# THE ASIAN AGE

**NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2025** 



NATION 4

**Contribution of Northeast** most important in making developed India, says Shah



WORLD 6

US and Canada trade war escalates as Trump doubles

**Hrithik Roshan suffers** injury while shooting a song for his film War 2

www.asianage.com

RNI No. 57290/94, Regd No: DL-SW-05/4189/15-17



Cricketer Shubman Gill at Chhatrapati Shivaii Maharai International Airport in Mumbai after his return from Dubai on Tuesday.

### **Airtel ties up with SpaceX to bring Starlink Net in India**

New Delhi: Telecom major Bharti Airtel on Tuesday said that it signed a pact with SpaceX to bring Starlink's high-speed Internet to its customers in India. With this agreement, Airtel and SpaceX have set a stage for further exploring opportunities for both companies to enhance their business offerings in India. However, the deal depends on SpaceX getting regulatory approval from authorities to sell Starlink services in the country. Under this pact, both Airtel and SpaceX are also learnt to have explored options in offering Starlink equipment in Airtel's retail stores, Starlink services via Airtel to business customers. Full report on Page 7

### **Govt puts 5-year ban on** Mirwaiz's party, 1 more

New Delhi: The Awami Action Committee, headed by Kashmir's cleric Mirwaiz Úmar Faroog, and Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen, led by Masroor Abbas Ansari, were on

Tuesday banned by the Centre for their alleged anti-Full report on Page 4

# Militants hijack train in

Pak. over 450 hostage Quetta (Pakistan): Armed militants held over 450 train passengers hostage on Tuesday in an ongoing siege claimed by a separatist group behind rising violence in southwestern Pakistan. "Over 450 passengers are being held hostage by gunmen," a senior railway official said. — AFP Full report on Page 6



I am wearing this wig to avoid arrest... I am an immigrant from Mexico!



Max: 34°C Min: 21°C **RH:** 34% Rain: Nil

Forecast: Mostly cloudy

## **ASTROGUIDE**

Krodhi: Uttarayana Tithi: Phalguna Masam Shukla Trayodasi till 9.13 am Star: Makha till 4.05 am Varjyam: 3.10 pm to 4.54 pm Durmuhurtham: 12.02 pm to

Rahukalam: 12 pm to 1.30 pm **SUNSET TODAY 6.28 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.33 AM** 

MOONRISE TOMORROW 5.45 PM

**MOONSET TODAY 4.58 AM** 

12.49 pm drones over Russia.

and 18 were injured, including three children, in the massive drone attack that spanned 10 Russian regions.



tariffs on metals imports

# **DELHI AGE 9**



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# ■ PM gets highest civilian award ■ Delegation-level talks today Modi tells diaspora: Mauritius isn't just a partner, it's family

KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

For India, "Mauritius is family and not just a part-ner country", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said at an Indian diaspora event in the island nation's capital Port Louis. Later in the evening (IST), the Prime Minister held talks with

Navinchandra Ramgoolam. The two PMs will hold formal delegation-level talks on Wednesday, which will be followed by the signing of key pacts, after which Mr Modi will attend the 57th National Day celebrations in the afternoon as the chief guest.

Welcoming Mr Modi at the diaspora event, Mr Ramgoolam pitched for increased Indian investment in Mauritius. He announced the nation's highest civilian award the Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (GCSK) — for Mr Modi. Thanking Mauritius for

the honour on behalf of

the people of India, the

**EC** asks party

chiefs for ideas

on improvement

of poll process

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Amid controversies over

duplicate voter ID num-

bers and allegations of

discrepancies in elec-

toral rolls, the Election

Commission (EC) on

Tuesday invited sugges-

tions from all national

and state political parties

by April 30 for any unre-

solved issues at the level of electoral registration

officers (ERO), district

election officers (DEO)

and chief electoral offi-

In a bid to iron out the

differences, the poll body has invited the party presidents and senior

leaders of political par-

ties for consultations

with them to clear doubts and take their sugges-

tions on ways to strengthen electoral processes.

In an individual letter issued to political par-

Election

the

Commission has said that while the sugges-

through emails, the indi-

vidual meetings will be

held at a mutually conve-

nient time. Last week, Chief Election

Commissioner Gyanesh

Kumar had instructed CEOs, DEOs and EROs of

states and UTs to hold

regular interactions with

political parties, resolve

suggestions and submit

More on Page 3

reports by March 31.

can be given

cers (CEO).

NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hands over Overseas Citizen of India cards to Mauritius President Dharam Gokhool and his wife Brinda Gokhool in Port Louis on

THANKING MAURITIUS for the honour on behalf of the people of India, the Prime Minister, while speaking in Hindi, Bhojpuri and English, said that 'India always stands with Mauritius'

Prime Minister, while speaking in Hindi, Bhojpuri and English, said that "India always stands with Mauritius", whether it be "investinfrastructure, commerce

AGE CORRESPONDENT

The Rajya Sabha wit-

nessed an uproar on

Tuesday over an unpar-

liamentary remark by Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge, who

apologised to the Chair

while clarifying that it

was meant for the government that was "trying to

create a regional divide"

The Congress leader's

statement in the Rajya

Sabha came while he was

speaking about education

Dharmendra

in the country.

NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

response". He also high-lighted the historical, cultural and religious ties that bind the two nations.

The Prime Minister

pitched India as a "proud partner" of Mauritius in capacity-building. He said India had always been a responder Mauritius in times of crisis and the first to celebrate the successes of the Indian Ocean nation. He recalled how India had rushed one lakh vaccines to Mauritius during the

Kharge's 'thokenge' jab in

RS stirs row, LoP clarifies

■ 'Bid to create regional divide' ■ Nadda seeks apology

Mallikarjun Kharge

Education

Pradhan after his remark

against the Tamil Nadu

government pertaining to

the issue of the three-lan-

guage policy under the

"This is a dictatorship. I

request you (deputy

Policy (NEP).

tioned the emotional attachment between the people of Mauritius and Bihar, from where most of the indentured labourers from India were brought to Mauritius by the British to work in plantations

about the inking of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) four years ago between the two nations, which had given Mauritius preferential access to the Indian market that "boosted growth and created jobs". He also pointed out Mauritius is at the centre of India's vision for security and development in the Indian Ocean Region, as part of the vision Sagar

Mr Modi also spoke

All in the Region). Mr Modi announced that "Girmitiya" (reference Indian indentured labourers of the 19th century and their descendants in various parts of

(Security and Growth for

the world) database will

▶ THE CONG leader's

statement came while he

was speaking about the

education minister after

Tamil Nadu government

pertaining to the issue of

the three-language poli-

Chairman) with folded

hands to allow me (to speak). Aapko kya kya

thokna hai thik se tho-

kenge, sarkar ko bhi tho-

Leader of the House and

minister

kenge," Mr Kharge said.

cy under the NEP

■ Turn to Page 4

Union

his remark against the

Delhi chief minister Rekha Gupta during the Holi celebrations in New Delhi on

# **Guns not way** to bring peace, **PM must visit** Manipur: Opp.

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

The Congress on Tuesday targeted the government on the Manipur crisis, saying the Centre failed to bring peace at gun-point and urged PM Narendra Modi to visit the strife-torn state and listen to the people's apprehensions and concerns.
"From the last two-

and-a-half years, you have been trying to restore peace through guns but have failed. You should stop using guns to bring peace and talk to the people of Manipur," said Congress leader Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi while initiating a discus-sion on the Manipur budget.

Opposition said the leader Manipur budget should have been discussed in the state Assembly, President's Rule has

The BJP defended the imposition of President's Rule, saying the decision was not forced on the state but was taken out of

compulsion.

More on Page 3

# New bill in LS on foreigners' entry and immigration

■ Opp. says it's 'anti-Constitution' ■ Stiff rules for long-stay visitors

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

The Immigration and Foreigners Bill 2025, seeking to streamline various services related to immigration and foreigners, including their entry, exit and stay in the country, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, with the Opposition dubbing it to be violative of the constitutional provisions.

Rejecting suggestions that Parliament lacked the legislative competence to bring the bill, minister of state for home Nityanand Rai said that the Central government has all the rights under the Union list to bring legislation on the subject. Mr Rai asserted that while tourists were wel-

come to come to India, it was the government's responsibility to ensure peace and sovereignty of the nation remain intact.

Opposing the bill at the introduction stage, Congress MP Manish Tewari said that the bill is violative of multiple provisions of the

**TIONS** that Parliament lacked the legislative competence to bring the bill, Nityanand Rai said that the Central govt has all the rights under the Union list to bring legislation on the subject

**REJECTING SUGGES-**

Constitution and various

laws.
"The bill violates the principle of fundamental rights and the government may use the provisions of the proposed law to deny entry to those who are not in sync with the ideology of the ruling dispensation of the day, Mr Tewari said.

Opposing the introduction of the bill, TMC MP Saugata Roy said that the proposed law could prevent the inflow of talent from outside in various

Before formally intro-ducing the bill in the Lok Sabha, Mr Rai said that the draft law seeks to correct overlapping and duplicate provisions in prevailing laws governing immigration and ■ Turn to Page 4

3 charred to

death as hut

# **US intel chief Tulsi Gabbard in India soon**

# ■ Will hold talks with top leaders in Delhi ■ To address Raisina Dialogue March 18

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs
NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON,

America's new national intelligence chief Tulsi Gabbard is all set to visit India soon. She is likely to be in New Delhi on March 16-18. This will be her first visit after assuming her new role under the Trump administration. Gabbard, a known friend of India, is expected to hold talks with the Indian leadership during her

visit. It may be recalled that the previous Joe Biden administration had been constantly needling plot to kill pro-Khalistan extremist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, and New Delhi will no doubt be breathing easier now.

It is leant, meanwhile, that among her other engagements Indian capital, Ms Gabbard will address the Dialogue on Raisina March 18. She was invited to do so by Prime Minister



Narendra Modi, the New York Times has reported. This is an annual event organised by the New Observer Delhi-based Research Foundation in association with the ministry of external affairs. In a post on social media platform X, Ms Gabbard said: "I am #WheelsUp on a multi-nation trip to the Indo-Pacific, a region I know very well having grown up as a child of the Pacific. I'll be going to Japan, Thailand, and India, with a brief stop in France enroute back to DC. Building strong relationships, understanding, and open lines of communication are vital to achieving President

■ Turn to Page 4

### **Global intel chiefs will** hold talks in India Sun New Delhi: America's

new national intelligence chief Tulsi Gabbard, Canadian spy chief Daniel Rogers and Britain's MI6 boss Richard Moore will be among top global intelin India this weekend to attend a security conclave, people familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

■ More on Page 4

# catches fire in **Anand Vihar** BHASKAR HARI SHARMA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

Three men, including two siblings, were charred to death when a massive fire gutted a makeshift hut near the AGCR Enclave at Anand Vihar in east Delhi on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday. Delhi chief minister

Rekha Gupta, who visited the spot, announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh to each affected family and assured the family members of all possible assistance and assured proper investigation into the incident

"We have registered an FIR at the Anand Vihar police station under Section 106(1) (causing death by negligence) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Multiple teams have been formed to probe the incident,' (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam said.

The Delhi Fire Service received a distress call at 2.22 am on Tuesday and dispatched three fire tenders to the scene. The flames were brought under control by 2.50 am, a fire official said.

More on Page 2

# Ukraine, US begin talks to end war as Kyiv launches drone hit

Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), March 11: High-stakes talks between senior delegations from Ukraine and the United States on how to end Kyiv's three-year war with Moscow opened in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, hours after Russian air defences shot down 337 Ukrainian

Two people were killed

THE TALKS offer an opportunity for Kyiv to repair Ukraine's relationship with the US after an unprecedented argument erupted during Volodymyr Zelenskyy's visit to the White House

In the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, journalists briefly entered a room where top Ukrainian officials met US secretary of state Marco Rubio for talks on ending the war. Mr Rubio smiled for the cameras, while

without expression at a table across from them. Saudi Arabia's foreign

minister was on hand for the talks as the US, Saudi and Ukrainian flags stood in the background. The talks offer an opportunity for Kyiv officials to repair Ukraine's relationship with the US after an unprecedented argument erupted during President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's February 28 visit to the White House.

■ More on Page 6



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with Saudi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at the Royal Palace in Riyadh on Monday.

### ■ FIR filed; family and neighbours suspect foul play

# 3 die as hut catches fire in Anand Vihar

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA

Three men, including two siblings, were charred to death when a massive fire gutted a makeshift hut near the AGCR Enclave at Anand Vihar in east Delhi on the intervening night Monday and Tuesday.

"We have registered an FIR at the Anand Vihar police station under Section 106(1) (causing death by negligence) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Multiple teams have been formed to probe the inci-dent," DCP (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam said.

The Delhi Fire Service (DFS) received a distress call at 2.22 am on Tuesday and dispatched three fire tenders to the scene.

The flames were brought under control by 2.50 am, a fire official said.

At 3.10 am, station officer Feroz confirmed that three charred bodies were recovered from inside the hut.

They have been identified as Jaggi (30), and siblings Shyam Singh (40) and Kanta Prasad (37) — all from Auraiya in Úttar Pradesh the police said in a statement, adding that asphyxiation due to fire killed the

The deceased and another labourer, who reportedly worked with Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL), lived in the makeshift hut located near a DDA plot in Manglam Road, the statement said.

"They reportedly used a small container of diesel placed on a cooler stand to light the hut. Nitin, the survivor, said that around 2.00 am, Shyam Singh woke up and noticed the fire. He tried to unlock the door but failed. As the blaze intensified, Nitin managed to survive by jumping off the wall boundary and sustained minor injuries," the statement said.

**AVINASH PRABHAKAR JHA** 

Authority of India (IWAI) on

Tuesday signed a memoran-

dum of understanding with

multiple agencies of Delhi government including irrigation and flood control depart-

ment, the Delhi Development

Authority (DDA), the Delhi

Jal Board (DJB), the Delhi

(DTC) to develop and boost

cruise tourism on four kilo-

metre stretch on river

Waterway 110 — between

The initiative aims to trans-

form the stretch of the Yamuna in Delhi into a hub

for eco-friendly cruise opera-

tions. To ensure sustainable

and non-polluting wa-ter

hybrid boats — each capable

of carrying 20-30 passengers

cr-uise vessels. These boats

will feature bio-toilets, public

an-nouncement systems, and

life jackets for passenger

will be deployed as river

Sonia Vihar and Jagatpur.

Corporation

electric-solar

National

Transport

Yamuna

transport.

NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Inland



A man looks at the charred remains at the site after a fire gutted a makeshift tent near the AGCR Enclave at Anand Vihar in New Delhi on Tuesday.

# CM announces ₹10 lakh aid for families of dead

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Delhi chief minister Rekha Gupta met the families of three men who lost their lives in a fire at a slum near AGCR Colony and announced financial assistance of ₹10 lakh for each bereaved family. According to an official statement, Ms Gupta visited the site to offer her condolences and assured the affected families of all possible support from

A gas cylinder inside the tent also exploded, further fuelling the fire.

However, the family of the two siblings and neighbours suspect foul play, questioning how Nitin managed to survive while the three of them died.

The trio victim along with Kanta's father Rampal (65) and Nitin Singh (32) had dinner in the tent around mid-

night. Sources said Mr Rampal has questioned how one person managed to escape the

Govt inks pact to boost

Yamuna cruise tourism

the government. She said that the Delhi govwould extend ernment financial assistance of ₹10 lakh to each bereaved family, the statement read.

During her visit, Ms Gupta interacted with the grieving families.

Expressing her sorrow, she said, "My deepest condolences to all the affected families. A poor family works hard to build a home, and such tragedies completely shatter their spirit.'

fire while three others were

charred to death. Suman (30), the younger sister of the siblings, also raised concerns about Nitin managing to escape the fire.

While the authorities suspect that the diesel container might have triggered the fire, a probe is on to ascertain the exact cause of the blaze, the statement said.

