling of village in his mind after stepping out of the house, feeling of the village and when one rises above the district, he should keep the feeling of humanity paramount in his mind and 'It is the responsibility of all of us to think about all those elements of the society, who have been neglected in the society, who should get justice but it has been denied from time to time. There should be a feeling of justice towards the neglected sections.' He said, 'Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee did justice by removing welfare from social welfare so that people of every section of the society can be inspired by the idea of social justice'. Dr K Laxman, president of BJP OBC Morcha, said, 'Congress is doing politics of appeasement in the name of OBCs. They have been in power for the last 70 years, yet they have done nothing, apart from not properly implementing the Mandal Commission recommendations. The first step taken by the Modi administration after coming to power in 2014 was to give constitutional status to the OBC Commission in 2018.

US stock markets tanked on rate cut

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

The US Federal Reserve in continuing the rate cut cycle cut the interest rate by 25 basis points, according to an official statement following the key FOMC meeting.

The US Federal Reserve has lowered its target range for the federal funds bringing it down to 4.25 per cent-4.5 per cent.

It said "In support of its goals, the Committee decided to lower the target range for the federal funds rate by 1/4 percentage

point to 4-1/4 to 4-1/2 per cent".

The fed noted that the move, aimed at supporting economic growth and achieving the central bank's long-term goals of maximum employment and a 2 per cent inflation rate, was announced after the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting. Despite the anticipated rate cut, the announcement did not bring cheer to the US stock markets. Instead, major indices tumbled, reflecting investor concerns about the economic outlook.

Ultraviolet launches its Experience Center in Delhi NCR

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ultraviolet is proud to announce the opening of its first UV Space Station in North India, located in New Delhi, marking a monumental step in its journey toward revolutionizing electric mobility across India. This new Experience Center is the 12th to be inaugurated this year, reflecting Ultraviolet's commitment to expanding its retail footprint to 12 cities in Phase 1 of its expansion plans. Strategically situated in the heart of New Delhi, this state-of-the-art facility offers an immersive



platform for customers to explore Ultraviolet's flagship high-performance electric motorcycle, the F77 MACH 2. Equipped with cutting-edge UV SuperNova DC fast charging infrastructure, the UV Space Station is designed as a comprehensive 3S

setup, integrating Sales, Service, and Spare Parts to deliver a seamless ownership experience. Speaking on the occasion, Narayan Subramaniam, CEO and Co-founder of Ultraviolet, remarked, "The launch of our first UV Space Station in North

India is a significant milestone in our journey. New Delhi, a city that thrives on innovation and sustainability, is the perfect location for this expansion. The UV Space Station launch in Delhi NCR marks Ultraviolet's commitment towards establishing our retail presence in 12 cities by Dec 2024. This not only opens up a key market but also reinforces our dedication to transforming urban mobility by delivering advanced technology and exceptional experiences to our customers." The launch of this facility coincides with the Delhi government's continued

efforts to promote EV adoption. The Delhi EV Policy, initially introduced in 2020, has recently been extended to provide benefits for EV buyers until March 2025. Additionally, the government is in the process of drafting an updated EV policy, aiming to further expand infrastructure and introduce measures to accelerate the adoption of sustainable mobility solutions. These efforts reflect a shared vision between Ultraviolet and the policymakers to combat pollution and reduce carbon footprints through advanced, eco-friendly technology.

Adding to this, Niraj Rajmohan, CTO and Co-founder of Ultraviolet, stated, "The opening of our Experience Center in Delhi NCR marks a pivotal moment in our mission to reshape the future of transportation. With the city's progressive EV policies and expanding infrastructure, we are excited to offer customers a glimpse into the next generation of electric mobility. Our focus on cutting-edge engineering and innovative design is aligned with our vision to provide high-performance, sustainable solutions that drive the future of transportation."

SpiceJet settles dispute of over \$16 million with Genesis

TDO NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Airline SpiceJet has settled dispute of over USD 16 million with Dublin-headquartered Genesis Aircraft Services, commercial aircraft leasing company, the company stated on Thursday.

Under the agreement, SpiceJet will pay Genesis USD 6 million and Genesis will acquire USD 4 million

in SpiceJet equity at a price of Rs 100 per share, the company added.

The agreement will also result in a significant saving for the airline as it navigates a robust path toward long-term growth.

The settlement with Genesis underscores SpiceJet's continued commitment to restoring financial stability, achieving operational resilience, and reducing legal lia-



bilities. Subject to the settlement terms being satisfied, both parties have agreed to

withdraw all ongoing litigations and disputes related to this matter at the appropri-

ate forums.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, said, "This settlement marks another crucial step in our journey towards financial stability. We are pleased to have resolved this matter amicably with Genesis through constructive negotiations. This agreement, which includes Genesis acquiring an equity stake in SpiceJet, will significantly

reduce our financial liabilities and further strengthen our balance sheet."

This settlement follows a series of successful resolutions with other lessors, including Horizon Aviation, Engine Lease Finance Corporation, Aircraft, Wilmington Trust SP, Shannon Engine Support Limited, Export Development Canada, among others.

In September 2024, Car-

lyle Aviation agreed to convert USD 30 million of lease arrears into SpiceJet equity at INR 100 per share, signalling increasing confidence from stakeholders in the airline's financial and operational recovery.

The airline's recent financial progress has been recognised by Acute Ratings and Research Limited, which recently upgraded SpiceJet's credit rating by

four notches. Budget airline SpiceJet is an IATA-IOSA certified airline that operates a fleet of Boeing 737s and Q-400s and is one of the country's largest regional players operating multiple daily flights under UDAN or the Regional Connectivity Scheme. The majority of the airline's fleet offers SpiceMax, the most spacious economy-class seating in India.

RELOCATION OPTION IN MOSQUE-TEMPLE ISSUE MAY HAVE RESOLVED IT AMICABLY

OPINION
RASHEED KIDWAI



Had supporters of Babri masjid in Ayodhya explored multiple options, Kiruna town in Sweden could have helped them resolve the vexed mosque-temple issue that resulted in thoughtless violence, disquiet and division in society.

Kiruna, a Swedish town north of the Arctic Circle, is undergoing one of the most ambitious urban relocation projects in history due to the expansion of the Swedish government owned Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara (LKAB) iron ore mine beneath the town. As part of this process, many buildings, including the iconic Kiruna Church, considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings in Sweden, are being relocated to a new area approximately 3 kilometers east of its current location. Kiruna's church is a terracotta-colored building designed to resemble a hut of the indigenous Sami people. In fact, the word Kiruna comes from the Sami word kiruna, which means snow grouse.

Sometime in 2025, the entire 600-tonne church's

wooden building will be loaded onto trailers and moved to a new spot near the local graveyard.

On a private visit, this correspondent saw how local authorities and community leaders are treating church's relocation not just about preserving the church but as a symbol of their collective efforts to Kiruna's unique heritage and identity while adapting to the challenges posed by modern industrial activities.

Kiruna Church, completed in 1912, is one of Sweden's largest wooden buildings and a prime example of early 20th-century Nordic architecture. It has significant cultural and historical value, making its preservation and relocation a top priority.