Meanwhile, the IGL in a statement termed the incident "unfortunate" and said it was not related to its oper-

# **Dentist kills** self at house, husband held

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

29-year-old woman

Speaking on the occasion, Delhi L-G V.K. Saxena said, "Today is a historic day for the people of Delhi. Our lifegiving river Yamuna, which was neglected for years, is again moving towards its glory. Today, MoU is being signed for the start of cruise tourism and terry services Delhi's 'Yamuna'. Delhi had been waiting for this day and this moment for a long time.

an important step towards Floodplain Yamuna Rejuvenation". Mr Saxena said that this MoU would have been signed earlier and ferry but the then chief minister

first time. Gupta said people would soon witness the ferry services on Yamuna as the MoU has been signed with the Central government will take tourism in the city to a new

This is not just the start of a new transport facility, but

service would have started, completely rejected the proposal when it came for the

Delhi chief minister Rekha

allegedly hanged herself from a ceiling fan in her house at Rohini in northwest Delhi, the police said on Tuesday The deceased's hus-Osho Prajapati, has been arrested in connection with the case, a police officer said. The deceased, a dentist by profession, was reported-

ly living separately from

her husband, he said.

As per the police, the woman's father made a PCR call to report the tragic incident. While preliminary inquiry hinted at the woman experiencing some personal difficulties, the circumstances prompting her to take the extreme step will be ascertain after the probe,

the officer said. A case under Sections 85 and 108 of the BNS has been registered.

# Once again, Delhi is world's most polluted national capital; 13 Indian cities in top 20

**SANJAY KAW** NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Thirteen of the world's top 20 most polluted cities are in India, which has been ranked as the fifth most polluted country globally in 2024 and Delhi has yet again topped the global charts as the most toxic national capital for the sixth consecutive year with average PM2.5 concentration levels logging a staggering 91.8 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3).

These findings have been flagged in the 2024 World Air Quality Report, compiled by Swiss air quality tech firm IQAir. As per the report, Byrnihat, a town on the

Assam-Meghalaya border, now holds the top spot globally with an alarming average PM2.5 concentration of 128.2 ug/m3. The other polluted cities include Punjab's Mullanpur, Faridabad, Loni, Gurgaon, Ganganagar, Greater Noida, Bhiwadi, Muzaffarnagar. Hanumangarh, and

The report has underscored how air quality in Delhi remains perilously poor year round, with the situation worsening in winter months.

Noida.

Meteorological conditions combined with a toxic cocktail of vehicular emissions, crop-burning, firecrackers, and other pollution sources create a deadly smog that

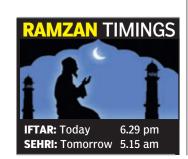
Saunkhri

often reaches hazardous levels, making the city's air unsafe to breathe.

Although there's marginal relief with a minuscule decline in PM2.5 levels, India as a whole continues to struggle with some of the worst air quality in the world. Despite a 7 per cent drop in

PM2.5 concentrations nationwide in 2024 (from  $54.4 \,\mu g/m3$ to 50.6  $\mu$ g/m<sup>3</sup>), six of the world's ten most polluted cities remain in India and Delhi is still at the top of the list.

To add to the woes, India is ranked as the fifth most polluted nation globally, with its average AQI 10 times higher than the WHO-recommended safe limit of  $5 \mu g/m3$ .



Government of Punjab Tender Notice Reference no. 2025/5437 dated 10.03.2025

The Department of SPO, PAU, Ldh invites online e-tender for the following Purchase of Laboratory Instruments, PAU College of Agriculture, Ballowal

Closing date and time: 24.03.2025 at 11:00 A.M.

# FIR against ex-CM Kejriwal & others over illegal banners

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

A Delhi court on Tuesday ordered the Delhi police to file an FIR against former

chief minister Arvind

Kejriwal and others in a

Additional chief judicial magistrate Neha Mittal said one Shiv Kumar Saxena submitted visual evidence with date and time indicating the illegal banners bore

defacement of public prop- the names and photos of the accused persons, including Mr Kejriwal. Aside from Mr Kejriwal, the court ordered the FIR against former MLA Gulab Singh and then

Dwarka concillor Nitika

for

Sharma

"large-sized" banners.
"The seriousness of the offence...can be gauged from

the fact that it is not only an eyesore and public nuisance thereby destroying the aesthetic sense of the city but is also hazardous and danger-

ous to the smooth flow of traffic by distracting traffic and poses a safety challenge to the pedestrians and vehicles. Deaths caused by the collapse of illegal hoardings are not new in India," the court said.

# KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS!



installing

For the Convenience of Rail passengers during HOLI FESTIVAL-2025, Railways are operating several Special Trains in addition to regular trains. The date wise list of Special Trains from Delhi area terminals is given below:-SPECIAL TRAINS RUNNING ON 12.03.2025 (WEDNESDAY) FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS

Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station To	Arr. Time	Stoppages	
04062	Delhi Jn.	23:55	Patna Jn.	16:40	Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara & Danapur stations	
03698	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Gaya Jn.	00:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone and Anugrah Narayan Road stations.	
09004	Delhi Jn	13:05	Mumbai Central	13:30	Delhi Cantt, Gurgaon, Rewari Jn, Alwar, Bandikui Jn, Gandhinagar Jaipur, Jaipur Jn, Kishangarh Ajmer Jn, Beawar, Marwar Jn, Falna, Pindwara, Abu Road, Palanpur Jn, Mahesana Jn, Sabarmati Bg, Vadodara Jn, Udhna Jn, Valsad, Vapi & Borivali stations	
04081	New Delhi	23:45	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	11:40	Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cantt, Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan stations.	
04068	New Delhi	14:00	Bhagalpur	13:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patna Jn, Bakhtiyarpur Jn, Mokama, Hathidah Jn, Luckeesarai Jn, Kiul Jn, Abhaipur, Jamalpur Jn & Sultanganj Stations.	
02436	New Delhi	08:30	Patna Jn	20:10	Ghaziabad, Aligarh, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar and Ara stations.	
02394	New Delhi	13:20	Rajendra Nagar	07:45	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn, Pt.deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur & Patna Jn stations	
04072	New Delhi	14:45	Katihar Jn.	14:00	Delhi Jn., Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur, Barauni, Begu Sarai, Khagaria & Mansi stations	
04076	New Delhi	19:15	Kamakhya Jn.	08:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Sonpu Hajipur Jn., Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn., Naugachia, Katiha Jn., Barsoi Jn., Kishangani, New Jalpaiguri, New Cooch Behar, New Alipurduar, New Bongaigaor Barpeta Road & Rangiya Jn. stations	
05578	Anand Vihar (T.)	05:15	Saharsa Jn	10:30	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn, Basti, Gorakhpur Jn, Kaptanganj Jn, Bagaha, Narkatiaganj Jn, Raxaul Jn, Bairagnia, Sitamarhi, Janakpur Road, Darbhanga Jn, Sakri Jn, Jhanjharpur, Ghogardiha, Nirmali, Saraygarh, Supaul & Garh Baruari stations.	
05306	Anand Vihar (T.)	00:20	Chhapra	22:50	Etawah, Kanpur Central, Aishbagh, Badshahnagar, Barabanki Jn, Gonda Jn, Mankapur Jn, Babhnan, Basti, Khalilabad, Gorakhpur, Kaptanganj Jn, Padrauna, Tamkuhi Road, Thawe Jn & Siwan Jn	
04074	Anand Vihar (T.)	19:00	Jogbani	23:00	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur Jn., Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn., Naugachia, Katihar Jn., Purnia Jn., Arariya Jn. & Forbesganj Jn. stations	
SPEC	AL TRAINS F	RUNN	ING ON 13.	03.2	025 (THURSDAY) FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS	
04024	Delhi Jn	19:30	Varanasi Jn	09:45	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Lucknow, Raebareli Jn and Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. station	
04026	Delhi Jn	23:05	Raxaul Jn.	19:00	Ghaziabad, Hapur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur, Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur and Narkatiaganj Jn stations.	
04062	Delhi Jn.	23:55	Patna Jn.	16:40	Ghaziahad Kanpur Central Prayagrai In Mirzapur Pt Deen Daval Unadhyaya In	
03698	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Gaya Jn.	00:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone and Anugrah Narayan Road stations.	
04064	New Delhi	09:30	Gaya Jn	01:50	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn, Bhabua Road, Sasaram and Dehri-on-Sone stations	
04066	New Delhi	21:35	Saharsa Jn.	22:00	Govindpuri, Praygraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra Jn., Sonpur, Hajipur Jn, Muzaffarpur, Jn, Samastipur Jn, Dalsinghsarai, Barat Begusarai, Khagaria Jn. & Mansi Jn stations	
02436	New Delhi	08:30	Patna Jn	20:10		
02394	New Delhi	13:20	Rajendra Nagar	07:45	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn, Pt.deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur & Patna Jn Statio	
04078	New Delhi	14:45	Katihar Jn.	14:00	Delhi Jn., Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur, Barauni, Begu Sarai, Khagaria & Mansi stations	
V2555	H a SY	150.50	60 000 76		Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Sonpi	

04026	Delhi Jn	23:05	Raxaul Jn.	19:00	Narkatiaganj Jn stations.	
04062	Delhi Jn.	23:55	Patna Jn.	16:40	Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara & Danapur stations	
03698	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Gaya Jn.	00:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone and Anugrah Narayan Road stations.	
04064	New Delhi	09:30	Gaya Jn	01:50	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn, Bhabua Road, Sasaram and Dehri-on-Sone stations	
04066	New Delhi	21:35	Saharsa Jn.	22:00	Govindpuri, Praygraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra Jn., Sonpur, Hajipur Jn, Muzaffarpur, Jn, Samastipur Jn, Dalsinghsarai, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn. & Mansi Jn stations	
02436	New Delhi	08:30	Patna Jn	20:10	Ghaziabad, Aligarh, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar and Ara stations.	
02394	New Delhi	13:20	Rajendra Nagar	07:45	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn, Pt.deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur & Patna Jn Stations.	
04078	New Delhi	14:45	Katihar Jn.	14:00	Delhi Jn., Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur, Barauni, Begu Sarai, Khagaria & Mansi stations	
04084	New Delhi	19:15	Kamakhya Jn.	08:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur Jn., Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn., Naugachia, Jn., Barsoi Jn., Kishanganj, New Jalpaiguri, New Cooch Behar, New Alipurduar, New Bong Barpeta Road & Rangiya Jn. stations	
04014	Anand Vihar (T.)	05:00	Jaynagar	12:00	Moradabad Jn, Bareily Jn, Lucknow, Raebareily Jn, Amethi, Maa Belha Devi Dham, Varanasi, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur Patliputra, Hajipur Jn, Muzaffarpur Jn, Samastipur Jn, Darbhanga Jn & Madhubani stations	
04028	Anand Vihar (T.)	23:55	Jogbani	03:00	Ghaziabad, Moradabad Jn, Bareilly Jn, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur, Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria Sadar, Siwan Jn, Chhapra, Sonpur Jn, Hajipur Jn, Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn, Begu Sarai, Khagaria Jn., Naugachia, Katihar Jn, Purnea, Arariya & Forbesganj stns.	
05578	Anand Vihar (T.)	05:15	Saharsa Jn	10:30	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn, Basti, Gorakhpur Jn, Kaptanganj Jn, Bagaha, Narkatiaganj Jn, Raxaul Jn, Bairagnia, Sitamarhi, Janakpur Road, Darbhanga Jn, Sakri Jn, Jhanjharpur, Ghogardiha, Nirmali, Saraygarh, Supaul & Garh Baruari stations.	
05114	Anand Vihar (T)	16:00	Chhapra	14:00	Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur, Burhwal, Gonda Jn, Basti, Khalilabad, Gorakhpur Jn, Kaptanganj Jn, Padrauna, Tamkuhi Road, Thawe Jn, Dighwa Dubauli, Mashrakh & Chhapra Kacheri Stations.	
03012	Anand Vihar (T.)	00:30	Howrah	03:00	Tundla Jn, Etawah Jn, Govindpuri, Fatehpur, Paryagraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Jn, Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone, Anugraha Narayan Road, Gaya, Koderma, Dhanbad, Asansol, Durgapur, Barddhaman & Bandel stations.	
01708	Anand Vihar (T.)	18:05	Jabalpur Jn.	10:00	Ghaziabad, Aligarh Jn, Tundla Jn, Etawah Jn, Govindpuri, Fatehpur, Prayagraj Jn, Shankargarh, Manikpur Jn, Satna, Maihar & Katni stations.	
04080	Anand Vihar (T.)	19:00	Jogbani	23:00	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur Jn., Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn., Naugachia, Katihar Jn., Purnia Jn., Arariya Jn. & Forbesganj Jn. stations	
08761	Hazrat Nizamuddin	12:30	Durg	13:50	Mathura Jn, Agra Cantt, Virangana Lakshmibai (Jhanshi), Saugor, Damoh, Katni Murwara, Umaria, Shahdol, Anuppur Jn, Pendra Road, Usalapur & Raipur Jn stations.	

04012	Delhi Jn	19:30	Darbhanga	16:30	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur Jn, Narkatiaganj, Raxaul, Bairgania, Sitamarhi and Janakpur Road stations.
04062	Delhi Jn.	23:55	Patna Jn.	16:40	Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara & Danapur stations.
05058	Delhi Jn.	14:00	Gorakhpur Jn.	06:25	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur Jn., Burhwal Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, & Khalilabad stations
03698	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Gaya Jn.	00:30	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone and Anugrah Narayan Road stations.
04146	Delhi Jn.	09:30	Subedarganj	19:40	Aligarh Jn., Tundla Jn., Etawah, Govindpuri & Fatehpur stations.
04022	New Delhi	14:00	Gorakhpur Jn.	05:00	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Lucknow, Gonda Jn. & Basti stations.
02436	New Delhi	08:30	Patna Jn	20:10	Ghaziabad, Aligarh, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn. Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar and Ara stations.
04070	Anand Vihar (T.)	00:20	Rajgir	19:50	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., PT. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Patna Jn, Bakhtiyarpur Jn. & Bihar Sharif Jn. stations
04018	Anand Vihar (T.)	09:00	Muzaffarpur Jn.	06:00	Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur, Kaptanganj Jn., Narkatiaganj Jn., Sagauli Jn. & Bapudm Motihari stations.
04016	Anand Vihar (T.)	00:30	Sitamarhi	02:00	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Lucknow, Raebareily, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapganj Jn., Varanasi Jn, Aunrihar, Ghazipur City, Ballia, Suraimanpur, Chhapra, Sonpur, Hajipur Jn. & MuzaffarpurJn. stations.
03256	Anand Vihar (T.)	23:30	Patna Jn	18:35	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara & Danapur stations.
05578	Anand Vihar (T.)	05:15	Saharsa Jn	10:30	Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn, Basti, Gorakhpur Jn, Kaptanganj Jn, Bagaha, Narkatiaganj Jn, Raxaul Jn, Bairagnia, Sitamarhi, Janakpur Road, Darbhanga Jn, Sakri Jn, Jhanjharpur, Ghogardiha, Nirmali, Saraygarh, Supaul & Garh Baruari stations.
05204	Anand Vihar (T.)	09:20	Muzaffarpur Jn.	05:00	Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn, Pt Deen Upadhyaya Jn, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Sonpur Jn & Hajipur Jn Stations.
07708	Hazrat Nizamuddin	03:15	Charlapalli	09:30	Agra Cantt., Virangana Lakshmibai (Jhanshi), Bina Jn., Rani Kamlapati (Bhopal), Nagpur, Chandrapur Maharashtra, Balharshah, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Manchiryal Ramagundam & Kazipet Jn. stations.
02982	Hazrat Nizamuddin	06:00	Sogaria	13:10	Mathura Jn., Bharatpur Jn., Bayana Jn., Hindaun City, Gangapur City & Sawai Madhopur stations.

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EPIC, the TMC in its five

page memorandum to EC

on Tuesday also alleged

duplicate Aadhar cards

were made for registra-

tion of fake voters. The

TMC has claimed that

since concerns have been

raised in several states

about "arbitrary" deletion

of names of voters from

electoral rolls and addi-

tion of new names, the EC

should put in place a

mechanism where a sepa-

rate list of deletions, new

additions and modifica-

tions are made public for

better transparency.