The LKAB iron ore mine in Kiruna is the world's largest underground mine that produces iron ore for steel mills and other industries. The mammoth, round the clock underground mining activities in Kiruna cause consistent threat to the stability of all city buildings, residences, shops and commercial establishments. A large part of the town was moved in 2004 setting an example of a town to be relocated. The town is also relocating about 3,000 homes and other buildings. The 1958 clock tower from the previous town hall was dismantled and rebuilt alongside the new landmark after cracks emerged in many



A Scandinavian firm, Henning Larsen, is working on an elaborate plan to dismantle the church carefully, with its pieces catalogued and transported to the new town centre.

government and school buildings. A new railway station has already been opened further away from the mine. By 2035, approximately 6,000 people out of its current population of 18,000, will have been relocated to new housing.

A Scandinavian firm, Henning Larsen, is working on an elaborate plan to dismantle the church carefully, with its pieces catalogued and transported to the new town centre. Some of the roads, currently 20 feet in breadth, are being expanded to 40 feet, so that the church's structure is moved easily. Henning Larsen promises to reassemble it in its original design.

The church is the only landmark being shifted. There are over 20 significant buildings from the old

town of Kiruna to the new location after getting dismantled and reconstructed in its original form. A member of Henning Larsen team says physically moving the entire town turns out to be a complex, expensive and unique challenge but making residents accept the change is a far more formidable task. "The challenge for Kiruna city is not only about moving an entire city, but also moving the minds of citizens and creating a new home and identity," he said while declining to be identified. He said many people asked him even if the church is moved physically, graves and birches would not.

Ebba Busch, Sweden's deputy prime minister and in charge of climate and business views LKAB as Sweden's goldmine," hav-

ing large deposits of rare earth elements, vital to produce electric car batteries and wind turbines.

As per the United Nations' report on climate change, rise in global temperatures may lead to an average sea level rise of between 26 and 77 centimetres by 2100. Higher levels of global warming will cause greater thermal expansion of the ocean and increased ice melting, with a two-degree increase potentially leading to the melting of the Greenland ice shelf and a rise of up to seven metres. If that happens, cities such as Mumbai, Miami and Guangzhou and many parts of Bangladesh would come under threat. Male in Maldives are already predicted to be uninhabitable by 2030.

Kiruna also houses Sami people who are the Indigenous tribe of Sápmi, a region spanning northern Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. They have a rich cultural heritage and history tied closely to the Arctic environment. The Sami language is part of

the Uralic language family and includes several dialects, such as North Sami, Lule Sami, and South Sami. North Sami is the most widely spoken. Reindeer herding is central to Sami culture and remains a significant source of livelihood. Other traditional practices include fishing, hunting, handicrafts (duodji), and joik, a traditional form of singing.

For centuries, Sami lands and culture were subjected to colonization, Christianization, and assimilation policies by the Swedish state. These policies included restrictions on the use of Sami languages and forced displacement. Swedish society admits that mining, forestry, and other industries have been encroached on Sami lands, impacting their traditional way of life.

The Sami Parliament of Sweden (Sámediggi) was established in 1993 to represent Sami interests in areas like culture, language, and reindeer herding. However, its powers are limited, and it functions primarily as an advisory body. Efforts are underway to preserve and revitalize Sami languages, traditions, and knowledge systems. Festivals like the Jokkmokk Winter Market celebrate Sami culture and attract visitors from around the world.

Climate change and warming temperatures are affecting reindeer migration patterns and disrupt ecosystems that the Sami depend on. The Sami population faces ongoing struggles for land and water rights, as their traditional territories overlap with areas used for industrial development in addition to systemic discrimination and racism, although awareness and advocacy efforts are increasing.

CTRL Movie depiction: An Eye Opener to AI chills

OPINION
PRAGATI SOLANKI



The Indian entertainment industry is undergoing significant transformation. While cinemas continue to draw crowds with their larger-than-life action sequences, glamour, and visual extravagance, online streaming platforms are quietly reshaping the way stories are told. Platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ Hotstar and Jio Cinema have gained acclaim for delivering Indian content—movies, series, and short films—that captivate audiences with thought-provoking themes, intricate narratives, and impactful messages.

This contrast between what succeeds in theatres and what resonates online reveals a fascinating trend. Indian audiences, when given access to meaningful stories in the comfort of their homes, demonstrate an increasing appreciation for quality cinema. However, at the box office, spectacle and grandeur still dominate, reflecting a collective affinity for visually extravagant experiences.

'CTRL': REFLECTING THE AI AGE

One standout in this streaming revolution is the Netflix film CTRL, directed by Vikramaditya Motwane starring Ananya Pandey. The movie examines the pervasive influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the growing risks to personal data privacy in a rapidly digitizing world.

CTRL envisions a future deeply entangled with AI, exploring both its transformative potential and its darker consequences. The film highlights alarming realities, such as the commodification of personal data often including sensitive information like addresses, contact numbers, and bank details that can be purchased for shockingly low prices. This reflects the ongoing fragility of data security in India.

Despite judicial milestones like the Aadhaar judgment and the K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India case affirming the constitutional right to privacy, as well as the enactment of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act 2023, privacy violations remain widespread. CTRL emphasizes how the intersection of AI and data exploitation could amplify these issues, presenting plausible yet deeply unsettling scenarios.

DEEPFAKES: A DISTURBING REALITY

A particularly harrowing aspect of CTRL is its depiction of deepfakes, a technology powered by AI that creates convincingly fake media. The film underscores the dangers faced by individuals, especially women, in a world where their faces can be maliciously superimposed onto explicit content.

This portrayal is not merely speculative; it mirrors a distressing reality where technology is misused to violate dignity and safety. Women falling victim to such acts face emotional, psychological, and social repercussions. By shedding light on this crisis, CTRL pushes for urgent discussions around the ethical boundaries of AI and the need for stringent measures to prevent such abuse. Addressing AI through Legal and Ethical Frameworks

The rapid development of AI presents a dual-edged sword. On the one hand, it holds immense promise for innovation; on the other, it poses serious risks if left unchecked. This raises a pressing question: Is India's legal framework prepared to address these challenges?

While the DPDP Act 2023 marks progress in safeguarding digital privacy, it does not fully address the unique complexities of AI-related issues. Comprehensive legislation is needed to cover areas such as accountability for AI-driven actions, ownership of AI-generated content, and penalties for misuse. Countries like Canada, USA and European nations have already brought changes under their data privacy regulations in reference to AI.

The ethical development of AI is a key message conveyed in CTRL. The film's exploration of AI's potential harm serves as a reminder that technology must prioritize human welfare. Establishing clear, enforceable guidelines is essential to prevent AI from being weaponized against society.

Navigating the Future of AI
AI's integration into our lives is inevitable, but its impact depends on the choices we make now. As individuals, we must exercise caution in sharing personal data. As a society, there is a need to demand accountability from corporations and governments. For India, fostering digital literacy and awareness around data security will be critical to ensuring that technology remains a force for progress rather than a source of peril. Films like CTRL play a crucial role in driving awareness of these pressing issues. By merging entertainment with social commentary, they not only engage audiences but also encourage introspection and action. As we chart our path through an AI-driven future, let us strive to ensure that innovation works for humanity's betterment rather than against it.