# SHORT TAKES

# **Never did vengeful**

politics: Andhra CM

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday told Assembly that he never engaged in vengeful politics but warned that people violating law and order will be dealt with severely. Addressing the House, the chief minister claimed that TDP coming to power is synonymous with law and falling in place in the state. "I am very clear. I never engaged in politics with vengeance. Even now I will not do it. At the same time, those who violate law and order will be dealt with severely. I am warning again, whoever it may be," Mr Naidu said. Alleging that law and order was not upheld in the previous Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP regime, the TDP supremo claimed that there was no protection to government assets or free movement of people back then. The CM also called upon the people of the state to use women's protection app called Shakti. - PTI

# Didn't join Sena out

of fear, says ex-MLA

**Mumbai: Former Congress** MLA Ravindra Dhangekar, who joined the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Monday night, denied on Tuesday that he switched loyalties due to BJP's pressure. Mr Dhangekar came into the limelight after winning the Assembly bypoll in 2023 from the Kasba Peth seat, which is traditionally a BJP stronghold. He said people in the BJP tried several times to get his wife arrested in connection with a land dispute case but asserted that he does not fear the saffron party. The Congress and the Shiv Sena(UBT) have alleged that he joined the Shiv Sena because of the fear of the ED. After Mr Dhangekar joined the Shiv Sena, Pune city Congress president Arvind Shinde accused him of switching sides due to personal interests, fear, and political temptations.

### **JD-U MLA's 'lewd** conduct' draws flak

Patna: The Opposition RJD in Bihar on Tuesday trained its guns at the JD(U) over a purported video showing an MLA of the ruling party singing a bawdy number and making lewd gestures at a woman artiste. The episode involves Gopal Mandal, a multiple-term JD(U) MLA from Gopalpur in Bhagalpur district, who was in news a years ago when he scan<sup>,</sup> dalised co-passengers on board New Delhi-bound Rajdhani Express by moving around in his undergarments. In the latest purported video, which has gone viral on social media, Mandal was seen pasting a currency note on the cheek of a dancer at a function organised in his constituency ahead of Holi, however, could not independently verify the authenticity of the video. — PTI

# C'GARH CHIEF **SECY AMONG 33** FOR CIC POSITION

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY RAIPUR, MARCH 11

Chhattisgarh chief secretary Amitabh Jain is among 33 applicants who have been shortlisted for the vacant post of state Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), to be selected through an interview, officials said on Tuesday. The interview for the coveted post is scheduled to be held on March 26, a notification issued by the state general administration department said. Mr Jain is scheduled to retire on June 30 this year and may opt for voluntary retirement from service (VRS) if he is selected for the post. tenure of which is three years, a senior bureaucrat disclosed to this newspaper, unwilling to be quoted. According to official sources, a search committee headed by additional chief secretary (home) of the state government Manoj Pingua was constituted to scrutinize the applicants for the post as per the eligibility criteria fixed for it. The other members of the committee were senior IAS officers Niharika Barik, Sonmoni Vora and Avinash Champavat. A candidate should have at least 30 years of experience in fields such as administration, social activity and journalism,

as per the eligibility criteria

■ Poll body seeks suggestions on ways to strengthen processes

# **Amid claims of fake votes, EC** invites parties for interaction

NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Amid controversies over duplicate voter ID numbers and allegations of discrepancies in electoral rolls, the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday invited suggestions from all national and state political parties by April 30 for any unresolved issues at the level of electoral registration officers (ERO), district election officers (DEO) and chief electoral officers (CEO).

The issue of duplicate numbers has also found an echo in Parliament Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi demanding a discussion in the House on the issue of voter lists on which several political parties have raised certain questions. Raising the issue during



BJP leaders Om Pathak, Sukanta Majumdar, Amit Malviya and others come out after meeting Election Commissioners at Nirvachan Sadan in New Delhi on Tuesday.

Zero Hour. Mr Gandhi said the entire opposition has been demanding a dis-

In a bid to iron out the differences, the poll body has invited the party presidents and senior leaders of political parties for consultations with them to clear doubts and take their suggestions on ways

to strengthen electoral

Earlier, during a confer-

issued to political parties,

processes. In an individual letter the Election Commission has said that while the suggestions can be given through emails, the individual meetings will be held at a mutually conven-

Commissioner Kumar had instructed chief electoral officers, district election officers and electoral registration officers of all states and Union territories to hold regular interactions with political parties, resolve any suggestions received in such meetings strictly within the legal framework already in place, and submit an action taken report to the commission by March 31.

The poll panel also urged political parties to proactively use this mechanism of decentralised engagement. Political parties are one of the key stakeholders amongst 28 stakeholders identified by the commission as per the Constitution and statutory framework covering all processes

# BJP, BJD, TMC teams meet poll body to voice concerns

EC urges parties to send agents for election training

VINEETA PANDEY NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Delegations of Trinamul Congress (TMC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Tuesday met the Election Commissioners to formally hand over their a memorandum carrying their doubts, grievances and suggestions. While agreeing to look into their issues, the EC also asked the parties to send their election related agents for training of election laws, rules and process to be con-

ducted by the poll body. Raising the issue of the duplicate EPIC numbers, the TMC has alleged this was done with an intention to influence the West Bengal Assembly elections next year. The BJD has been alleging discrepancy in vote count and has been asking EC to clarify the variations. The BJP

**RAISING THE** issue of the duplicate EPIC num-bers, the TMC has alleged this was done with an intention to influence the West Bengal

Assembly polls next year

too has separately in a petition claimed that West Bengal has over 13 lakh duplicate voters with 8,415 people having similar EPIC numbers are registered as voters.
It is learnt that the EC

informed BJD delegation that political parties are important stakeholders who are involved at every stage of the electoral process and as per the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, the record of votes polled in all booths is already given to the Polling Agents of all candidates as per Form 17C. Apart from its ongoing

contention on duplicate

The EC told TMC that all concerns, including duplicate EPIC numbers, duplicate, shifted and dead voters and illegal migrants, will be resolved by each booth level officer and concerned electoral registration officer with active participation of booth level agents appointed by

all political parties.

■ No peace in state at gunpoint, urge Modi to visit state: Gaurav Gogoi

# Opp. slams Centre over Manipur crisis

**AGE CORRESPONDENT** NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

The Opposition parties on Tuesday targeted the government on the Manipur crisis, alleging that the Centre had failed to bring peace at gun-point in Manipur, and urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit the state and listen to the apprehensions and concerns of the people.

However, the defended the imposition of President's Rule in Manipur, saying the decision was not forced on the state but was taken out of compulsion.

Lok Sabha proceedings were also adjourned briefly in the evening as Congress members protested protested against a remark by BJP member Sambit Patra on Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

"Northeast is a sensitive region. It is a border region. People's sensitivity is involved. For the last two and a half years, you have been trying to restore peace through guns, but you have failed. You should stop using guns to bring peace and talk to the people of Manipur," said Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi on Tuesday while initiating a discussion on the supplementary demands for grants, excess grants, and

the Manipur budget. He said that the Prime Minister should visit Manipur and listen to what are the fears in the mind of the people of Manipur. He said the Manipur budget should have been discussed in the state Assembly, but President's Rule has been imposed in the state. He

## **Action to be taken** if MGNREGA funds misused: Shivraj

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Amid the war of words between TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee and treasury bench members over the stoppage of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural **Employment Guarantee** Act (MGNREGA) funds for West Bengal, the government on Tuesday warned of strict action if MGNREGA funds were misused or the guidelines for the implementation of the scheme were not fol-

Union agriculture min-ster Shivraj Singh Chouhan also informed the Lower House that the government is ready to provide ₹6,000 annual cash benefit under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi to all eligible farmers who are not part of it yet.

said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apprise the House about the rationale for the imposition of President's Rule in the state.

What is the state of Vidhan Sabha in the state — is it dissolved or in suspended animation?" the Congress leader sought to

BJP members, including Nishikant Dubey, objected to Mr Gogoi's extensive reference to the situation in Manipur and cited rules to point out that the Congress leader should stick to the demands for grants and the state budget.



BJP MPs Jagdambika Pal and Kangana Ranaut during the Budget Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Tuesday.

# ■ Tamil 'no one's monopoly': Pradhan in RS 'Govt not trying to impose any language, take anyone's rights'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Jnion education minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday reiterated that the Centre is not trying to impose any language or take anyone's rights through the National Educational Policy (NEP). He also lashed out at the Opposition for claiming that the NDA government was trying to divide society through the imposition of Hindi.

The minister, while replying in the Rajya Sabha on a discussion on the working of his min-istry, said the Narendra government

wants to take the country country wants to progress forward along with Tamil with Tamil Nadu as its forward along with Tamil Nadu. He also asserted that Tamii is 'no one's monopoly", as he cited several examples of the promotion of the language by the Modi government.

He stressed that India is a multilingual country and that the government will never hurt anyone's feelings based on the language. The education ministry has come under fire from the Tamil Nadu government, which alleges that the Centre wants to impose Hindi through the threelanguage policy under the NEP, a charge vehemently rejected by Mr Pradhan.

Mr Pradhan said that the

growth engine. He noted tnat youngsters from Tami Nadu should not be denied the opportunity to grow and that he is ready to face any personal attacks from the DMK government.

He accused the TN government of creating "fear psychosis" about the three-language formula while doing little to promote Tamil in the state.

The minister said that while the students are increasingly opting for English in the state, the Tamil Nadu government is questioning the need for the three-language for-

# NEP a 'destructive Nagpur plan', will not accept it: Stalin

and D. SEKAR

Tamil Nadu chief minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday dubbed the Education National "destructive Nagpur plan" and reiterated that the state would not accept it even if the union government was to provide ₹10,000 crores.

Addressing a government event at Chengelpet near here, Mr Stalin said: "Yesterday, you would have seen parliamentary proceedings on televi-sion. He is talking arrogantly that Tamil Nadu would be provided ₹2,000 crores only if Hindi and Sanskrit are accepted. Who? It was Union educa-Dharmendra Pradhan."

Nagpur hosts the head-quarters of the Rashtriya Śwayamsevak (RSS), the ideological mentor of the BJP.

the NEP envisaged public they were elected, he said.

examinations for c dren, a Neet-type of entrance test for arts and science and engineering colleges, privatise education and pave the way for Union government's domination in education.

That Tamil Nadu was fighting persistently against the BJP's "conspiracies" was something that they could not endure, which was evident from the verbal attack on people of Tamil Nadu in Parliament by Pradhan, Mr Stalin said. The minister was forced to withdraw his remarks by the war cry raised by Tamil Nadu members, he said and congratulated them on behalf of the people.

The MPs had proved that they would fight for the rights of the state without fearing for anybody and also gave a fitting reply to all those who asked what the 40 members from the state would The chief minister said do in Parliament when

# **BJD chief Patnaik will attend** TN CM's meet on delimitation

**AKSHAYA KUMAR** SAHOO

BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 11

The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) confirmed on Tuesday that its president and former Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik will participate in the upcoming meeting on delimitation and electoral constituency reorganisation, convened by Tamil Nadu chief minister M.K. Stalin.

The announcement after DMK MP came Dayanidhi Maran, accompanied by Tamil Nadu's industries minister TRB Rajaa, met Mr Patnajk in Bhubaneswar to extend an official invitation for the meeting. The discussion is scheduled to be held in Chennai later this month.

Mr Patnaik reportedly assured Mr Maran of his participation.

# Manipur situation improved, will get financial support: FM

Announces ₹500cr contingency fund for Manipur in LS

**MADHUSUDAN SAHOO** NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Silencing the Opposition leaders in the House, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said that Centre would provide all the financial support to Manipur for faster economic development and announced a ₹500-crores corpus for the state to establish a contingency fund, aiming at bolstering strife-torn state's financial resilience. "We are providing all necessary financial assistance to support Manipur's economic recovery and will continue to do so for a faster rebound," Ms Sitharaman said, while replying to a debate on the Manipur budget and supplementary demands for grants in the Lok Sabha.

Besides, the finance minister also said that there were some collective efforts by Centre and state, which led to an overall improvement in law and order situation in Manipur. This statement of Ms Sitharaman comes



Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Budget Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Tuesday.

at a time when the state continues to recover from nearly two years of ethnic conflict and recent vio-lence as well. "The Centre remains committed to the faster economic recovery and restoration of law and order in the region," she

Ms Sitharaman also promised over ₹35000crores expenditure for Manipur, reaffirming the Centre's commitment to providing full financial support for Manipur's economic development. On Monday, she tabled the Manipur budget for 2025-26, outlining an expenditure of ₹35,103.90 crores,

marking an increase from ₹32,656.81 crore in the curfinancial Following the proclamation issued under Article 356 of the Constitution on February 13, 2025, legislative powers in the state are currently being exercised under the authority of Parliament.

This allocation was made during her response to the combined discussion on supplementary demands for grant (SDG) second batch 2024-25 demands for excess grants for 2021-22, the Manipur Budget 2025-26 as well as SDG (Manipur) 2024-25 in the Lok Sabha.

# Congress MLA suspended

# Odisha Assembly in turmoil as BJP, Cong MLAs clash

AKSHAYA KUMAR BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 11

The Odisha Assembly descended into chaos on Tuesday as MLAs from the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress exchanged blows during Question Hour, marking an unprecedented low in the state's legislative history. The disruption led Speaker Surama Padhy to suspend Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati for seven days on charges of "unruly" behaviour and causing damage to

Assembly property. The Speaker's action followed repeated disruptions caused Bahinipati, who had climbed onto the Speaker's podium and broken the microphone on Monday, creating pandemonium. Despite warnings, the MLA allegedly continued his

disruptive behaviour on Tuesday, prompting the suspension.

Tensions have been running high in the Assembly since Monday, with the Opposition Congress and the BJD standing firm on their respective demands. The Congress has been pressing for action over an alleged rise in crimes against women and children in the state over the past nine months Meanwhile, the BJD has been demanding clarification from chief minister Charan Majhi regarding a controversial remark by BJP MLA

Jayanarayan Mishra. Mr Mishra, who rep resents Sambalpur, recently described Sambalpur's accession to Odisha as a "historical blunder" and voiced support for the formation of a separate state named Koshal.

# **Bastar event to display tribal culture**

Raipur, March 11: "Bastar Pandum 2025", a first of its kind event, is set to kick off in Chhattisgarh's Bastar on Wednesday to showcase

rich art, culture, and tradition of the local tribes in the region. The 22-day-long event aims to preserve the art, culture and tradition.



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S. N.	Jobs No.	Name of the Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)					
1	45/DGM/SM (WC-1) / 2024-25	M/o Drain (C/o Rain Water Harvesting in front of DND Loop Sector-16A side on Expressway), Noida.	10.71					
2	27/DGM/SM (WC-6) / 2024-25	D/o Sector-117 (C/o Shade on Electric Meter Pannel in Shri Krishna Apartment Society Sector-117), Noida.	12.15					

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महत्वपूर्ण सूचना-

नवीन ओखला औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अधिसूचित क्षेत्र में शासन से र्यीकृत मास्ट्र प्लान एवं उत्तर प्रदेश औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास अधिनियम, 1976 के विपरीत प्लॉटिंग या किसी भी प्रकार का अन्य निर्माण पूरी तरह अवैध है जनसामान्य को आगाह किया जाता है कि इस प्रकार की अवैध कॉलोनियों एवं अवैध निर्मित भवनों में भूखण्डों/अपार्टमेंट/दुकान/गोडाऊन/फार्महाउस की खरीद-फरोख्त से पूर्णतः सुबेत रहें तथा कॉलोनाईजर के लुभावने एवं भ्रामक विज्ञापनों से बचे। साथ ही नौएड़ा अधिसूचित क्षेत्र के हिण्डन एवं यमुना नदियों के डूब क्षेत्र (Flood Plain Zone) में अनाधिकृत / अवैध प्लॉट एवं फार्म हाऊसों के कारोबार में संलिप्त भूमाफियाओं के चंगुल में न फुसे।

Dy. General Manager (Civil) CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA



for the post.













# Didn't join Sena out

of fear, says ex-MLA

**Mumbai:** Former Congress MLA Ravindra Dhangekar, who joined the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Monday night, denied Tuesday that he switched loyalties due to BJP's pressure. Mr Dhangekar came into the limelight after winning the Assembly bypoll in 2023 from the Kasba Peth seat, which is traditionally a BJP stronghold. He said people in the BJP tried several times to get his wife arrested in connection with a land dispute case, but asserted that he does not fear the saffron party. The Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT) have alleged that he joined the Shiv Sena because of the fear of the Enforcement Directorate. After he joined the Shiv Sena, Pune city Congress president Arvino Shinde accused him of switching sides due to personal interests and fear.