Dr. Ravi Prakash Tiwari is the author of Pun is Pun.

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Euthanasia: The right to die, and many arguments

OPINION
DR. RAVI PRAKASH TIWARI



The Greek term 'Euthanasia' means a painless death. Euthanasia embodies several facets, from active (introducing something to cause demise) to passive (discontinuing treatment); voluntary (consent) to involuntary (consent from guardian) and physician's assistance (where a physician prescribes the medicine and patient or the third party administers the medication to cause demise).

ARGUMENTS OF ADVOCATES OF EUTHANASIA

Refusing care: The right to refuse medical treatment is acknowledged in

ill, but also 'Right to life' for the needy patients.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST EUTHANASIA

Malafide intention: The members of the family or relatives may abuse euthanasia for inheriting the property of the patient. In the recent judgement, the Supreme Court has also broached this issue. To regulate the medical professionals, the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002 elucidates euthanasia briefly in Chapter 6, Section 6.7 and it is according to the provisions of the Transplantation of Human Organ Act, 1994. The law commission rendered a report (no-196) to the government on this issue as there is an imperative need to safeguard patients and also medical professionals caring the terminally ill patients from inessential litigations.

Focus on care: When cure is impossible by low cost methods, the intention is to provide care. Hence, euthanasia for no cure illness is illogical. The society and medical professionals become despondent and the patients take extreme

measures such as suicide, euthanasia or substance use, whenever there is no cure. Here, palliative and rehabilitative care rescues the patient and the family. At times, the family is advised to get the patient discharged from the hospital and wait for death to come. The reasons quoted for such decisions are non-availability of bed, futile intervention, poverty, and resources to be utilised for other curable patients. Unfortunately, the majority of our patients' family accept the suggestion. The perception of the society needs to be altered and also the doctors need to emphasize cure rather than just cure.

Eradicating the invalid: According to euthanasia opposers, if we embrace 'the right to death with dignity', patients with incurable and debilitating illnesses will be eliminated from our society. But palliative care would provide a relief from excruciating symptoms and pain.

Constitution of India: According to Article 21 'Right to life' is a natural right but suicide is incompatible and inconsistent with the concept of 'right to life'. After the legalisation of euthanasia, there is a grave concern that the State may not invest in health (working towards

Right to life). In Holland, legalised euthanasia led to a severe downfall in the quality of care for terminally ill patients. So, there should not be any space for euthanasia in any form in a welfare state.

SYMPTOM OF MENTAL ILLNESS:

One witnesses instances of attempts to suicide or completed suicide in patients suffering from depression, and schizophrenia. It is also documented in patients suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder. Hence, it is imperative to evaluate the mental status of the patient seeking euthanasia. An attempt to suicide is a psychiatric emergency and considered a desperate call for help or assistance in classical teaching.

COMMERCIALISATION OF HEALTH CARE:

Passive euthanasia is witnessed in a majority of the hospitals across the country, where poor patients and their family refuse or withdraw treatment because of the huge expenses entailed in keeping them alive. Once it is legalised, commercial health sector will serve death sentences to many disabled and elderly citizens of India for a paltry amount of money. The

Supreme Court Judgement has emphasised this.

Studies have reported that many terminally ill patients opting for euthanasia suffer from major depression, and that the longing for death in terminally ill patients is correlated with depression. They desperately require palliative and rehabilitative care. Zealous, compassionate and humanistic team of health professionals need to look after them and the complete expenses need to be borne by the State so that 'Right to life' becomes a reality and succeeds before 'Right to death with dignity'. Just like the death sentence is granted to offenders in the rarest of the rare cases by courts, euthanasia should be granted only in the rarest of the rare cases.

The grit to survive against all odds will vanish from the character of human beings, if the option of euthanasia is available to patients and their families. The true medical professionals will use it to their advantage to convince the patients and families to utilise this option.

6 KILLED IN SHAHJAHANPUR COLLISION; TRUCK DRIVER ARRESTED

According to officials, three people died on the spot, while three others succumbed to their injuries during treatment at a hospital

TOD NETWORK
SHAHJAHANPUR (U P)

A car rammed into a truck, leaving 6 members of a family dead and four others critically injured in Uttar Pradesh's Shahjahanpur district, police said on Thursday.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Rajesh S said, "The accident occurred near the Barkheda Jaipal crossroads on the Bareilly-Etawah highway when a family travelling to Delhi in an Eriga car collided with an oncoming truck late Wednesday night." The deceased were identified as Riyazul Ali (45), Amna (42), Gudiya (9), Tamanna 'Anu' (32), and Noor (6). Gulfisha (25) later succumbed to injuries at a government hospital.

Riyazul, a resident of Kant town in Shahjahanpur, was engaged in the garment business in Delhi, the police said. "The family had left for Delhi at around 10 PM on Wednesday night after attending a wedding. Their vehicle met with the fatal collision shortly thereafter," the SP said. Chief Medical Su-

FATAL ACCIDENT

- A car collided with a truck, killing 6 family members and critically injuring 4 others on the Bareilly-Etawah highway.
- The deceased include Riyazul Ali (45), Amna (42), Gudiya (9), Tamanna 'Anu' (32), Noor (6), and Gulfisha (25), who died in the hospital.
- The family was returning to Delhi after attending a wedding in Shahjahanpur when the accident occurred late Wednesday night.
- The truck driver has been taken into custody, and an investigation is underway to determine the cause of the crash.



perintendent of the Government Medical College Dr Nepal Singh said five seriously injured people were brought here, of whom Gulfisha (25) died during treatment.

In addition to this, a seriously injured patient was referred to Bareilly. The condition of two of the three patients admitted here remains serious.

Police said they have taken the truck driver into custody and seized the vehicle.

Shamsher Ali, the uncle of Riyazul, said at the hospital, "The family had come to Shahjahanpur two days ago for a wedding and were returning to Delhi when this tragedy occurred." Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed condolences to the bereaved families.

In a statement, he directed district officials to ensure the injured receive proper treatment and prayed for their speedy recovery.

The truck driver has been arrested, and an investigation is underway to determine the cause of the accident, the police further confirmed in its statement.

Following the incident, Superintendent of Police (SP) Shahjahanpur stated, "A tragic incident occurred in Shahjahanpur district involving a collision between a truck and an auto-rickshaw. Three people lost their lives

on the spot, and two more succumbed to their injuries during treatment at the hospital, bringing the total death toll to five so far. Five other passengers, out of a total of ten on board, have also sustained injuries."

The District Magistrate and the SP inspected the hospital and met the injured. "Two children have sustained fractures, and their treatment is proceeding well. If necessary, critical cases will be referred to higher medical centres, as decided by the attending doctors," the SP added.

Further, the official stated that authorities are monitoring the condition of the injured individuals under treatment.

In another incident, at least 26 people were injured on Wednesday in a road accident in Uttar Pradesh's Kasganj, as per the police officials.

A tractor collided with a pick-up carrying passengers coming from a marriage ceremony. All the injured were hospitalised and undergoing treatment, according to the police.

SC extends stay on defamation case proceedings against Kejriwal, Atishi

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday extended its interim order staying the proceedings of the criminal defamation case against current and former Chief Ministers of Delhi, Atishi and Arvind Kejriwal over their remarks on the alleged deletion of voter names from the electoral roll in the national capital in 2018.

As Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Rajeev Babbar, who filed a complaint, sought time to file a reply, a bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhattachagge gave four weeks time to him.

Earlier, the apex court had issued notice to Delhi Police and the complainant and sought their responses in the matter.

In the meanwhile, proceedings before the trial court will remain stayed in the defamation case, the apex court had said.

Arvind Kejriwal and Atishi approached the apex court challenging the Delhi High Court's refusal to grant the criminal defamation case by BJP leader Rajeev Babbar filed over their



They had made remarks on the alleged deletion of names of 30 lakh voters belonging to some communities from electoral rolls in 2018.

remarks on the alleged deletion of voter names from the electoral roll in the national capital in 2018.

Atishi and Kejriwal have challenged the September 2 order of the Delhi High Court.

They had made remarks on the alleged deletion of names of 30 lakh voters belonging to some commu-

nities from electoral rolls in 2018.

The High Court had said the imputations were prima facie "defamatory" with the intention of vilifying the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and gaining undue political mileage.

The High Court had dismissed the plea by Atishi, Kejriwal and others challenging the defamation proceedings pending before the trial court. The defamation complaint also named two other AAP leaders, Sushil Kumar Gupta and Manoj Kumar.

It had also directed the AAP leaders to attend the trial court hearing scheduled for October 3.

Kejriwal and the other AAP leaders had challenged in the High Court the trial court's decision, which upheld the summons issued by the magistrate court following the Babbar's complaint.

The AAP leaders, before the High Court, sought to quash the magistrate court's March 15, 2019, order, and the Sessions court's January 28, 2020, order, labelling the complaint as "politically motivated" saying Babbar was not an aggrieved party.

SC extends stay on defamation case proceedings against Kejriwal, Atishi

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

'Dummy' students: CBSE conducts surprise inspection at 29 schools, to take legal action

New Delhi The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) conducted a series of surprise inspections at 29 schools in Delhi, Bengaluru, Varanasi, Bihar, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh to check enrolment of 'dummy' students, officials said on Thursday. According to CBSE Secretary Himanshu Gupta, a total of 29 teams, comprising a CBSE officer and a principal from an affiliated school, conducted the inspections. "Majority of the inspected schools were found to have violated the Board's Affiliation Bye-Laws by enrolling students beyond their actual attendance records,



effectively creating 'non-attending' enrolments. Additionally, schools were found to be flouting infrastructural norms of the board," Gupta said.

"CBSE has taken these violations seriously and is in the process of issuing show-cause notices to the schools found in breach of regulations. The Board is also considering legal action against the defaulting institutions," he added.

The inspections were conducted on Wednesday and

Thursday. Eighteen of the violating schools are in the national capital, while there are three in Varanasi, two each in Bengaluru, Patna, Ahmedabad, Bilsapur, and Chhattisgarh. Scores of students preparing for engineering and medical entrance exams prefer to take admission to dummy schools so that they can focus solely on their preparations for the competitive exams. They do not attend classes and straightforwardly appear in the board exams.

Aspirants also choose dummy schools keeping in mind the quota in medical and engineering institutes available for the students from certain states. For example, the candidates who have completed classes 11 and 12 in Delhi are considered for admission to the medical colleges of the national capital under the Delhi State Quota.

VPNs, proxy servers complicate bomb threat investigations, says Delhi Police

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

As bomb threats threw more than 100 Delhi schools into chaos in the past nine days, police and experts said that VPNs and proxy servers acted as key barriers in solving cases and legal frameworks for gathering information from these services are inadequate, leading to delays in investigations.

Since May this year, over 50 bomb threat emails have targeted not only schools but also hospitals, airports and airline companies in Delhi, but the police have yet to make any breakthroughs in these cases.

Former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had also raised concerns over threats to schools on Wednesday and questioned the police's failure



to catch the culprit.

According to senior officials, the Delhi Police have written to service providers like Google, VK, and Outlook.com to obtain the IP addresses of the senders.

In some cases, the police have received responses, but they have not been able to determine the exact origin.

The Delhi Police have also sought the assistance of Interpol through central agencies.

Several Delhi schools have received bomb threat emails in the past nine days, prompting security agencies to conduct checks in five separate incidents.

"Though nothing suspicious has been found in any of the threats so far, we cannot take any of them lightly. Each message was taken seriously, and thorough checks were conducted, following all security protocols," the officer said.

The officer further explained that VPN networks function like a web on the internet, where the origin is not directly connected to its server. "For example, if we are talking to each other, it's direct connectivity, but if we are connected through a VPN, our communication happens via multiple domain

servers," he said.

The first case of threats to Delhi schools and hospitals was reported in May. Several other government installations, including Thirai Jail and some Union Ministry departments, also received bomb threats.

In October, over 150 domestic and international flights operating from Delhi received similar bomb threat messages sent on X, where the sender had used VPN networks.

Delhi airport police registered 16 separate cases and conducted investigations, but have not been able to make any breakthroughs yet.

Cyber law expert and Supreme Court advocate Dr. Pavan Duggal said the problem is that India does not have a dedicated law to regulate the use of VPNs.

Delhi to display signages in Hindi, English, Punjabi, Urdu for linguistic diversity

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi's road signages, directional boards, including those at metro stations, will soon display information in Hindi, English, Punjabi and Urdu to move ahead at promoting linguistic diversity and to represent the city's official languages.

Bureaucrats working with the Delhi government will also be required to display their names in the four languages on boards outside their offices.

The move aligns with "The Delhi Official Languages Act, 2000", which recognises Hindi as the first official language and Urdu and Punjabi as second official languages. Currently most signboards



be Hindi, English, Punjabi and Urdu, with uniform font sizes for all.

A senior government official said that the direction would apply across metro stations, hospitals, public parks and other public spaces. The Public Works Department (PWD), which manages 1,250 km of roads in the city will begin updating signages accordingly.

"All government departments/offices/autonomous bodies/local bodies are directed to ensure the implementation of 'The Delhi Official Languages Act 2000' and the aforementioned order / sequence of the State Languages including English in the same size of font to write, print, paint, inscribe or emboss the information on

boards, Sign-boards, Nameplates and Directional signs in language/s other than Hindi, recognised for use for official purposes in NCT of Delhi," the department's official statement said.

The LG's directive also aligns with a 2011 order from the Union Home Ministry's Department of Official Language, which mandated states in Region A, including Delhi, Bihar and Haryana, to prioritise Hindi on public signages while deciding the order of other languages locally.

Hindi holds the top spot due to its official status and widespread usage followed by English, the associate official language of India given its prominence in administrative and communicative functions.