### Man chased, killed on busy road in UP

Lakhimpur Kheri: A 20-yearold man was chased and shot dead by around five assailants on a busy road near a police outpost in Mishrana locality here, an officer said on Tuesday. The incident happened on Monday evening, when Lucknow range inspectorgeneral (IG) Prashant Kumar was in the city to review the law and order situation ahead of Holi. According to the police, the youth, identified as Amogh Seth, a resident of Seth Colony in Hathipur, was rushed to a hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries. A book store employee, Aditya Kashyap, was also injured when the attackers opened fire as the youth took shelter in the shop, they said. Mr Kashyap is said to be out of danger. The assailants fled the officer said. -PT

# 4 killed as vehicle

falls into J&K gorge Jammu: Four persons were killed and eight others injured on Tuesday when a vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and rolled down into a deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials said. The accident took place near Gangode area in the district when the driver reportedly lost control over the tempo traveller, causing it to roll into the deep gorge. Immediately after the mishap, local police and the spot to carry out rescue operations, they said. Three persons died on the spot. and one died en route to hospital, officials added. Eight injured persons were shifted to the hospital. "The vehicle was on its way from Jammu to Mahore. It rolled into deep gorge. In the mishap, three persons died on the spot, and one died on the way to the hospital. Six out of eight injured persons have been shifted to ■ Believe in non-violent resistance: Top cleric contests charge

# **Govt bans Mirwaiz's party, 1** more for 5 years under UAPA

Strongly condemn the ban on Awami

Action Committee... it has unwa-

veringly stood by the people of

J&K advocating their aspirations

and rights through completely

YUSUF JAMEEL

The Centre on Tuesday declared two more political organisations of Jammu and Kashmir as "unlawful associations" and banned them under Section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967, for a period of five years each on the plea that they are involved in activities that threaten India's sovereignty, integrity, and secu-

The two organisations — &K Awami (People's) Action Committee (AAC), headed by Kashmir's chief Muslim preacher Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, and J&K Ittihad-ul-Muslimeen (IUM), led by Shia cleric and politician Moulvi Masroor Abbas Ansari — have also been accused of

non-violent and democratic methods and calling for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict. - Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, ACC chief anti-India mobilising propagating narratives, funds for separatist move-

ments, and inciting vio-

lence in J&K.

In a post on X, Union home minister Amit Shah wrote about the banning of these two organisations, saying they were found inciting people to cause law and order situations, posing a threat to the unity, and integrity of

"Anyone found involved in activities against the

nation's peace, order, and sovereignty is bound to face the crushing blow of the Modi govt," Mr Shah

The Mirwaiz has, however, contested the MHA's charge and said that his organisation completely believes in non-violent resistance and seeks a resolution of the Kashmir conflict through dialogue and deliberation.

Reacting to the MHA's move, the Mirwaiz wrote on X, "Strongly condemn

Committee... it has unwaple of J&K advocating their aspirations and rights through completely non-violent and democratic methods and calling for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict through dialogue and deliberation, for which its members suffered jails and incarceration and even martyr-dom".

Mirwaiz added 'This move seems part of the continuation of the policy of intimidation and disempowerment that is being followed vis-a-vis J&K since August 2019. The voice of truth may be suppressed through force but will not be silenced"

"Strongly condemn the unjustified & unfair ban on Ittihad-ul-Muslimeen,' Mr Ansari posted on X.

# Role of N-E vital in building developed India, says Shah

Region close to PM's heart ■ Govt wants its development

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Union home minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the contribution of the north-eastern region will be crucial in the making of developed India. Mr Shah highlighted the region's immense potential for global tourism.

"Northeast contributed over 20 per cent to India's GDP before Independence," Mr Shah said.

Lauding the intelligent youth and hardworking tribes of the region, he said, "The Northeast is a priceless gem of Indian culture, enriched with a

Mr Shah highlighted the diversity of the Northeast with over 220 tribal groups, 160 plus resident tribes, 200 plus languages, 50 unique festivals, and 30 globally renowned dance

forms. The region has 78 unique musical ments, over 100 tradi-

leled

unique

tional Amit Shah attires, and unparalcraftsmanship, handicrafts, and cuisine. ite its many qualities, the "Despite

Northeast lagged in development due to past periods of misinformation and conflicts that fueled terrorism and separatism. Violence. shutdowns. drugs, blockades, and regionalism fragmented the Northeast, not only distancing it from the rest of the country, but also creating divisions among its own states. As a result. the region remained underdeveloped for 40

years, with terrorism and

separatist groups being the biggest obstacles to progress," he said.

Mr Shah stressed that the Northeast has always been a priority for the BJP government and a dedicate ed ministry for the region was established during Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure as PM. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has placed the Northeast at the core of every government initiative, he said.

A key achievement of the Modi government is reducing the gap between the Northeast and the rest of India. By 2027, all north-eastern state capitals will be connected via rail, air, and road networks, he said, adding that a single-window system has been implemented to accelerate the region's development, backed by a substantial budget.

**U'khand govt** 

launches heli

# **SC: Pay salary** to consumer body officials without delay

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

The Supreme Court has directed all state governments to immediately pay the salary and perquisites of the chairpersons and members of the state and district consumer redressal bodies as per extant rules.

A bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and N. Kotiswar Singh also directed the Centre to take a call on amending Consumer Protection (Salary, allowances and conditions of service of President and Members of the State Commission Commission) Model

Rules, 2020. "We direct all the state governments to ensure that without prejudice to contentions raised in this group of salary and perquisites as per existing state rules shall be immediately paid to the chairpersons/members." the SC said.

The top court said in case there was no decision from the Centre on the prospective amendment, the bench would "consider exercising power under Article 142 of the Constitution".

In its March 5 order, the bench said, "In the event compliance is not made by some of the state governments, the parties concerned are free to hand over a note to that effect to the learned amicus curiae so that the court can pass an appropriate order."

# Global intel chiefs to converge in India for crucial talks Mar 16

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Top intelligence chiefs of 20 countries, including the US, the UK, the US, the UK, Australia, Germany, New Zealand and Canada will converge in the national capital to attend a security conclave on Sunday. The security and intelli-

gence conference will be chaired by national security adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval. US director of national intelligence national Tulsi Gabbard, Canadian spy chief Daniel Rogers and Britain's MI6 boss Richard Moore will be among the top spymasters attending the event, sources said. The agenda of the con-

clave is to deliberate on

ways to boost intelligence sharing for combating terrorism and various transnational crimes besides securing the logistics chain in the Indo-Pacific, they said. Ms Gabbard is visiting India as part of a multination tour of Japan, Thailand and France. Her visit marks the first high-level visit to India by a top official of the

Donald Trump adminis-

**■** Top court reinstates woman as sarpanch

The deliberations are also likely to cover various global challenges including the Russia-Ukraine war and the conflict in West Asia.

On the sidelines of the conclave, Mr Doval is expected to hold one-onone meetings with his counterparts from several leading countries.

Ms Gabbard is also expected to bring up the need for expanding cooperation between the two countries in the Indo-Pacific with an overall focus 0on dealing with China's increasing muscle-flexing in the region.

# SC: Babus cannot be allowed to 'frustrate grassroots democracy'

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Upholding the Bombay high court order reinstating a woman as the sarpanch of a Maharashtra village, the Supreme Court has underlined that bureaucrats couldn't be allowed to "frustrate grassroots democracy"

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N. Kotiswar Singh said, "We have given judgments in two to three cases where babus were found to be misbehaving with the elected representatives. This is happening typically in Maharashtra. These babus should be under the elected representatives.

KOKALE WAS aggrieved with the June 7, 2024 order of the collector confirming her resignation from the

sarpanch's post

These bureaucrats cannot be allowed to frustrate the grassroots democracy." The SC also came across instances of bureaucrats trying to open old cases to disqualify elected representatives, especially at

the grassroots level. "They (bureaucrats) try to open old cases like your grandfather has encroached upon government land and hence you are disqualified," Justice Surya Kant told the counsel for Archana Sachin

Bhosale, whose election as the sarpanch was set aside by the HC on January 29. Reinstating Kalavati Rajendra Kokale as the sarpanch, the SC upheld the HC quashing the June

2024 order of the collec tor of Raigad district declaring a vacancy for the post of sarpanch in village Ainghar, Taluka-Roha and appointing a returning officer to conduct the election. "We are inclined to agree with the view taken by the high court... We uphold and affirm the continuation of respondent number 1 (Ms Kokale) as the duly elected pradhan of the gram panchayat, Ainghar Taluka-Roha, district Raigad," the bench said.

# 'In 15-20 years, India will need 30K pilots'

Will create multi-model system: Naidu

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Civil aviation minister K. Rammohan Naidu said on is working on a "template model" to set up more airports to handle the increasing air traffic and expanding aircraft fleet. Mr Naidu said the government plans to have dedicated airports for cargo and flying training organisations.

He added that India will need 30,000 pilots in the next 15-20 years as domestic airlines have more than 1,700 planes on order as they expand their net-

On the sidelines of an event in the national capital, Mr Naidu said the government is looking to create a multi-model system and that there are a lot of technical aspects



K. Rammohan Naidu

connectivity to all regions and wherever possible, we can taper down the land requirement... instance like having) a small airport where we can operate an ATR," he

Meanwhile, responding to queries related to recent incidents involving Air India, Mr Naidu said whenever there are issues, those are discussed and feedback is also sought from the airline concerned. "If there is any breaking of law, then we take action, penalise them and ensure that things happen in the

# **No talks with Sambhal cops** over Friday's namaz: Masjid

Sambhal (UP), March 11: people were killed and The Shahi Jama Masjid Committee in Sambhal on Tuesday denied any discussion with the police administration regarding the timing of Friday prayers that coincide with Holi celebrations on March 14.

The committee clarified that they will announce the prayer timing independently in the coming

Sambhal has been on alert after riots broke out on November 24 last year, following a survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid. Four

several including police oersonnei were injured in the clashes. Talking to reporters

Shahi Jama Masjid Committee president Zafar Ali said neither he nor any representative from the committee was present at the peace committee meeting convened by the administration. "We have not been in touch with the police administration and no discussion has taken place regarding the timing of the Friday prayers," he said. — *PTI* 

# services to 4 new hill towns AGE CORRESPONDENT DEHRADUN, MARCH 11

Uttarakhand governlauched four new heli extending domestic air connectivi-Nainital. to Bageshwar, Mussoorie and Haldwani. So far 13 towns Uttarakhand have been connected with domestic air services under the Centre's Udaan Scheme. "Udaan scheme to

increase air services in the hill towns will provide impetus to tourism and economic development in the state. Better air connectivity will bring positive changes in the lives of local people. Besides being sought after tourist Bageshwar, areas Nainital and Mussoorie are also important cultural and spiritual destinations of the state. The natural beauty, serene valleys, lush green mountains, historical temples and rich culture of these areas attract global tourists," said chief minister Pushkar Singn Dhami, inaugurated the helicopservices Dehradun to Bageshwar, Nainital and Mussoorie and another between Haldwani

Bageshwar. The CM said heli services to these hill areas will reduce journey time from present 8-10 hours to one hour. Besides, in case of emergency, people living in the far off hills will also get much needed help, Mr Dhami

# K'taka to probe **DGP** rank cop in actress case

Bengaluru, March 11: The Karnataka government has appointed additional chief secretary Gaurav Gupta to probe the role of DGP rank officer K. Ramachandra Rao, if any, in the alleged gold smuggling activity of

tigation into the alleged lapses and dereliction of duty of police officers at Kempegowda International Airport

(KIA), Bengaluru. Ramachandra Rao is presently serving as the managing director of the Karnataka state police housing and infrastructure development corporation.

the order said.

# New bill on immigration, foreigners Citizen of India (OCI).

■ Continued from Page 1 foreigners in the country.

Jammu," said SSP Reasi

Paramvir Singh. — PTI

The legislation is aimed at streamlining various services related to immigration and foreigners, including their entry, exit and stay in India. The entry, stay and exit of foreigners from India are currently governed by the Registration of Foreigners Act 1939 and the Foreigners Act 1946.

While Indian visas of all categories to foreigners can be granted in physical or sticker form by Indian missions or posts located abroad, the bureau of immigration (BoI) grants electronic visas under seven categories to people from 167 countries.

Besides, visa-on-arrival is granted by immigration authorities at six designated airports to nationals of three countries -- Japan, South Korea and the UAE (only for such UAE nationals who had earlier obtained e-visa or regu-

■ Continued from Page 1

Trump's objectives of peace,

freedom and prosperity. First

stop: Honolulu, where I'll visit

IC partners and INDOPACOM

lar or paper visa for India). The stay and movement of foreigners in India and their exit are regulated by the BoI and state governments and UT administrations.

According to existing laws, all foreigners on long-term (more than 180 days) student, medical, research, employment, missionary and project visas are required to register with the foreigners regional registration officer (FRRO) or the foreigners registration officer (FRO) concerned, having jurisdiction over the place where the foreigner intends to

stay, within 14 days of arrival. Pakistani nationals are required to register within 24 hours of their arrival. Other laws that cover foreigners in India include the Citizenship Act 1955, which regulates the acquisition and termination of Indian citizenship as well as the acquisition and registration of foreigners as Overseas

**US intel chief Tulsi Gabbard in India soon** 

Trump administration.

Minister Narendra Modi earli-

er in February during his visit

to Washington DC for the bilat-

eral meeting with President

This will be Ms Gabbard's

The Passports Act, 1967, provides for the issue of passports and travel documents to regulate the departure from India of citizens of India and persons and the ration (Carriers' other Immigration Liability) Act 2000 makes carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into

> visions of the Passport Act. Apart from movement, stay and visa, there are certain protected areas in India where foreigners need special permits to travel, including multiple states in the northeastern region, the whole of Andaman and Nicobar, and parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand.

India in contravention of pro-

Himachal According to Union home

Pradesh and Rajasthan.

# ministry data, a total of 98.40lakh foreigners visited India

between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024.

first trip to India after taking Blair House on February 12, shortly after the Indian leader over as the eighth Senate-confirmed and first female combat arrived in the US capital. "Met USA's Director of veteran Director of National National Intelligence, @Tulsi-Gabbard in Washington DC. Ms Gabbard had met Prime

official to meet Mr Modi at

Congratulated her on her confirmation. Discussed various aspects of the India-USA friendship, of which she's always been a strong votary, Prime Minister Modi had said in a post on X.

# Kharge 'thokenge' jab in RS triggers row, LoP clarifies

■ Continued from Page 1

J.P. Nadda intervened and criticised Mr Kharge's remarks and demanded an apology from the LoP of the Rajya Sabha.

Mr Kharge immediately apologised for his remark, clarifying that his remark was not aimed at the Chair but towards the government and its policy I apologise to you (deputy Chairman)...

I did not use these words for you. I said

that'hum sarkar ki policies ko thokenge. I apologise to you and not to the government..." Mr Kharge said. Earlier in the morning, the Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned for about 40 minutes as the Opposition MPs trooped into the Well of the House over the alleged "raw deal" the southern states will get in

the redrawing of constituencies solely on

the basis of population. The Opposition MPs gave notices under rule 267 seeking that the listed business of the day be set aside to take up a discussion on the concerns of southern states over the impending delimitation exercise. They also gave notices over alleged lapses on the part of the Election Commission in issuing multiple duplicate voter identity cards. The notices were rejected by the Chair for not adhering to the rules. However, DMK's R. Girirajan managed to raise the issue of delimitation through a

Zero Hour mention. Thereafter, the MPs were up on their feet shouting slogans and trooped into the Well of the House. Deputy Chairman Harivansh said the matter has already been raised and asked members to return to their seats.

The protest continued. Shortly thereafter, Mr Harivansh adjourned the proceedings till noon.

# **Mauritius is family: Modi**

■ Continued from Page 1 be prepared to compile details of towns and villages in India from where these labourers

where they settled across the world. The PM also mentioned the emotional attachment between the people of Mauritius and Bihar, from where most of the indentured labourers from

were brought

left during the British Raj and

Mauritius by the British to work in plantations. The Prime Minister also mooted the organisation of a World Girmitiya Conference to pay tribute to the legacy of these brave people who underwent so much suffering in their lives and chart the geographical routes that these indentured labourers took from their motherland. He pointed out that "to further strengthen these bonds, a special carve-out for Mauritius has been made whereby Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards can be made avail-

of the people of Indian origin in Mauritius" Mr Modi also presented OCI cards to Mr Ramgoolam and

able to the seventh generation

his wife Veena Ramgoolam. Highlighting the religious ties between the two nations, Mr Modi pointed to the happiness among the people of Mauritius when the Ram temple in Avodhva was inaugurated in January last year and the fact that a half-day leave had been announced by Mauritius government to cele-

brate the grand occasion. He also mentioned that pilgrims from Mauritius had also participated in the Maha Kumbh that culminated recently and that he had brought along the holy water from the Maha Kumbh that would be offered "Ganga lake" Mauritius.

After his arrival at Port

Louis in the morning, Mr Modi was welcomed in Bihar's tradition of "geet gawai". He later called on the Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool. After the talks, the Mauritius President hosted a state lunch in honour of the Prime Minister. He presented "makhana" (foxnut) from Bihar as a gift to Mr Gokhool, a Banarsi silk saree to the First Lady Vrinda Gokhool and an idol of Lord Ganesha.

In a statement on the engagements earlier in the day, New Delhi said, "The two leaders exchanged views on deepening the special and close bilateral between India and

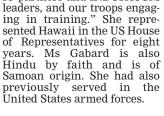
Mauritius." New Delhi added: "Prime Minister paid homage today at the Samadhis of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and Sir Anerood Jugnauth at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden, Pamplemousses. Mr Modi was accompanied by Mr Ramgoolam for the wreath-lay-

ing function. Following the wreath-laying ceremony, the two Prime Ministers planted a tree under the initiative "Ek Ped Maa ke Naam" in the historic garden.

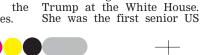
### his step daughter and Kannada actress Ranya Chief minister's office informed media on Tuesday that an order appointing Mr Gupta was issued on Monday night. The government also ordered a CID inves-

The government order

Gupta has been appointed as the investigating officer." The investigating officer should commence the investigation immediately and submit its report within a week,



















# THE ASIAN AGE

12 MARCH 2025

# Stop 'weaponising' funds to force states to toe line

Union government's reluctance to fulfil the requirements of democracy and the country's federal Constitution, and its propen-sity to weaponise Central funding to force its agenda on states, have led to unpleasant and avoidable exchanges in Parliament, requiring the intervention of the chair and the expunging of remarks of a Union minister, which is a rare occurrence. It is time the government did a rethink on this policy in the larger interest of democracy and the welfare

The Union government putting conditions for funding welfare schemes, especially those related to health and education, on states requiring them to adopt its policies runs counter to the federal principles of the Constitution. The purse strings are indeed with the Union government, especially after the country rolled out the Goods and Services Tax, and the position taken by the finance commissions, the constitutional body mandated to devise the formula for fund sharing, of late has not helped the cause of the states either, leaving them at the mercy of the Union government. But it cannot be the reason for the Union government to release

As a political party, the BJP can always propagate the

virtues of the Central policy, including the threelanguage formula, in Tamil Nadu. But it must respect its decision to not adopt it.

The Union government is the proponent of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It may be remembered that education was originally on the State List of the Constitution and was subsequently shifted to the Concurrent List. However, the NEP, as a policy, has no legal backing affording it pre-emi-nence over state policies. Still, the Union gov-ernment wants an unwilling Tamil Nadu government to adopt it, with its concomitant three-language formula which the state has been resisting for decades; it has said the state would be deprived of funds of over ₹2,000 crores under various Central schemes. And worse, the Union education minister now berates the state and the members of Parliament from there for tak-ing a position contrary to that of his

government.

The Union government has denied funds to other states too for refusing to fall in line and follow its policies. The Kerala health minister was heard telling the state Assembly last week that funds to the state under the National Health Mission for the financial year 2023-24 were held back because the state government refused to rebrand its healthcare infrastructure, which it has built over centuries, as per the Union government's

It is time Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the best champion the cause of cooperative federalism can have in our country today, intervenes and settles the issues in such a way that it enhances the prestige of the idea he espouses. The Union government can indeed lay the larger framework of policies but it must let the states build on it to serve the larger interest of their people. As a political party, the BJP can always propagate the virtues of the Central policy, including the three-language formula, in Tamil Nadu and win their confidence. But until such time comes, it must respect the decision of state governments to make their choices. At the end of the day, the Constitution defines India that is Bharat as a union of states.

# Can Carney reset India ties?

The economist and former central banker Mike Carney is all set to become the Prime Minister of Canada. He comes in at a tumultuous time when US President Donald Trump's tariff obsession is going to test the world, especially Canada and Mexico against which stiff tariffs on imports into the US are in

Where Mr Carney's appointment as PM by the Liberal Party will be most welcomed is India with which a positive resetting of ties is now on the cards. Canada's relationship with India, dating back a couple of centuries, hit a nadir in Justin Trudeau's rule after he took the floor in parliament and charged India with carrying out a hit on a Khalistani sympathiser on Canadian soil.

The self-destructive rule of Mr Trudeau in which he cavorted with radical political elements to stay in power at the head of a coalition government may have reached a natural conclusion in his being removed from the PM's post for lack of confidence in the Liberal Party which his father Pierre had led for decades with

The assassination charge, never followed up by credible evidence that would stand judicial scrutiny, may have died a natural death considering the change of regime in Washington after the defeat of the censorious Joe Biden government that seemed to do the tango with Mr Trudeau on this matter of extraterritorial killing by the Indian government.

The new Canadian PM comes armed with deep knowledge of economics and high finance as he has headed not only the Canadian federal bank but also the Bank of England. As one steeped in such knowledge he can prove resourceful in the trade war that Donald Trump has started by levying tariffs on imports into the world's biggest economy that threaten to disrupt global trade.

Mr Carney's first task would be to consolidate his party's recent gains in people's ratings and lead his party into the coming federal election against a Conservative Party that had gained much from Mr Trudeau flirting with the party of the Sikhs and leading Canadians suffering increasingly from a rising cost-of-living index.

### THE ASIAN AGE

KAUSHIK MITTER

K. SUDHAKAR

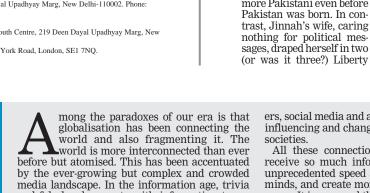
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and falsehood compete with information to engage our attention, challenging us to separate the two and focus on what is factual and really important. Moreover, profusion of information does

not necessarily mean an accretion in knowledge. There is now a growing body of literature that deals with information and communication technology. Some books extol its benefits and virtues while others express scepticism and point to its dangers and detrimental consequences. A compelling new publication, Superbloom: How Technologies of Connection Tear Us Apart by Nicholas Carr, belongs firmly to the latter cate gory. Carr has written several books on the impact of technology on people's lives and think-ing. His previous work, *The Shallows*, analysed what the internet was doing to our brains, in which he argued it was seriously affecting our ability to think deeply even as it was opening new vistas for us. His new book takes that conversation forward and expands on it by examining how digital communication technology information systems, online platforms and tools that include smartphones, the Internet, comput-

ers, social media and artificial intelligence — are influencing and changing the lives of people and

All these connections that enable people to receive so much information and messages at unprecedented speed and scope should broaden minds, and create more understanding and harmony. It is assumed that by making communication more efficient a lot of problems can be fixed.

But, Carr argues, it hasn't turned out this way. Speed and intensity in the flow of information and stimuli force people to rely on intuitive thinking based on biases. It robs them of the ability to tap into deeper analysis. It has undermined careful reading, reasoned analysis, methodical evaluation and contemplative inquiry. 'Attention splinters, understanding grows thin,' he posits, adding "rather than levelling barriers to knowledge, it becomes a barrier itself". This

results in mental shortcuts and shallow thinking. Carr takes readers on a fascinating journey through the history of technological advancement, starting with the invention of the telegraph to present-day large-scale communication networks along with the profits made by giant, unaccountable tech companies. He draws on psychology and sociology to buttress many of his observations. Every advance in media, he writes, was accompanied by "millenarian rhetoric". Each time, claims were made about how the world would become a better, friendlier place with peomacy would be rendered obsolete, crises averted and wars prevented. None of this, of course, happened. Therefore, Carr asserts, "we had been telling ourselves lies about communication and about ourselves'

social media and the tech companies that run The consequences of this have yet to be fully fathomed. More than promoting facts and truth, social media amplifies falsehoods and hostility. Shorn of communication barriers, it brings people's worst instincts into play. The "ugly content that pervades the social media" he also attributes to tech companies and the role played by algorithms. They choose content to stir strong emotions that create a slippery slope compelling people to be drawn even more into the 'feed'.

While close bonds can be formed online, that and other benefits don't outweigh the drawbacks, including psychological harm. Carr questions the narrative that digital media is a democratising vehicle, which to him overlooks how it breeds extreme views, polarisation and fanaticism. He argues it is more conducive to authoritarian movements and cults of personality. Communication media, he claims, is anything but politically neutral. It spawns asymmetries of

Some of Carr's assessments about digital tech-

IMMEDIATELY ... THESE NEW TEAM LEADERS WILL WORK 24 HOURS A DAY

FIRE 200 EMPLOYEES

ber down from his throne

to the chant of an adapted

Ram, Jitna kapra, utna

kam" slogan and bow three

times to his vassal from Baroda. Parity must adjust

to a natural order in which poverty also has a price, as the irreverent Sarojini

Naidu naughtily reminded

Of course, Mr Zelenskyy could have told the offi-

cious and offensive Mr

Vance whose main pur-

pose seemed to be to ingra-

tiate himself with his boss that his own soldier's attire was not mandatory for all

freedom-fighters. An army

may rely on foot soldiers to

fight but it also needs gen-

erals and field-marshals. If

Mr Zelenskyy identifies with the humblest defend-

ers of Ukraine's indepen-

dence, there is nothing to

stop friends from assuming the grander rank they feel

is their due. Mr Trump should be flattered to be

designated an honorary

field-marshal of the Ukrai-

Gandhi.

'Raghupati Raghava Raja

# Dressing down at Oval: A power statement by Kyiv



Subhani

Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

scarves, according to Lady Willingdon, who feared the

Jinnah might catch a cold.

Contrary to what people

might think, such symbol-

ism didn't begin with that

shrewd but saintly master of statecraft, Mohandas

Karamchand Gandhi, who

when asked if he had tea

with the King-Emperor

George V in Buckingham

Palace wearing only his

trademark loin cloth, famously retorted: "His

Majesty wore enough for

both of us!" The Bengali

revolutionary, Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, an angli-

barrister Cambridge and Middle

mayor of Calcutta, and is

revered as Deshapriya,

"Lover of the Land", proba-

bly first used a sartorial semaphore. Deshapriya's

sought to malign him with

the cartoon of a man swill-

ing whisky in black tie and

er held out his khadi dhoti,

kurta and chaddar. The

kapra", which has passed

into the language, speaks of

Like Prime Minister

Modi's telltale waistcoat

which betrays his unac-

Jawaharlal Nehru, China's

ubiquitous Mao jacket —

which Jiang Zemin tried to

banish when launching his

"Going Global" policy —

still lurks in some august

Beijing wardrobes. The

immaculate Xi Jinping, for

instance, has been known

Western suit and dust

down a Mao jacket for the

most politically pregnant

It is possible that Mr

Vance's tirade was really to

demand visual reciprocity

and prevent Mr Zelenskyy

from stealing a march over

his host. As guardian of Mr

Trump's dignity, he may

have been trying to ensure

that the President wasn't

discard his smart

other countries as well.

"Meeting

who became

adversaries

debt to

Temple

caption,

knowledged

occasions.

scantily-dressed

ot since Ba-roda's Maha-raja Sayajirao Gaekwad III flung a sartorial bomb into the Delhi Durbar of 1911 have attire and attitude caused so much consternation in high places as the recent fiasco in the Oval Office of the White House. Not that it's at all surprising that the American vice-president should emerge as Volodymyr Zelenskyy's strident critic. James David Vance may be a white American politician but his gifted Hindu Brahmin vegetarian wife's roots are in the Telugu heartland of Andhra Pradesh. It being no secret catch-as-catch-can upwardly mobile Indian immigrants are not noted for cultural sensitivity, some crassness may have rubbed off on Mr Vance gave Ukraine's President a dressing down not Donald Trump's honour.

Clearly, Mr Vance missed the symbolic defiance of Mr Zelenskyy's militarystyle black sweatshirt adorned with Ukraine's trident. Asia's sartorial signals are usually more muted like Vijayalakshmi Pandit's khadi sarees which were reputedly smooth as French silk. However, there's nothing subtle about the flamboyant turbans and waistcoats with which Narendra Modi is transforming the political stage into a Hindu dur-bar where those who are not dwijas are mlechhas. Pakistan carried prenatal exclusiveness to extremes with Muhammad Ali Jinnah's sister abandoning the sarees on which she had been weaned for the salwar-kameez she deemed more Pakistani even before Pakistan was born. In contrast. Jinnah's wife, caring nothing for political messages, draped herself in two told the officious and offensive Mr Vance whose main purpose seemed to be to ingratiate himself with his boss that his own soldier's attire was not

Zelenskyy could have

mandatory for all freedom-fighters

Of course, Mr

thwarted in his mission to annex Greenland, discipline Canada, Panama and Mexico, cut Europe down to size, earn Vladimir Putin's approbation and, a transactional politician, also make a penny from Ukraine's natural resources.

We know from Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's novel, The Leopard, that the old order's death knell was sounded when the town's plebeian mayor turned up in full evening dress at the Prince of Salina's ball where the prince himself always received guests in informal attire. The radical mayor's outfit warned that a revolution was brewing. Although roles were reversed at the Delhi Durbar, the Gaekwad's appearance in white cotton instead strings of diamonds and emeralds sent similar alarm bells ringing throughout the Raj. It wasn't only that His Highness's cotton might have been seditious khadi. His casual stroll towards the throne and the perfunctory bow sketched before turning his back on Their Majesties, swinging a swagger stick as he walked jauntily away, were as mutinous as the mayor's glad rags. Watching the filmed sequence which is regularly screened at London's Victoria and Albert Museum, no one can tell whether the Gaekwad was being his simple self, deliberately aiming a deadly insult at the King-Emperor, or whether — as he claimed - he was overcome with confusion in that glittering throng of bejewelled potentates. All one knows is that reciproc-

nian Army with an appropriately ornate uniform that his good friend in Delhi's Panchavati, aka 7 Lok Kalyan Marg, would undoubtedly be happy to First, however, the now restore his own credentials. Eight years ago he derided the President as an idiot, which the latter may not have forgotten or forgiven since he told Fox News recently that it is 'too early" to tell whether the vice-president can run for President in 2028. Nor can Mr Vance claim an upsurge of popular support since people remember that when he was running for the Ohio Senate in 2022, he told a podcast: "I have got to be honest with you. I don't really care what hap-pens to Ukraine one way or the other." That also seems to be Mr Trump's attitude since his second coming. Hapless Ukraine must fend for itself while the so-called Leader

> The writer is a senior journalist, columnist

of the Free World plays

footsy with the reincarna-

tion of the Soviet chal-

The inability of the Maharashtra government to fulfil the promise made during elections of ₹2,100 to be given to the ladki bahins comes as no surprise. All political parties have been making promises to the electorate of giving away cash for nothing even if the state finances wouldn't permit. Realisation has just hit the government that it is in no position to deliver on the promises. How the electorate is going to view this remains to be seen. It would come as no surprise if beneficiaries, especially in rural areas, demand an explanation from bank employees as to why the said amount has not been credited to their accounts!

> **Anthony Henriques** Mumbai

# **CRISIS AHEAD?**

**ALL IS** not well for the Indian rupee which depreciated by 38 paise, its steepest fall in over a month, to close at 87.33 (provisional) against the US dollar on March 10 due to volatile crude oil prices amid tariff uncerldwide and outflow of foreign funds. A sell-off in the domestic equity market hit sentiments adversely. The latest RBI data released on Friday showed the country's forex reserves dropped by \$1.781 billion in the week ended February 28. Due to a weak Indian economy under the current government, the rupee is falling continuously against the US dollar.

Bhagwan Thadani Mumbai

### **GOOD NEWS**

INDIA'S INFLATION rate likely fell below four per cent in February 2025 for the first time in six months, driven by lower food prices, especially vegetables, pulses, and cereals. Economists estimate inflation at 3.98 per cent, down from 4.31 pc in January, aligning with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) target. With fresh produce entering the market, inflationary pressures are easing, and the average inflation rate for 2025 is expected to be around 4.8 pc. This decline may prompt the RBI to consider a 25-basis-point rate cut, supporting economic growth and strengthening consumer purchasing power.