The police arrested accused Sarbjit Singh who accepted his involvement in this case during interrogation. He revealed that Pawandeep Singh alias Prince was the mastermind in the case.

The police added that Prince forged the docu-

ments of D-501, Badwar Apartment, Sector 6, Dwarka with his Sarbjit Singh on the name of Sarbjit's mother, Rajendra Kaur. After forging the documents, they sold this house to one Sunny Yadav for Rs 1,85,00,000.

According to the police,

HC Transfers MCOCA case involving Naresh Balyan to Special MP/MLA Court

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday transferred the case under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act involving AAP MLA Naresh Balyan to the Special MP/MLA Court in Rouse Avenue from Special MCOCA Court in Dwarka.

The bench of Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri observed that proceedings against Naresh Balyan are ongoing at the Rouse Avenue Court, while the proceedings for other accused were being held in the Dwarka Court. The court noted that it is not permissible for proceedings related to the same FIR to take place in two different courts.

Last week, Delhi High Court issued notice on a plea moved by Delhi Police seeking the transfer of the case proceedings under MCOCA from Dwarka District Court to the special MP/MLA court at Rouse Avenue.

Recently Delhi police sought transfer of case proceedings under MCOCA against three accused Ritik alias Peter, Rohit alias Anna and Sachin Chikara.

Delhi Police counsel Laksh Khanna submitted that an



The bench of Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri observed that proceedings against Naresh Balyan are ongoing at the Rouse Avenue Court, while the proceedings for other accused were being held in the Dwarka Court.

MLA has been arrested in this case and proceedings related to him are going before Special MP/MLA Court at Rouse Avenue.

On the other hand, proceedings related to three respondents are going before the Special Judge (MCOCA) at Dwarka Court, he added.

On December 13, the Rouse Avenue court declined the police custody of AAP MLA Naresh Balyan in judicial custody. He was remanded to

judicial custody after a police interrogation in MCOCA case. He was arrested on December 4. As per Delhi Police, Balyan's name emerged in connection with the case as an alleged mediator involved in resolving an extortion demand made by gangster Kapil Sangwan to a businessman. This year, the MCOCA was also invoked against the gangster, who is reportedly operating from the UK, for his involvement in extortion activities.

Mother-Son duo with one associate arrested for property grabbing

TOD NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi police arrested a mother-son duo along with one associate for property grabbing in Dwarka, Sector 6, in Delhi by forging the documents after the death of the own-

er, officials said on Thursday.

According to the police, the son, Sarbjit Singh with his mother, Rajendra Kaur, and one associate, Pawandeep Singh, forged documents of the property in Dwarka's Sector 6 and sold it for Rs 1,85,00,000.

The police initiated the investigation after receiving a complaint that some land grabbers have sold the property of the owner to one Sunny Yadav post owner's death in 2023. The owner had no children and his wife had also expired in 2019, the police

said. The police arrested accused Sarbjit Singh who accepted his involvement in this case during interrogation. He revealed that Pawandeep Singh alias Prince was the mastermind in the case.

The police added that Prince forged the docu-

ments of D-501, Badwar Apartment, Sector 6, Dwarka with his Sarbjit Singh on the name of Sarbjit's mother, Rajendra Kaur. After forging the documents, they sold this house to one Sunny Yadav for Rs 1,85,00,000.

According to the police,

Pawandeep Singh was arrested from Himachal Pradesh. He was also previously arrested in a murder case. He then came in contact with some persons who were his inmates and from them he got the idea of forging documents of empty plots and flats

and further selling them in order to earn easy money, the police informed.

Rajendra Kaur, mother of Sarbjit Singh, went untraceable after the arrest of her son. She was then declared a proclaimed offender by the Dwarka court. Rajendra Kaur was

arrested from the Sant Nagar extension, bringing an end to the chase.

According to police, Prince along with Sarbjit gave her the temptation that they will give her huge amount if she allowed to forge the documents in her name.

SUPREME COURT RESERVES 3 POSTS FOR WOMEN LAWYERS IN UPCOMING DHCBA ELECTIONS; TREASURER PLUS 30% OF OTHER EC POSTS RESERVED IN DISTRICT BARS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case *Fozia Rahman Versus Bar Council Of Delhi And Anr* observed and has directed for the reservation of 3 posts for women lawyers in the upcoming Delhi High Court Bar Association elections.

The court also stated that in the district bar associations, the post of Treasurer plus 30% of other posts shall stand reserved for women lawyers.

The bench comprising of Justice Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing the present matter.

However, out of 3 posts reserved in Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA, and all District Bar Associations.

Firstly, is of Treasurer. Secondly, is of Designated Senior Member Executive and

Thirdly, is for a member from the senior designation category.

The court made the said reservations on an experimental basis for the upcoming elections only and the elections directed to be held on the scheduled date (whatever date may be fixed).

Background of the Case:



The court in the case was hearing the three petitions filed seeking reservations for women lawyers in Delhi's lawyer bodies viz. Bar Council of Delhi, BCD, Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA and all District Bar Associations.

It has been contended by Advocate Shobha Gupta who filed one of the petition that under representation of women in effective posts in BCD and other Bar associations can negatively affect their rights and access to justice as well as detract from the effectiveness of overall justice system.

Advocate Shobha Gupta seek directions for 33% reservation in the upcoming Bar Council elections of all Advocate Bars in Delhi.

Advocate Shobha Gupta approached the Delhi High Court.

On September 11, the Delhi High Court refused to grant interim relief and listed the matter for November 27.

As per the Delhi Bar elections were scheduled to be held on October 19, and no interim relief was granted, the petitioners prayers were seemingly rendered infructuous.

The present petition is filed before the Supreme Court, wherein it asserted that the process of the election has been commenced with declaration or finalizing voter list.

On September 20, the court issued notice on the petitions.

This Year, the Supreme Court directed for the implementation of 33% women reservation in SCBA elections.

Earlier Proceedings Before the Court: The court had earlier asked the DHCBA to consider reserving post of Vice-President for women lawyers in the upcoming elections.

The bench found its as very disappointing that since the year 1962, there had not been even a single woman President of the Bar.

The court ordered that there should be women's reservation for posts in Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA.

The Court directed that a meeting of the General

Body of Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA be held to consider the desirability of reserving the post of Treasurer for women members. Therefore, in addition to reserving the post of Treasurer, GB was at liberty to consider the desirability of reserving 1 more post of office bearers of the Bar Association for women members.

Pursuant to the said order, the Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA filed a response wherein urging that the petitions be dismissed and the matter allowed to continue before the Delhi High Court, while it is pending.

It was also stated that a GBM was held on October 7, wherein the members of the General Body resolved that they were not in favor of reservation in the seats of the Executive Committee of the Delhi High Court Bar Association, DHCBA.

On December 12, the court reiterated that there was no stay imposed by the Court on Bar Association elections across the country, the Court asked DHCBA President Mohit Mathur to see that the issue of women reservation is resolved 'immediately and amicably.'

Supreme Court stays Kerala High Court's directions on use of elephants for temple festivals which are contrary to 2012 rules

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case *Thiruvambady Devaswom and another v. Union of India* observed and has stayed the restrictions which is imposed by the Kerala High Court for the use of elephants in temple festivals.

The court in its order stated that any direction which is being issued by the High Court is contrary to the Kerala Captive Elephants (Management and Maintenance) Rules, 2012 would remain stayed.

The bench comprising of Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice NK Singh was hearing the present matter.

The court in the case was hearing an appeal filed by the Thiruvambady and Paramakkavu devaswoms, which hold the iconic Thrissur Pooram (festival) in Kerala.

The bench orally remarked that the High Court directions were 'impractical' and asked how could the High Court frame rules, substituting the rule-making authority.

The High Court in the case observed and has issued



The bench comprising of Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice NK Singh was hearing the present matter.

The court in the case was hearing an appeal filed by the Thiruvambady and Paramakkavu devaswoms, which hold the iconic Thrissur Pooram (festival) in Kerala.

various directions wherein mandating a minimum -meter distance between two elephants, minimum distance of 8 meters from the elephant to the public and any percussion display, minimum distance of 100 meters from any place where fireworks are used.

Further, the High Court prescribed that elephants must get a minimum of 3-days rest between two exhibitions.

The High Court bench comprising of Justice AK Jayasankaran Nambiar and Justice P Gopinath observed that the use of elephants in festivals was not an essential religious practice.

Therefore, the temple devaswoms appealed to the Supreme Court wherein it is stated that the High Court's directions were impractical and would bring the conduct of poorams (temple festivals) to a grinding halt.

SC: UP amendment to Section 106 TP Act inoperative after parliamentary amendment of 2003

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case *Nacem Bano Alias Gaindo vs Mohammad Raheem* observed and has held that if the Parliament amends a law which being on a subject in Concurrent List, then an earlier State amendment to the same provision would become inoperative.

The court in the case held that the Uttar Pradesh amendment to Section 106 of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, which was carried out in 1954, would become inoperative after the Parliament amended Section 106 in the year 2003.

The Uttar Pradesh amendment provided for a notice period of thirty days for the termination of a lease.

The Parliamentary amendment of 2003 amended Section 106 to provide for fifteen days' notice period.

The issue raised before the court is that which pro-



vision would be apply in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

The appellant approached the Supreme Court after the Allahabad High Court deferred a decision citing the pendency of a larger bench reference.

The Supreme Court observed that the Transfer of Property Act was traceable to Entry 6 of List III of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. 'Transfer of property other than agricultural land; registration of deeds and documents.'

The court referred to Article 254 of Constitution of India which provides that the Parliamentary law will prevail over a State law in the event of a repugnancy

between the two.

The Uttar Pradesh Amendment Act would become inoperative due to the application of Article 254(2) of Constitution of India.

The bench comprising of Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice NK Singh was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case held that the Uttar Pradesh amendment to Section 106 would pale into insignificance owing to implied repugnancy and inconsistency between the U.P. State amendment and the Parliamentary amendment to Section 106 of the TP Act in the year 2003 even if the earlier U.P. amendment had been reserved for consideration

of the President and had received the Presidential assent. Therefore, on the Parliament amending a provision subsequent to a State legislature's amendment of a provision of law found in the Concurrent List, the Parliamentary amendment would apply. The Article 254 of Constitution of India is an instance of Parliamentary supremacy.

The court also observed that in view of the amendment made to Section 106 by the Parliament by Act 3 of 2003 with effect from December 31, 2022, the substitution in Section 106 made by the Legislature of the State of U.P. is impliedly repealed and Section 106 as amended with effect from December 31, 2002 by the Parliament, would apply. This is on the strength of the proviso to clause (2) of Article 254 of the Constitution of India.

Accordingly, the court remitted the matter back to the High Court for decision on merits.

Delhi High Court: No pruning of trees till Forest Department has SOP on compliance under DPTA

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court in the case *Bhavreen Kandhari Versus Shri C. D. Singh And Ors* observed and has directed all the Deputy Conservator of Forests, DCFs in order to ensure that no pruning of trees is undertaken till the Department of Forest and Wildlife has guidelines or SOP in order to ensure that the exercise is being done and monitored in accordance with the provisions of Delhi Preservation of Trees Act.

The bench headed by Justice Jasmeet Singh in the case stated that the Department of Forest shall ensure an eligible and responsible person is present to supervise the same.

In the present case, the court was hearing the contempt petition filed in connection with the orders passed by the court in a matter concerning preservation of trees in

the national capital.

It has been argued before the court that the officials failed to follow the directions issued by court requiring the Tree Officers to spell out reasons for permitting the felling of trees.

The counsel, Advocate Aditya N Prasad appearing for the petitioner, Bhavreen Kandhari, apprised the Court about the permissions granted by DCF, South Forest Division for light and heavy pruning of trees.

The court in the case observed that there being a prima-facie contravention of provisions of DPTA, contravention of judicial orders and an overall unsatisfactory state of affairs. The court also stated that it seems that the Deputy Conservator of Forest, South Forest Division is not aware of the statutory duty and responsibility cast upon the Department of Forest and Wildlife.

Adding to it, the court stated that the said court

has time and time again reminded the DCF of their role of preservation of trees, which is the primary objective behind the statute and that permission for felling, cutting, removing or disposing of a tree under section 9 of the DPTA cannot be passed in a casual and cavalier manner. Therefore, the section 9 of the DPTA in itself restricts such permission to be given only in exceptional circumstances and only after due inspection of the trees concerned.

The bench headed by Justice Singh in the case observed and has issued a show cause notice to the Deputy Conservator of Forest, South Forest Division as to how blanket permissions for pruning of trees were given without due inspection or reasons in contravention to the provisions of DPTA. The court stated that, 'The said court has repeatedly passed directions to prevent incessant

and mindless felling of trees in Delhi, however, the Department has continued to display a lack of sensitivity towards the same.'

Further, the court directed the Forest Department for filing an affidavit which indicate the forest land in Delhi and the extent of illegal and unauthorized encroachments on the same.

Last Year, the court in its order stated that no permission shall be granted to anyone by the city authorities for felling of trees for construction of houses in the national capital.

The court in the case directed the Delhi's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to ensure that the orders permitting the tree felling, under Delhi Preservation Of Trees Act, 1994, are uploaded within a period of 48 hours on the official website.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on January 10, 2025.

Kidnapping case: Karnataka High Court permits Bhavani Revanna to enter her native districts of Mysuru, Hassan for 15 days

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka High Court in the *Bhavani Revanna And State Of Karnataka* observed and has relaxed a condition which is imposed in the anticipatory bail order of Bhavani Revanna, and permitted her to enter her native districts of Mysuru and Hassan for 15 days.

The court in its order dated June 7 granted an interim anticipatory bail to Bhavani in connection with a kidnapping case.

The court directed her not to hover around Hassan and KR Nagar of Mysore district.

However, the condition was

The court directed her not to hover around Hassan and KR Nagar of Mysore district.

However, the condition was imposed after the Special Public Prosecutor Professor Ravivarma Kumar argued that "She is the mastermind of the crime and let her not enter Hassan and KR Nagar district."

imposed after the Special Public Prosecutor Professor Ravivarma Kumar argued that "She is the mastermind of the crime and let her not enter Hassan and KR Nagar district."