**Amarjeet Kumar** 





Social media has amplified untruths: Big Tech making us shallow thinkers

ple joined in happy brotherhood. Personal diplo-

ity alone would have ach-

ieved nothing. In any case,

the King-Emperor could

He reserves his most scathing critique for

power as it determines what we know and therefore shapes our thinking in the process.

"more angry and tribal". In analysing 'digital distraction', she used research findings to press the case that technology and social media are also contributing to the loneliness crisis. Smartphones "fragment our attention", estrange us from people and "create a splintered self" among other damaging effects she mentions. Apart from pushing people into isolated digital bubbles, social media is creating a meaner, more

nology bring to mind a very readable and insight-

ful book published much earlier. This saw it pro-

ducing another kind of outcome - loneliness, both personal and political. The Lonely Planet,

by British economist Noreena Hertz, had a dif-ferent focus, as the title of her book indicates, but

it also considered the damaging effects of com-

munication technology and social media. Of

course, what she described as a global pandemic

of loneliness — defined as a feeling of being unsupported in a social and familial context and

also by fellow citizens, governments and the state

— was ascribed to a conflation of diverse factors

and events. They included "structural and insti-

tutional discrimination", an urbanisation wave,

rise of neoliberalism and fundamental changes to

But Hertz also assigned an "integral role" to

social media and smartphones in making people

how we live.

aggressive world. - By arrangement with **Dawn**  SHORT TAKES

# **HIGHWAY BUS CRASH KILLS 12 IN S. AFRICA**

Johannesburg, March 11: At least 12 people died and 45 were injured when a bus overturned on a highway in the South African city of Johannesburg on Tuesday, emergency services said. Emergency crews were trying to lift the bus back onto its wheels to see if any more victims were trapped underneath it, said William Nthladi, a spokesperson for the city's Ekurhuleni Emergency Management.

The crash happened on a highway near Johannesburg's main O.R. Tambo International

### **MEDICAL COPTER CRASH KILLS 3 IN MISSISSIPPI**

Madison County, March 11: A medical transport helicopter crashed in Mississippi on Monday, killing a pilot and two hospital workers on board, offi-

cials said. A spokesperson for the University of Mississippi Medical Centre confirmed the deaths of everyone on board the flight. The AirCare copter was not carrying any patients when it crashed in Madison County. north of the capital of Jackson, the university said in an earlier statement. Families of the three victims were notified, but authorities didn't release names to protect privacy.

### POPE OUT OF **DANGER, MAY BE DISCHARGED**

Vatican City, March 11: Pope Francis was reported to be in good spirits on Tuesday after the Vatican declared he was out of danger and could even be discharged in the near future after almost one month in

hospital with pneumonia. The 88-year-old head of the Catholic Church has been in Rome's Gemelli hospital since February 14 with pneumonia in both lungs and has suffered several respiratory crises that sparked real fear for his life.

After a week of improvements, the Holy See on Monday evening said his prognosis was

### **FORMER PERU PREZ ON HUNGER STIR OVER TRIAL**

Lima, March 11: Former Peruvian President Pedro Castillo said on Monday that he was beginning a hunger strike in protest of the start of an oral trial against him for the alleged crime of rebellion. The prosecution has requested 34 years in prison for the former

Castillo, detained since December 7, 2022 after a televised speech in which he declared the dissolution of Congress and his intent to rule by decree, said on his social networks that he has begun a hunger strike to protest "injustices committed against me.

### **PORTUGAL'S GOVT LOOKS SET TO LOSE TRUST VOTE**

Lisbon, March 11: Portugal's minority government was in danger of falling on Tuesday as Parliament prepared to vote on a confidence motion, with an overwhelming majority of opposition lawmakers saying they will choose to oust the centreright administration.

That would bring Portugal's third general election in three years at a time when Europe's security and economy are under threat.

The government asked for the confidence vote, saying it was needed to dispel uncertainty about its own future amid a simmering political crisis.

# **AL-SHABAAB ATTACKS SOMALI HOTEL, KILLS 6**

**Mogadishu, March 11:** A car bomb exploded on Tuesday at a hotel in the central Somali city of Beledweyne in a militant attack that killed at least six people, including two prominent traditional elders, according to witnesses.

The explosion targeted the Cairo Hotel, which houses traditional elders and military officers currently involved in coordinating the government's offensive against the militant

group al-Shabab. The blast triggered intense gunfire as attackers stormed

# **Ukraine, US talk partial** truce in war with Russia

Three killed in attack as Moscow shoots down 337 drones

March 11: Ukraine said talks with the United States in Saudi Arabia began "very constructively" on Tuesday, with a partial ceasefire with Russia on the table hours after Kyiv conducted its largest drone attack on Moscow in three years of war.

Three people were killed in the attack as a total of 337 drones were downed over Russia, including 91 over Moscow region and 126 over Kursk region. US secretary of state Marco Rubio and Ukraine's foreign minister Andriy Sybiga attended the meeting in Jeddah — which Russia was not participating in — as President Donald Trump ramped up pressure on Ukraine to end the war that began with Russia's 2022 invasion.

The talks come just days after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's public dressing-down at the White House, after which the United States cut off military aid, intelligence sharing and access to satellite imagery. Ukraine is hoping the offer of a partial ceasefire in the sky and at sea will persuade Washington to restore the assistance.

"We are ready to do coun everything to achieve tion.

Washington, March 11: US

President Donald Trump

announced massive new

tariffs on Canadian steel

aluminum Tuesday, while threatening to "shut down" its

auto industry and saying

the best way to end the

trade war was for Washington's ally to be absorbed

ats came hours before a

midnight deadline for ra-

mping up the Republic-

an's increasingly global

trade offensive.
On his *Truth Social* plat-

form, Trump announced

that he would increase

tariffs on Canadian steel

and aluminum imports by

an additional 25 per cent

tor a total of 50 per cen

duties on those commodi-

This is in addition to tar-

iffs of 25 per cent on steel

and aluminum imports

from around the world,

including exporters in

Brazil, Mexico and United

Arab Emirates. The upcoming levies, which currently allow for no

exceptions, threaten to hit

everything from electron-

ics to vehicles.

TRUMP: WILL

**BUY A TESLA TO** 

**SUPPORT MUSK** 

Washington, March 11: US

President Donald Trump

said he'll buy a new Tesla

to support Elon Musk,

after shares of the elec-tric-car maker had their

worst day in four years

amid a growing backlash

over Musk's political alle-

In a post just after mid-

night in Washington, Tru-

mp said he'll buy a new

Tesla on Tuesday morn-

ing as a "show of confi-

dence and support for

ties for the neighbour.

into the United States. Trump's shock new thre-



Fuel reservoirs fire following a Russian drone attack near Odesa, Ukraine, on Tuesday.

People line up to cast their vote in parliamentary elec-

**NY FIRES 2K PRISON GUARDS** 

than 2,000 prison | Monday to confirm Lori

guards Monday for | Chavez-DeRemer as U.S.

after a weekslong | position that puts her in

federally mandated worker

rights and protections at a

"There was (still is) a

massive cyberattack agai-

nst X," Musk said in a post

on the platform, which

was working sporadically.

The SpaceX and Tesla

boss also blamed a cyber-

attack, although he provi-

ded no proof, for crashing

the site last year when an

interview with Donald Tr-

ump was about to be strea-

med on it. Musk shared a

post from an account cal-

led DogeDesigner suggest-

ing that the cyberattack

was a burst of animosity towards him. -AFP

time when the White

eliminate thousands of

failing to return to work | labor secretary, a Cabinet

work stoppage over. | government employees.

Musk says X hit by

major cyberattack

**NEW YORK** fired more **THE SENATE** voted

had come back on the | House is trying to

**THE TRUMP** administration has cut millions

of dollars in federal funding from two cyber-

security initiatives, including one dedicated

to helping state and local election officials.

tions, in Nuuk, Greenland, on Tuesday.

crippled the state's

said enough officers

correctional system, but

job to declare the illegal

San Francisco, March 11:

Elon Musk said X was hit

on Monday by a major

cyberattack, raising ques-

tions whether the politi-cally divisive billionaire is

being targeted or his deci-

sion to gut staff at what

was once Twitter is haunt-

Reports of problems with *X* started early on Monday, with users in

Asia, Europe, and North

America saying they cou-

ld not access the platform,

ing the social network.

peace," Ukrainian presidency chief of staff Andriy Yermak told reporters.

Kyiv said the "largest drone attack in history' in which hundreds of drones slammed into Moscow and other areas, was intended to push Russian President Vladimir Putin to agree to the aerial and naval ceasefire. "This is an additional signal to Putin that he should also be interested in an air truce," said Andriy Kovalenko, a national security council official responsible for countering disinforma-

Trump doubles tariffs on

Canada metals to 50%

**WESTERN OFFICIALS: PUTIN KNOWS** HIS UKRAINE TERMS WON'T BE MET

Brussels, March 11: Western security officials said Russian President Vladimir Putin has no intention to compromise on demands on land, peacekeepers and Ukraine's neutrality in any peace talks, complicating President Donald Trump's efforts to secure a credible settlement.

Putin has made deliberately "maximalist" demands ahead of negotiations

to end the war, which he knows will likely be unacceptable to Ukrainians and other Europeans. The Russian leader is prepared to continue fighting if he doesn't get his goals, said the officials, who asked not to be named. The assessment of Putin's intent casts doubt if he is serious about negotiating a realistic and lasting peace settlement with Bloomberg

**RUSSIA SAYS** 

SETTLEMENTS

**RETAKEN DOZEN** 

Paris, March 11: French

President Emmanuel Ma-

cron was on Tuesday to

address a meeting of military chiefs from 30 Eur-

opean and Nato countries

willing to contribute to

security guarantees for Ukraine after any negotiated truce with Russia.

Tuesday's meeting will be

held in coordination with

the Nato military com-

Macron has

# **INDIAN STUDENT GOES MISSING** ON VACATION

New York, March 11: A 20-year-old Indian student has gone missing while on vacation in the Dominican Republic and US federal law enforcement agencies are working with authorities in the Caribbean country in the probe into her dis-

Sudiksha Konanki is a citizen of India and a permanent resident of the United States. A student at the University of Pittsburgh, Konanki was vacationing with five female college friends at a resort in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, when she went missing on March 6, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office said in a statement on Monday.

rne Loudoun Count Sheriff's Office (LCSO) said it continues to assist and support the US federal law enforcement agencies working with the Dominican National Police and others to determine Konanki's whereabouts and what may have happened to her.

Konanki was on a spring break trip in Punta Cana and was last seen in the early morning of

March 6. "The ongoing investigation includes wideranging search efforts, along with a review of surveillance video and telephone records. Interviews are also continuing with anyone who may have seen or been with Konanki before she went missing," the LCSO state-



### (BLA), which is fighting for independence and accuses outsiders of profiting from the region's wealth, behind rising violence in southwestern Pakistan. "Over 450 passengers onboard are being held hostage by gunmen," Muhammad Kashif, a senior railway government

Karachi, Quetta, March

11: Armed militants held hundreds of train passen-

gers hostage on Tuesday

in an ongoing 'hijack drama' claimed by the

Baloch Liberation Army

official in Quetta, the capital of the province, said. While, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) claimed that it seized control of the train by derailing it, killed six security personnel and took over 100 passengers, including active duty personnel, into custody.

In a statement, the BLA warned that if the Pakistan military launches an operation, "all hostages will be executed". The group is banned in Pakistan, the UK and the US.

Jaffar Express, with around 500 passengers on board in nine coaches, was on its way from Quetta to Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when it was fired on between Gudalaar and Piru Koneri areas, according to officials.

Official data on casualties was not available, but security sources said that the train driver and severpassengers were

injured in the gunfire. There are reports of intense firing at a Jaffar Express, which was heading from Quetta to Peshawar, between Pehro Kunri and Gadalar, Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind said.

Rescue teams and security forces have reached the scene, and an operation is underway to track down the assailants. Emergency has been declared in the local hos-

# **HINDUS SEEK**

Peshawar, March 11: A Pakistan-based Hindu rights organisation on Tuesday urged the government to ensure footproof security and necessary arrangements for the community members to celebrate Holi and other festivals at the ancient Prahladpuri Temple located in Multan city of Punjab province.

Prahladpuri Temple is dedicated to Hindu deity Narasimha. — PTI

# attack on Baloch train

A worker adjusts an anti-smog dust suppression spra-

# Pak ranks world's 3rd most polluted country

Islamabad, March 11: ment took various steps to Pakistan ranked the third most polluted country in 2024 when it faced unprecedented smog, according to a report on Tuesday.

BLA takes claim after

According to Swiss air technology company IQAir's 2024 World Air Quality Report, Chad topped the rankings for the most polluted country, followed by Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and then India, *Dawn* reported.

Pakistan last year witn-

unprecedented smog levels, especially in Punjab, where the situation was declared a "calamity" and around two million people had to seek treatment for resulting health issues. The govern-

(WHO), the report said.

region, Pakistan was second — behind Bangladesh with Lahore, Multan, Peshawar and Sialkot among the 15 most pollut-

# PAK AMBASSADOR **TO TURKMENISTAN DEPORTED FROM LA**

Islamabad, March 11: The US authorities denied entry to Pakistan's ambassador to Turkmenistan and deported him from Los Angeles, a media report said on Tuesday. Ambassador K.K. Wagan, who holds a valid US visa and all necessary travel documents, was stopped at Los Angeles airport by US immigration authorities, The News quoted diplomatic sour-

ces as saying.
"Ambassador K.K. Wagan was deported from the US. He nad an immigra tion objection which led to his deportation," a senior foreign ministry offi-

to return to his last port of departure, raising concerns about diplomatic protocol and the nature of the decision.

combat pollution, including imposing lockdowns and closing schools. For Pakistan, the avera-

ge concentration of particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) was 73.7 micrograms per cubic metre (ug/m³) — nearly 15 times higher than the safe levels set by the World Health Organisation

Despite the record smog, Pakistan's average pollution remained the same as in 2023, it added. In the Central and South Asia

# PIA WILL BE SOLD

cial said.

The officials forced him

# BY JULY: IMF GETS **PAK's ASSURANCE**

Islamabad, March 11: Pakistan has assured the IMF of selling the Pakistan International Airlines by July after a botched attempt to sell the national flag carrier last year, according to a media report on Tuesday. The PIA has been runn-

ing into losses and as part of reforms urged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government was putting on the block its stake, ranging from 51 to 100 per cent.

No serious buyer made the bid when the effort was made in October last year. The only offer of Pakistani Rs 10 billion by a local real estate developing company was rejected by the government. An IMF team is in Pakistan to review the \$7 billion loan programme approved last

# Nabbed Palestinian's deportation blocked

New York, March 11: A US judge on Monday ordered that Palestinian Columbia student Mahmoud Khalil not be deported for now as part of US President Donald Trump's crackdown on some anti-Israel protesters, and set a court hearing in the case for Wednesday. Trump publicly denoun-

ced Khalil and said more arrests would follow. He has been moved to a federal jail for migrants in Louisiana to await deportation proceedings, according to his lawyers and a US detainee database. Demonstrators on the

the state attorney general and the American Civil Liberties Union have denounced his arrest by US department of homeland security agents as an attack on free speech.
Police and hundreds of

streets of New York City,

protesters briefly clashed in lower Manhattan and at least one person was detained. Khalil, who had held legal permanent resident status and was nabbed on Saturday, has been a prominent figure in Columbia's pro-Palestinian student protest movement that set off demonstrations.

# PARL. ABSENCE OF **CHINA LAWMAKER DUE TO INFECTION** Beijing, March 11: The

third-ranked leader of China's ruling Communist Party was absent on Tuesday from a key parliamentary session he had been due to open, with his stand-in attributing the absence to a respiratory infection.

Zhao Leji, 68, was not among the senior party leaders in the Great Hall of the People, marking the first time in almost two decades that a member of the Politburo Standing Committee was

not at the event.
"Chairman Zhao Leji
requested leave from this afternoon's meeting due to a respiratory infection," said Li Hongzhong, vice chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, as he opened the plenary session.