In the present case, Bhavani sought complete relaxation

of the condition, wherein it is stated that none of the other accused in the case were served the same on January 9, 2025 but in the meantime, "petitioner is granted relaxation of 15-days operational

from tomorrow to enter into two districts Mysore and Hassan. It is made clear that if there is violation of conditions imposed during granting bail, it will be viewed seriously.

The mother of the complainant had worked for Bhavani for about six years and was kidnapped by Satish Babanna on Revanna's instructions, to protect her son Prajwal. Complainant said his friend brought to his notice a viral video allegedly pertaining to the sexual assault on his mother and when he requested Babanna to send his mother back, the latter declined to do so. The complaint was lodged on May 24 at KR Nagar Police Station.

Supreme Court denies anticipatory bail to astrologer accused of helping woman to poison husband and mother-in-law

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case *Pandit Varun Mehta Versus The State Of Punjab* and has refused to grant an anticipatory bail petition to an astrologer Pandit Varun Mehta who is being accused of conspiring with a woman, who allegedly administered poison to her husband and her mother-in-law.

The court observed that both victims were given slow poison and before death, they were given lemonade. Their health continued to deteriorate and eventually, they succumbed to death.

It has been alleged before the court that the astrologer gave the poisonous substance to the wife to administer it to her husband and mother-in-law.

to death.

The court stated that, 'Not a case for anticipatory bail.'

In the present case, the Punjab Police have arrested the accused the wife and her two brothers, who were also allegedly involved in the case.

However, the police have charged the accused persons with Section 304, punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder of the Indian Penal

Code, 1860. Subsequently, Section 302, punishment for murder of Indian Penal Code, IPC.

The bench comprising of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice PB Varale was hearing the present matter.

The counsel appearing before the court that the incident on June 11. I was not there. The death happened July 12. I am only an astrologer, where she is a client.

The bench headed by Justice Nath stated that, 'Whether were there or not there, we do not know. Question is there are serious allegations that the wife along

with her brothers and this Pandit ji, where she was learning astrology; he and his wife, connived together and administered poison to [husband and mother-in-law].'

The bench of Justice Nath also questioned why the charges are under Section 304 of Indian Penal Code, IPC. It should have been under Section 302 of IPC.

The counsel appearing before the court informed that the murder charges were added subsequently.

The counsel also requested that he may be allowed to withdraw the SLP, which was allowed.



THE BUSINESS GUARDIAN

FRIDAY | 20 DECEMBER 2024 | NEW DELHI

TOP OF THE DAY

PAKISTAN COURT EXTENDS BAIL OF IMRAN'S WIFE

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
The Peshawar High Court has extended the protective bail of former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's wife, Bushra Bibi, until January 16. The court has also exempted Imran Khan's wife from appearing in court, The Express Tribune reported. The two-member bench of the Peshawar High Court, consisting of Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Waqar Ahmad heard the case. Bushra Bibi's lawyer Alan Khan Adeenazi, Additional Attorney General Sanaulah, NAB Special Deputy Prosecutor General Moham-mad Ali, and Additional Advocate General Inam-ulah appeared during the

SRI LANKA LIFTS VEHICLES IMPORT BAN

Colombo: Sri Lanka has announced that they will lift the vehicles import ban which was put in place in 2020 to ease the pressure on foreign exchange reserves due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By the gazette issued on Wednesday the importation of public transport vehicles have been allowed for the first time since early 2020. The Ministry of Finance said the policy to ban vehicle imports was implemented with the intention of easing the pressure on foreign exchange reserves due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn of 2022.

EARTHQUAKE OF MAGNITUDE 4.1 STRIKES NEPAL

Kathmandu: An earthquake of magnitude 4.1 struck Nepal in the early hours of Thursday, the National Centre of Seismology (NCS) reported. The earthquake occurred at 7:22 AM Indian Standard Time (IST), the NCS noted. The earthquake was recorded at a depth of 10 kilometres at Latitude 28.56 N and Longitude 84.23 E. The details were shared on X by the National Centre of Seismology. "EQ of M: 4.1, On: 19/12/2024 07:22:47 IST, Lat: 28.56 N, Long: 84.23 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Nepal."

AFGHANISTAN: 52 KILLED IN 2 BUS ACCIDENTS

Kabul: Two bus accidents involving a fuel tanker and a truck on a highway through central Afghanistan killed 52 people and injured 45, the Taliban government spokesman said Thursday (December 19, 2024). The accidents happened in Ghazni province on the same highway between the capital Kabul and southern Kandahar city late Wednesday (December 18, 2024), provincial head of information and culture Hamdullah Nisar said on X, without specifying how many people were killed and injured in each accident.

ISRAELI FIGHTER JETS STRIKE HOUTHI TARGETS IN YEMEN: IDF

It is determined to continue acting and striking whoever threatens citizens of Israel

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) has announced that Israeli fighter jets struck Houthi targets in Yemen after the rebel group carried out repeated missile and drone attacks on Israel, The Times of Israel reported.

The IDF said that the targets struck by fighter jets were "used by Houthi forces for their military operations." The Israeli military said, "Attacking these targets harms the terrorist authorities by preventing the exploitation of infrastructure for military and terror purposes, including transferring Iranian weaponry to the region."

According to the IDF statement, the Houthis "with Iran's guidance and funding" have acted together with Iran-backed militias over the past year to target Israel, "undermine regional stability and disrupt global shipping."

The IDF said that it is determined to continue acting and striking "whoever threatens citizens of the State of Israel, at any distance required."

Following the overnight Israeli strikes in Yemen, Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz has issued a warning to Houthi leaders. The Times of Israel reported.

He said, "The long arm of

HOUTHI AND YEMEN



A handout picture obtained from Yemen's Huthi Ansarullah Media Center shows a huge column of fire erupting following reported strikes by Israeli fighter jets in the Yemeni rebel-held port city of Hodeidah on Saturday.

- The targets included Houthi military infrastructure used for operations, including weapon transfers from Iran.
- The Houthis, with Iran's support, have been involved in attacking Israel and destabilizing the region.
- Israeli Defence Minister Katz warned Houthi leaders, vowing retaliation for any attacks on Israel.
- IDF spokesperson Hagari emphasized the Houthis as a global threat, backed by Iran, and vowed further military action.
- The IDF's strikes aimed to prevent the exploitation of Houthi infrastructure for military and terrorist purposes.
- Israel's air defence intercepted a missile from Yemen, which did not enter Israeli airspace.

Israel will reach you," Katz said. "Whoever lifts a hand will have it severed. Whoever strikes [us], will be struck many times over."

Meanwhile, IDF chief spokesperson Daniel Hagari said that "ports and energy

infrastructure" were among the targets hit in the "precise strikes" in the rebel-held capital of Sana'a that the Houthis used for "their military actions," according to The Times of Israel report.

In an English-language

ISRAEL REVEALS NEW DETAILS OF STRATEGIC STRIKES ON HOUTHIS

Jerusalem: The Israel Defence Forces disclosed new details on Thursday morning about overnight airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen. The operation aimed to paralyze three ports controlled by the Iran-backed terror group's operational capabilities, a move the army described as an "economic blow." The planned attacks, involving dozens of fighter jets, targeted maritime infrastructure, including tugboats used to guide ships into ports. This comes weeks after a previous strike in September that damaged cranes at the same ports, further impacting Houthi-controlled maritime activities.

The operation strike was launched early Thursday morning, with the first wave of attacks targeting Yemen's coastal region at 3:15 AM, followed by a second wave at 4:30 AM in the Sana'a area, the first Israeli strike on the capital city. Fourteen fighter jets flew over 1,700 kilometres to hit their targets, focusing on the ports of Ras Issa, Hodeidah, and al-Salif. Eight tug boats were destroyed, and strikes extended to fuel and oil tankers, as well as a power plant in Sana'a.

video statement, Hagari said, "With their attacks on international shipping vessels and routes in the Red Sea and other places, the Houthis have become a global threat. Who is behind the Houthis? Iran," while vowing the military "will act against anyone in the Middle East" who threatens Israel.

While sharing the video statement of Hagari on X, IDF stated, "IAF fighter jets struck military targets belonging to the Houthi terrorist regime on the western coast and in inland Yemen. Over the past year, the Houthi terrorist regime has been operating with the direction and funding of Iran, and in cooperation with Iraqi

militias in order to attack the State of Israel and Israeli civilians."

"The conducted strikes degrade the Houthi terrorist regime, preventing it from exploiting the targets for military and terrorist purposes, including the smuggling of Iranian weapons to the region. The IDF is determined to continue operating against all threats posed to the citizens of the State of Israel, wherever necessary."

Earlier, the IDF said that the air defences shot down the missile fired from Yemen, which it said never entered Israeli airspace, the report said. The Israeli military said that the strikes were triggered due to concerns that falling

Budget cuts 'double blow' to all officers



Border Police patrol in front of the Lion's Gate in Jerusalem's Old City, as Palestinians wait to be allowed to enter the al-Aqsa mosque compound, on April 17, 2022.

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

The Israel Police Command said that, over the past few weeks, it has been working to prevent the Ministry of Finance's intentions to "harm police officers' salaries," saying that planned budget cuts are, "beyond economic decrees that anyway make living in Israel more expensive for every citizen. In fact, it is a double blow to the police officers, those who guard and protect with dedication, day and night, Saturdays and holidays, the security in the State of Israel."

The Police Department feels that damage to police salaries will have

"fatal consequences" for its ability to fill the ranks, "recruit quality personnel, and retain skilled personnel, who have invested a great deal of effort in their training," and that this "constitutes a direct and dangerous damage to the security of the state and its residents." "The challenges of the Israel Police are unparalleled among Western police forces in the world," it explained. "The many and varied threat and attribution scenarios that our police officers are required to face in routine, emergency, and emergency routine situations are exceptional by any standard." Police Commissioner

'Israel's deprivation of water in Gaza is act of genocide'

AGENCIES
THE HAGUE

Human Rights Watch said on Thursday that Israel has killed thousands of Palestinians in Gaza by denying them clean water which it says legally amounts to acts of genocide and extermination.

"This policy, inflicted as part of a mass killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, means Israeli authorities have committed the crime against humanity of extermination, which is ongoing. This policy also amounts to an 'act of genocide' under the Genocide Convention of 1948," Human Rights Watch said in its report.

Israel has repeatedly rejected any accusation of genocide, saying it has re-

spected international law and has a right to defend itself after the cross-border Hamas-led attack from Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023 that precipitated the war.

In a statement on X, Israel's foreign ministry wrote: "The truth is the complete opposite of HRW's lies." "Since the beginning of the war, Israel has facilitated the continuous flow of water and humanitarian aid into Gaza, despite operating under constant attacks of Hamas terror organization," the statement said.

Although the report described the deprivation of water as an act of genocide, it noted that proving the crime of genocide against Israeli officials would also



require establishing their intent. It cited statements by some senior Israeli of-

ficials which it said suggested they "wish to destroy Palestinians" which

means the deprivation of water "may amount to the crime of genocide."

"What we have found is that the Israeli government is intentionally killing Palestinians in Gaza by denying them the water that they need to survive," Lama Fakih, Human Rights Watch Middle East director told a press conference. In its response, Israel said it had ensured water infrastructure remained operational. It said international partners had sent water tankers through Israeli crossings, including last week, and Israel had facilitated the entry of more than 1.2 million tons of humanitarian supplies into Gaza. Human Rights Watch is the second major rights group in a month to use the word genocide to describe the actions of Israel

in Gaza, after Amnesty International issued a report that concluded Israel was committing genocide.

Both reports came just weeks after the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence chief for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity. They deny the allegations.

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US lawmaker seeks targeted sanctions against Bangladesh

AGENCIES
DHAKA

Expressing a sense of urgency on the escalating crisis of human rights violations in Bangladesh, an influential American Congressman called on the US Departments of Treasury and State on Wednesday to impose and enforce sanctions on those perpetrating these heinous acts against minorities in the South Asian country.

"I call on the Departments of Treasury and State to impose and enforce sanctions on those perpetrating these heinous acts against minorities in Bangladesh," Indian American Congressman Shri Thandekar said in front of the US Capitol on Wednesday afternoon in the presence of Hindu Americans who had come from various parts of the country.



Since July, he said, Bangladesh has experienced a spike in political violence, leading to the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"Since then, we have seen Bangladesh plunge into political turmoil, with its Hindu, Buddhist and Christian minorities bearing the brunt of violent acts towards their people and places of worship by a majority Mus-

lim population," Thandekar said. "The creation of a new government with Prime Minister Muhammad Yunus is yet another attempt in history to obtain lasting peace and stability for the country. While I have my concerns regarding this new government, I am hopeful that with our assistance, Bangladesh will finally find a peaceful resolution to these conflicts," he said.

India-Liberia hold consultations

TOD NETWORK
MONROVIA

The first round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Liberia took place in Monrovia. The meeting was attended by top officials from both the countries.

In a press statement by the Ministry of External Affairs, it was noted that the consultations were co-chaired by Sevala Naik Mude, Deputy External Affairs, and Sara Beysoloun Nyanti, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Liberia, held on December 17. During the visit, Mude also called on Jeremiah Kpan Koung, Vice President and Louise M Kpoto, Minister of Health and Social Welfare amongst other ministers.

11 people killed in arson attack at cafe in Hanoi

TOD NETWORK
HANOI

As many as 11 people were killed and two others were injured after a suspected arson attack at a cafe and karaoke bar in Vietnam's Hanoi, Al Jazeera reported, citing police.

In a statement on Thursday, Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security said that it had arrested a man who admitted to starting the blaze on the building's ground

floor after a dispute with the staff.

Rescue workers who rushed to the site of the incident brought seven people out of the building alive, two of whom were taken to the hospital, police said.

Videos that surfaced on social media showed a multi-storey building engulfed in flames as firefighters tried to control the blaze while being surrounded by onlookers.