"I was entrusted ... to preside," he told more than 2,000 delegates gathered in the hall's main auditorium for the parliamentary meetings, set to conclude on Tuesday.

It was a departure from the Communist Party's customary secrecy regarding the health of senior leaders. "It's certainly unusual for China's NPC speaker to miss the single most important occasion of the year, said Wen-Ti Sung, an analyst of Chinese politics at the Atlantic Council's Global China — Reuters

ENVIRONMENTAL | DEGRADATION

Elon Musk, a truly great according to the Downd-

American. — *Bloomberg* etector tracking site.

# **UK government launches probe into accident to find next steps**

# Ships blaze, spill feared after North Sea crash Smoke rises from Collision: Man nabbed

Grimsby, United Kingdom, March 11: Fires were raging on Tuesday after a cargo ship laden with toxic materials slammed into a tanker carrying flammable jet fuel in the North Sea, as questions mounted about how the accident

happened. There were also growing fears that any spill from the collision could harm the local environment and coastline, home to seals. porpoises and some protected waders and water-

BBC images on Tuesday

showed a large hole in the side of the *Stena Immacul*ate tanker as huge plumes of thick, black smoke rose from the stationary ships with smaller boats dousing the vessels with water.

The fires were "still going on" nearly 24 hours after the Portuguese-flagged Solong cargo ship ploughed into the Stena Immaculate tanker, anchored about 10 miles (16 km) off the northeastern port of Hull, nearby Grimsby port chief executive Martyn Boyers told AFP.

One crew member was



also still missing, he said.

The Stena Immaculate

was on a short-term US

military charter with

Military Sealift Comma-

nd, according to a spo-

kesperson for the com-

Withernsea, on Tuesday, after it collided with the Stena Immaculate tanker.

the Solong cargo

ship in the North

coast of

Sea, off England's

mand that operates civilian-crewed ships for the US defence department. Crowley, the US-based operator of the tanker, said the crash had "rupthe ship's tank

"containing A1-jet fuel"

and triggered a fire, with fuel "reported released" The UK government's Marine Accident Investigation Branch has launched a probe into Monday's

police arrested a man on

suspicion of manslaug-

hter as they searched for answers about why a cargo

ship hit a tanker transpor-

ting jet fuel for the US mil-

accident to determine the next steps

London, March 11: British itary off eastern England,

The UK Coast Guard halted search operations late on Monday after rescuing 36 crew members from both ships.

with the collision."

setting both vessels ablaze.

Police said the 59-year-old

was detained "on suspici-

on of gross negligence ma-

nslaughter in connection

# E FINANCIAL

INDICATOR	RS	%
Sensex	74,102.32	-0.02
Nifty 50	22,497.90	0.17
S&P 500*	5,610.01	-0.08
Dollar (₹)	87.21	-0.14
Pound Sterling (₹)	112.81	0.07
Euro (₹)	95.19	0.45
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	85,932▲513	0.60
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	70.27	1.43
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.694	-0.007
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.217	0.004
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

# **IL&FS** launches Roadstar InvIT units on NSE

Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) listed the Roadstar Infra Investment Trust (RIIT) InvIT units on NSE on Tuesday. The listing of RIIT follows the distribution of InvIT at an enterprise valuation of ₹8.592 crore. This is for the first time that six stressed road assets have been listed through the InvIT route reflecting IL&FS Group's ability to effectively use diverse financial instruments for debt resolution.



# Bajaj launches electric 3-wheeler brand GoGo

Bajaj Auto on Tuesday introduced a game changing electric three-wheeler brand called Bajaj GoGo. The first batch of 51 units of Bajaj GoGo rickshaws were delivered and it received 200 bookings in Lucknow. "UP is the country's largest FV market hence Lucknow provides the ideal backdrop for GoGo's launch. ushering the future of urban mobility to the nation's heart," Bajaj Auto said.

# **Hindustan Zinc** inks deal with Serentica

Vedanta group firm Hindustan Zinc Ltd on Tuesday said that it has entered into a pact with Serentica Renewables for supply of up to 530 MW of green electricity. The power delivery agreement (PDA) increases Hindustan Zinc's renewable energy up to 530 MW from previously signed pact of 450 MW, increasing the overall green energy contribution to over 70 per cent of its total power requirement.

# JSL investing ₹700 crore in decarbonisation

Jindal Stainless Ltd (JSL) on Tuesday said it is in the process of investing ₹700 crore in decarbonisation projects to achieve its net-zero goals by 2050. The investments will continue over next five years to set up various environmentfriendly projects, which include renewable energy, green hydrogen, biodiversity conservation, waste management and adoption of carbon capture technologies, JSL said.

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# **Indusind share plummets 27%**

Bank reports discrepancy in forex derivative portfolio, could impact net worth by ₹1,530 cr

slipping to 27.8.

stock entered oversold zone

Industry does not expect

ative derivatives'

deposit mobilisation to be im-

pacted due to IndusInd issue.

Developments at

IndusInd are big

🛬 worry because neg-

disclosure has poten-

tial to unnerve investors

more than a back-dated non-

performing loans disclosure.

FALAKNAAZ SYED

The country's fifth largest private lender IndusInd Bank saw its shares plummet nearly 27 per cent on Tuesday after it reported a massive discrepancy in the forex derivative port-folio which could lead to an adverse impact on its net worth by ₹1,530 crore, inviting downgrades from analysts and shaking investor confidence.

The discrepancy, spanning over five years, is expected to reduce the bank's net worth by 2.35 per cent as of December 2024, according to its

exchange filing.

Further, IndusInd Bank said that it shall take the hit through profit and loss (P&L) which, coupled with accelerated provisions on the micro-finance portfolio, shall push the bank into losses during the January to March quarter (Q4) of the current finan**AUDIT** • Amid huge selling pressure,

• Discrepancy, spanning over 5 yrs, is expect to reduce bank's net worth by 2.35% as of

Dec. 2024. Bank appoints external auditor to confirm actual impact.

cial year. The bank has appointed an external auditor to confirm the actual impact. The RBI, it added, is aware of the issue. The stock of the lender

ended 27.17 per cent lower on the BSE at ₹655.95, after hitting a four year low of ₹649. Amid huge selling pressure, the stock entered the oversold zone with its relative strength index slipping to 27.8 in

the current session. On the NSE, it slipped 27.06 per cent to ₹656.80. The stock has experienced a steep fall over 58 per cent from the peak of ₹1,576.35

on the NSE. Investor wealth shrinked by ₹19,059 crore on BSE as market cap of the bank fell to ₹51,102 crore against ₹70,161 crore in the previous session.

In a interview to a news

THE BANK will report net profit for with its relative strength index current quarter as well as for the full financial year, despite the hit on the bottom line due to discrepancies discovered in derivative portfolio.

-SUMANT KATHPALIA, MD and CEO, IndusInd Bank

channel, Sumant Kathpalia, MD and CEO, Indu-sInd Bank, said that the bank will report net profit for the current quarter as well as for the full financial year, despite the hit on the bottom line due to discrepancies discovered in the derivative portfolio.

Addressing investor concerns, IndusInd International Holdings Ltd (IIHL) chairman Ashok Hinduja

said that no margin calls had been triggered on pledged holdings so far and that the promoter group had strong financial backing to expand its stake in the bank once regulatory approvals were secured.

Bankers do not expect deposit mobilisation to be impacted due to the IndusInd issue. The managing director of a public sector bank said, "It sector bank said, "It appears to be more of inadequacies in risk management of forex exposures rather than reporting issues. So in my view there is nothing for public sector banks to worry about deposits on account

However, according to most analysts, developments at IndusInd are a big worry because a negative derivatives' disclosure has the potential to unnerve back-dated non-perform-

With exception of

Meta, all the Mag 7

stocks are in red for

Nvidia lost 5.1%,

saw \$1 trillion

erode in market

value in 2 months.

• Selloff has been

extreme in specula-

tive corners of the

# Mkts end flat after battling volatility

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD** MUMBAI, MARCH 11

Domestic market overcame negative global cues from sharp meltdown in the US market on recession possibilities led by technology stocks and closed flat after early morning fall by more than half a per cent.

The Sensex recovered from day's low of 73,663 points to close at 74,102.32 down by just 12.85 points while Nifty-50 closed at 22,497 up by 37.60 points after an early morning fall to 22,314.70. Broader markets were mixed with BSE mid-cap index up 0.72 per cent while BSE small-cap index gained 0.70 per cent.

IT stocks faced the heat of US tech stocks sharp fall as BSE IT index fell the most at 0.87 per cent followed by financials with Bankex down by 0.36 per cent mainly triggered by sharp fall in IndusInd Bank while BSE realty

index gained 3.92 per cent. "Markets ended mixed in a choppy trading session with Nifty erasing its losses towards close due to selective buying. Weakness in Asian and US markets indices kept the mood cautious, while strong foreign fund outflows cou-



The Sensex recovered from day's low of 73,663 points to close at 74,102.32 down by just 12.85 points while Nifty-50 closed at 22,497 up by 37.60 points after an early

morning fall to 22,314.70.

pled with volatile currency and global economic unce-rtainty continue to make investors risk averse," said Prashanth Tapse, senior VP -Research, Mehta Equities.

Foreign portfolio investors were net sellers of equities worth ₹2,823 crore while domestic institutions were net buyers of equities worth ₹2,001 crore.

"Market seems to be in a place where the intensity of selling has reduced as a lot of negatives seem to be priced in but there are still known unknowns around the trade policy which is keeping the rebound in check," said Satish Chandra Aluri,

# Musk's Starlink

**MADHUSUDAN SAHOO** NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

Telecom major Bharti Airtel on Tuesday said that it signed a pact with SpeceX to bring Starlink's high-speed Internet to its customers in India.

With this agreement, Airtel and SpaceX have set a stage for further exploring opportunities how both the companies can enhance business offerings in India. However, the deal depends on SpaceX getting regulatory approval from authorities to sell Starlink services in the country.
Under this pact, both

Airtel and SpaceX are also learnt to have explored in offering Starlink equipment in Airtel's retail stores, Starlink services via Airtel to business customers, opportunities to communities, schools and health centres among other facilities across India, even in the

rural belts of the country In a statement, Airtel said this agreement is subject to SpaceX receiving authorisations to sell Starlink's satellite communications-based services in India.

"Working with SpaceX to offer Starlink services to Airtel customers in India is a significant milestone and further demonstrates the company's commitment to next-generation satellite connectivity," said Bharti Airtel managing director and vice chairman Gopal

collaboration enhances our ability to bring world-class high-speed broadband to even tĥe most remote parts of India, ensuring that every individual, business, and community has reliable Internet. Starlink will complement and enhance Airtel's suite of products to ensure reliable and affordable broadband for



• Airtel said this agreement is subject to SpaceX receiving authorisations to sell Starlink's satellite communications-based services in India.

our Indian customers wherever they live and work," Vittal said.

The statement further said that Airtel and SpaceX would also explore how Starlink could help expand and enhance the Airtel network, as well as SpaceX's ability to utilise and benefit from Airtel's ground network infrastructure and other capabilities in India. Airtel aiready Eutelsat OneWeb for satellite Internet.

will help "Starlink Airtel expand its coverage to areas with little or no Internet. Businesses and communities in remote locations will also get more options for high-speed connectivity," it

"We are excited to work with Bharati Airtel and unlock the transformative impact Starlink can bring to the people of India. We are constantly amazed by the incredible and inspiring things that people, businesses and organisations do when they are connected via Starlink,' SpaceX president Gwynne

Shotwell said. The Airtel team has played a pivotal role in India's telecom story, so working with them to complement our direct offering makes sense for our business, Shotwell added.

# Airtel to provide US tech stocks lose \$1 trn in value on recession worries

New York, March 11: US Technology shares suffered their biggest one-day plunge since 2022, as investors ditched longtime market leaders on rising worries the economy is

headed for a recession.

The Nasdaq 100 Index plunged 3.8 per cent with Monday's selling wiping out more than \$1 trillion

Tesla tumbled 15 per cent, widening its loss this year to 45 per cent, while Nvidia lost 5.1 per cent and has erased more than \$1 trillion in market value in two months.

The tech wreckage comes after a weekend that saw US administration officials and President Donald Trump himself suggest that the American economy is set to slow.

The change in language from the campaign trail, when Trump promised tariffs on day one that would pay for tax cuts without disrupting the growth, has sparked a frenzied repricing of risk assets.

your winners embrace the bear case and duck and cover," said Michael Bailey, director of Fulton Breakefield Broenniman.

**VALUE EROSION BASKET OF PROFITLESS TECHNOLOGY** COMPANIES TUMBLE 6.6% AND IS DOWN 23% IN 2025.

Tesla tumbles 15%, widening its loss this year to 45%. It shed nearly \$600 billion off its value so far in 2025.

By virtually any accounting, the winners until recently had been mega-cap tech. Nvidia, Micro-soft, and Apple soared to valuations north of \$3 trillion, Amazon and Alphabet weren't far behind. Even Tesla saw its market worth top \$1 trillion. For weeks, Wall Street

had been cautiously moving from tech to more defensive sectors as onagain, off-again trade policies unnerved investors at same time inflation provea sticky. inat rotation accelerated Monday after unnerving comments on growth over the weekend. The selloff has been even more extreme in the

speculative corners of the

market. A basket of profitless technology companies tumbled 6.6 per cent on Monday and is down 23 per cent this year. The gauge is on pace for the worst quarter since 2022. With the exception of

market.

Meta, all the Mag 7 stocks are in the red for the year, with Nvidia down double digits and Tesla shedding nearly \$600 billion off its value so far in 2025. "All of these stocks were

priced for perfection across the board," said James Abate, chief invest ment officer at Centre Asset Management LLC. "Clearly you have a mar-ket that's in the process of de-risking.

# Diamonds woo China buyers

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, MARCH 11

China has returned to the diamond market for the first time after the pandemic. India hopes that this will help gems and jewellery exports bottom out and see positive growth in FY26.

The Hong Kong International Jewellery Show that ended on March 8 saw active participation by Chinese buyers. Chinese buyers were conspicuously absent in similar shows after pandemic.

"We have seen Chinese buyers along with those from Vietnam Cambodia were active in the show for the first time after the pandemic. China used to control around 22 per cent of global diamond demand and in the past few years it had come

gold demand had picked up. We expect our exports to Hong Kong, through which Chinese buyers reroute Indian diamonds, to improve in the coming months," said Vipul Shah, past chairman of GJEPC. According Sabyasachi

executive director of GJEPC, social media campaigns in China too had contrib-uted to the lull in the diamond market in past few years.

However, De Beers and leading Chinese jeweller Chow Tai Fook have been working to improve the customer perception. Indian exports of dia

monds had dropped from \$9.3 billion in FY19 to \$4.3 billion in FY24. Hong Kong is second largest market for Indian cut and polished diamonds.

coinbase

**COINBASE REGISTERS** 

# India fintech investments top APAC

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, MARCH 11

India was the top economy in the Asia Pacific region to attract investments in fintech in 2024, despite investments in sector edging lower to \$4.1 billion.

Among the large economies of the region, China and India saw decline in investments, but India remained the top destination attracting funds.

Total fintech investment in India slipped from \$4.4 billion to \$4.1 billion, while China saw a drop from \$2.6 billion to just \$687 million between 2023 and 2024. However, the largest deals in the region were recorded in countries other than China and

The \$334 million investment into DMI Finance from Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group was one of the largest deals in India. Niwas Housing Finance, Mintifi and Finova Capital were the other fintech companies that received funding in 2024. In the Asia Pacific

region, Australia saw fin-



investment more than double from \$839 million to \$2.1 billion yearover-year, while investment in Japan held steady at \$662 million.

Total fintech investment in the ASPAC region fell to \$11.4 billion in 2024 — the lowest level seen since 2014. The decline was driv-en by several factors, including geopolitical uncertainties associated with changes to govern-ments globally, the continued focus on efficiency and cost cutting among many corporations, and the continued softness in

While the payments sector remained quite a hot area throughout the region, lending-focused solutions continued to str according to KPMG.

IN INDIA, TO OFFER TRADING PLATFORM China's fintech sector. New Delhi, March 11: Coinbase Global has registered with India's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), allowing the investment

> in the country.
>
> The American firm plans to roll out its retail trading platform in India later this year, with additional inve-stment and product offerings to follow, according to a

cryptocurrency exchange

to offer trading services

This is Coinbase's second attempt to expand into India. In 2022, the company had integrated with India's unified payments interface (UPI) to allow customers to purchase cryptocurrencies

using the network. "India represents one of the most exciting market opportunities in the proud to deepen our investment here in full compliance with local regulations," said John Coinbase's

# M NEY MATTERS

# Handle risks better with term insurance



**ROHIT TATKARE** 

inevitable part of life, and managing it effectively is for long-term crucial financial stability. In a financial context, risk can addressed through three key strategies: risk retention, risk mitigation,

and risk transfer. Risk retention involves accepting certain financial risks and covering potential losses personally. For example, maintaining an emergency fund allows individuals to handle unexpected expenses without external

tance. Risk mitigation focuses on reducing the likelihood or impact of financial risks, such as diversifying investments to minimise market fluctuations or following a disciplined budget to avoid overspending. However, some risks - especially those related to income loss - cannot always be mitigated or retained, making risk transfer an essential tool in financial

planning. One of the most effective ways to transfer financial risk is through term insurance, which provides a financial safety net in the event of an income earner's untimely demise. Consider a scenario where Mr. A is the sole breadwinner for a family

of three — himself, his



wife, and their child. He has long-term financial goals, such as funding his child's education and meeting recurring expenses.

Additionally, he has an ongoing home loan. While his accumulated assets might cover some of these financial commitments. they may not be sufficient to address all his goals and liabilities. In this situation, term insurance plays a crucial role by ensuring that his family financially despite

Without insurance, his dependents might struggle to meet essential expenses such as loan repayments, daily household costs, and future financial goals. The insurance payout serves as a protective buffer, prevent-

It is recommended to have a term insurance cover that is at least 10 to 12 times of your annual income. By incorporating term insurance into financial planning, individuals can safeguard their families against unforeseen hardships. It ensures financial security and allowing individuals to focus on building wealth.

ing financial distress.

(The author is senior financial planner)

# Zydus in talks to buy stake in Amplitude

Mumbai, March 11: Zydus Lifesciences on Tuesday said it has entered into exclusive negotiations to acquire a majority stake France-based Amplitude Surgical for

256.8 million euros. The company has entered into negotiations with PAI Partners, Amplitude Surgical's management, as well as two minority shareholders to acquire 85.6 per cent of the company's share capital, the Ahmedabad-based drug

Amplitude Surgical is a European MedTech leader in high-quality, lower-limb orthopaedic tech-nologies. The company provides numerous valueadded innovations to best the needs

healthcare facilities. This includes the design and development of knee and hip prostheses.

In fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, Amplitude Surgical generated sales of 106 million euros and Ebitda of 27.1 million euros on a consolidated basis.

"We believe this was a natural extension in the field of medical technology. Our commitment to quality excellence, continuous investments in R&D and expertise in manufacturing will guide our foray into highly specialised MedTech products, adding a new dimension to our operations,' Zydus Lifesciences managing director Sharvil

Patel said.



using rupees. But just three days into the launch, Coinbase disabled the service after the entity that runs UPI said it was not aware of any digital-assets exchange

world today, and we're O'Loghlen, regional managing director for APAC in a statement. Bloomberg







# SHORT TAKES

## **MI denied direct** entry to WPL final

Mumbai: Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru ended an otherwise disappointing season on a positive note, denying Mumbai Indians a direct entry into the final of the

Women's Premier League with an 11-run win here on Tuesday. The result helped table toppers Delhi Capitals secure a direct berth in the final of the competition, which will be held here on March 15, while MI will take on Gujarat Giants in the eliminator on March 13 at the same venue. DC have now entered the summit clash for the third consecutive time and would

elude them. Batting first, RCB rode on skip-per Smriti Mandhana's 37-ball 53 and useful contributions from Ellyse Perry (49 off 38 balls), Richa Ghosh (36 off 22) and Georgia Wareham (31 off 10) to post a commanding 199

hope that coveted title doesn't

In reply, MI were stopped at 188 for nine. Both MI and Delhi finished the league engagements with five wins each, but the latter had better net run rate.

Brief scores: Royal Challengers Bengaluru 199/3 (Smriti Mandhana 53, Ellyse Perry 49 not out, Richa Ghosh 36, Georgia Wareham 31 not out) beat Mumbai Indians 188/9 (Nat Sciver-Brunt 69, Sneh Rana 3/26, Kim Garth 2/33).

# Satwik & Chirag, **Sen drop 5 spots**

New Delhi: Star shuttler Lakshya Sen and the celebrated men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty dropped five places each, leaving no Indian men's representation in the world's top 10, according to the latest BWF World Rankings released on Tuesday. Lakshya, a former world number 6, slipped to 15th following a series of sub-par performances this sea-

Meanwhile, Satwik-Chirag, the former world No. 1 men's doubles pair, fell to 12th from seventh last week. For the Asian Games champions, this marks the first time since November 2021 that they are outside the

In women's singles, double Olympic medallist P. V. Sindhu also dropped one place and is now ranked 16th.

The women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand was the only bright spot for India, maintaining a spot in the world's top 10 at

# **Ahead of IPL, NZ** rest T20 regulars

Wellington: New Zealand have rested a majority of their T20 regulars for the home series against Pakistan with the IPL around the corner. The series. comprising five T20Is, begins March 16 while the IPL begins

Michael Bracewell, who was one of the main performers for New Zealand in the Champions Trophy, will lead the side in the absence of Mitchell Santner. Besides Bracewell, six more players in the T20 squad featured in the 50-over Champions Trophy. Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra and white-ball captain Santner were unavailable for selection due to IPL commitments. Kyle Jamieson and Will O'Rourke have been included only for the first three games of the series, as the selectors seek to manage the workload of the pace bowlers returning from the Champions Trophy. — PTI

### Rajnigandha Polo emerge champs

New Delhi: Rajnigandha Achievers edged past Sujan Indian Tigers 6-5 in the final to lift the Radha Mohan Rajinder Mohan (RMRM) Gold Vase Cup at the Jaipur Polo Grounds here on Tuesday. This is the sixth consecutive win for the Rajnigandha at the event. Rajnigandha Achievers showcased an impressive comeback, sealing their victory with two crucial goals in the final chukker. The final clash was nothing short of a nail-biter, with both teams battling neck and neck till the last chukker Shamsheer Ali was instrumental in Rainigandha's success, scoring the opening goal, the equaliser and ultimately, the

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winning goal.

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# MASTER PLAN

# Challenging two-year cycle to start for coach Gambhir

New Delhi, March 11: People who know Gautam Gambhir, describe him as someone "boringly consis-tent", someone who has not even changed his eating pattern in the last 20

An experiment is out of question.

He loves wearing his

denims for casual gatherings and it has not changed for years.

But when it comes to cricket, his brain is always ticking and seeking solutions to various strategic problems.

It has been eight months since Gambhir took charge of the national team after Rahul Dravid ended his stint with the T20 World Cup triumph in

The man from Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar has witnessed some heartbreaking and baffling defeats as well as success. He has seen both ends of the spectrum with high of Champions Trophy and low of six Test losses.

The CT win has come like a breath of fresh air and 'Guru Gambhir' will get a chance to analyse the big picture as Indian cricket is expected to undergo a sea-change in

the next two crucial years. It won't be wrong to say that Gambhir has com-pleted his probation period and will get into a phase where he would ĥave three distinct challenges, starting with the

Test tour of England.
That will be, as usual, right after the T20 spectacle known as IPL with no time for preparation.

His second big challenge will be the 2026 T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka where Suryakumar Yadav's men will be defending their title.

And last but certainly not the least is 2027 ODI World Cup in South Africa, which will be a helluva challenge.

If one Gambhir's segregates coaching across formats, he has already built a fabulous core for the T20 team with Surya at the helm.

Even as Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja walked into the sunset in shortest format, their absence was hardly brand of cricket that India has been playing in T20 is earning them fans globally.

New Delhi, March 11: The

Indian cricketers, led by

Rohit Sharma, have made

a quiet return home fol-

lowing their triumph in

the Champions Trophy in Dubai. After leading India

to their second ICC title in

nine months, skipper Rohit landed back in

Mumbai on Monday night.

have got a week off before they join their respective

IPL teams ahead of the

tournament beginning

"All the players with

families left from Dubai

on Monday. There are

some players who have

stayed back for a couple of

days," a BCCI source said.

With players preferring to rest ahead of the two-month-long IPL, the BCCI

did not plan a felicitation

for the team like it did

when the squad returned

March 22.

The squad members



India head coach Gautam Gambhir (left) interacts with K. L. Rahul during a training session in Dubai on Friday.

least three seam all-rounders in Hardik Pandya, Nitish Kumar

Reddy and Shivam Dube.

Axar along

Surya and

 The Champions Trophy win has come like a breath of fresh air and 'Guru Gambhir' will get a chance to analyse the big picture as Indian cricket is expected to undergo a sea-change in the next two crucial years.

India skipper Rohit Sharma waves at fans on his arrival

in Mumbai on Monday night.

from Barbados following the win in the T20 World

Cup last year. The players

had also met Prime

He has unearthed a gem Yashasvi Jaiswal. in Abhishek Sharma. When Varun

Chakravarthy and Jasprit Bumrah would bowl during a global meet (World T20) those eight overs would be a nightmare for patters. Sanju Samson nas found his mojo although Rishabh Pant will be around and so would be with Hardik are old guards in this team. It is a team which has all its

tweak here and there. But it is the other two formats where Gambhir,

the strategist, the disciplinarian and the man-man-ager would have to merge for results. There is a prolific powerplay wicket-taker in Arshdeep Singh and at

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli have made it clear that they are not retiring from ODIs anytime soon. But during the 2027 World Cup Gambhir won't have the option of using iour specialist spinners totals in range of 240-250.

bases covered and is run-

ning on auto-pilot with a

Quiet return for Indian cricketers

preferring to rest

ahead of the two-

month-long IPL, the

win in the T20 World

and

Harshit Rana landed in

Delhi on Monday night.

Superstar Virat Kohli had

left the team hotel with

wife Anushka Sharma right after the team

returned from the Dubai

International Stadium

Shreyas Iyer, who played a big role in the middle

order, will captain Punjab

Kings and will join the

team on March 16. — PTI

late on Sunday night.

Cup last year.

Gambhir

BCCI did not plan a mal explanation.
"If the PCB mandarins felicitation for the team like it did when the squad returned from Barbados following the

present on stage. The reason is protocol," said the ICC source. "Sumair Ahmed is an employee of the PCB

and not an office-bearer. Also please check when has a tournament director been on stage for presentation?
"We can give an exam-

source said.

# **ONE SHOULD ALWAYS AIM** FOR INDIA CAP, **NOT IPL: PANT**

New Delhi, March 11: India wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant feels the lure of the IPL is under-standable but budding cricketers should always focus on playing for the country as "everything else" follows thereafter. Pant, who was part of India's triumphant Champions Trophy squad but did not get a game, made his interna-tional debut back in

"Since childhood, I had only one dream — to play for India. I never even thought about playing in the IPL. I think today, people are more focused on the IPL. Of course, it's a great platform, but I believe that if your goal is to play for your country, everything else — including the IPL — will eventually fall into place," Pant told JioHotstar.

"If you have that bigger mindset, success will follow I always believed that I would play for India one day, and God has been kind. At 18, I got the opportunity to make my debut, and I am grateful for that,"

said the 27-year-old. Pant is known for flamboyant style of play and some of his trademark shots include a one-handed six with the bat often slipping out of his

# **ICC UNLIKELY TO OFFER ANY EXPLANATION TO PAK BOARD**

Dubai/ Karachi, March 11: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is unlikely to receive any "formal clarification" from the ICC on the perceived snub during the closing ceremony of Champions Trophy in Dubai. The controversy erupted when Sumair Ahmed, who is chief operating officer of the PCB and was the tournament director of the Champions Trophy, was not invited on stage for the final presentation.

However according to ICC sources, the PCB won't be given any for-

look up, even ICC CEO Geoff Allardice wasn't

ple. ICC's new head of operations and commu-Saxena was once Tournament Director for Asia Cup in Dubai. Was he on stage for final presentation," an ICC

### ALL ENGLAND | CHAMPIONSHIPS

# Sen advances, **Prannoy exits**

Birmingham, March 11: Birmingham, March 11:
India's Lakshya Sen
fought his way back to
reach the second round of
the All England
Championships on
Tuesday, while compatriot H. S. Prannoy was elimintended in the comping

inated in the opening round of the men's singles competition here. Lakshya, ranked 15th in the world, came from

behind to defeat Chinese Taipei's world No. 37 Su Li Yang, with a 13-21, 21-17, 21-15 win in the opening round of the Super 1000 event. The 23-year-old from

Almora will face Indonesia's third seed Jonatan Christie next. Lakshya had defeated Christie en route to his fourth place finish at the Paris Olympics last year.

Prannoy, a bronze medallist at the 2023 World Championships and Asian Games, strugand Asian Games, struggled against France's Toma Junior Popov, who is ranked 17th. Prannoy fought for 53 minutes before going down 19-21,

In the mixed doubles, Sathish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Variyath had a tough outing against China's world No. 7 pair of Guo Xin Wa and Chen Fang Hui, losLakshya, ranked 15th in the world, came from behind to defeat Chinese Taipei's world No. 37 Su Li Yang, with a 13-21, 21-17, 21-15 win in the opening round of the Super 1000 event.

ing 6-21, 15-21 in 51 min-

After losing the first game, Lakshya and Yang battled fiercely till 17-17 in the second game, with the Indian taking advantage of three errors from Yang at the net to register four straight points and roar back into the contest.

In the decider, Lakshya led 11-9 at the interval, and though Yang drew level at 15-15, Lakshya finished strong, winning the last six points with a body blow, two powerful returns, and a few more mistakes from Yang.

Earlier in the day, the 32-year-old Prannoy, ranked 29th, had his chances in the opening game, leading 6-1 and 15-12, but faltered in the face of the relentless pressure of Popov, who turned the game around from 16-18 to 19-18 before taking the

# **AFTER 15 MONTHS, MINISTRY REVOKES WFI SUSPENSION**

New Delhi, March 11: The Sports Ministry has revoked the suspension imposed on the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), ending the months of uncertainty surrounding the sport and paving the way for resumption

of activities, including selection trials for the upcoming Asian Championship in Amman.

The ministry had suspended the WFI on December 24, 2023 for lapses in governance and procedural integrity by the new body, which was elected on December 21. It had asked IOA to form an ad-hoc panel to run the affairs of the Federation.

The Sanjay Singh-led body had announced the conduct of Under-15 and Under-20 National Championships in Nandini Nagar, Gonda — the stronghold of former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh — and the choice of venue irked the government since the former BJP MP was facing charges of sexual harassment.

The ministry, in its order issued on Monday, said that the WFI has taken compliant measures, so in larger interest of the sport and athletes, the ministry has decided to lift the suspension.

# PREMIER LEAGUE



Newcastle United's Bruno Guimaraes (left) celebrates after scoring against West Ham during the English

# **NEWCASTLE SINK WEST HAM** TO REIGNITE TOP FOUR BID

March London, Newcastle reignited their bid to qualify for the Champions League as Bruno Guimaraes sealed a controversial 1-0 win at West Ham on Monday. Brazil midfielder

Guimaraes struck in the second half as West Ham's claims for a foul in build-up ignored.

Eddie Howe's side are up to sixth place in the Premier League, level on points with fifth-placed Manchester City and two points behind fourth-

placed Chelsea. A top four berth will guarantee Newcastle return to the Champions League after missing out this season.

Even finishing fifth qualification for Europe's elite club competition depending on the results

11: of the remaining English clubs action.

After losing three of their last four matches, the Magpies' restorative victory was perfectly timed ahead of their second League Cup final appearance in three sea-

Newcastle, beaten by Manchester United in the League Cup showpiece in 2023, face Premier League leaders Liverpool in the final at Wembley on Sunday.
The Tyneside club are

aiming to win their first major trophy since the 1969 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup and their first domestic prize since the 1955 FA Cup.
"One of our best wins of

could be enough to ensure the season, not in terms of performance but desire and heart," Howe said.

# **PCB SLASHES DOMESTIC TOURNEYS MATCH FEES**

Karachi, March 11: In a stunning development, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has resorted to costcutting measures including slashing the match fees of players in domestic cricket, raising questions about the financial health of the sport's apex body in the country. The PCB has reduced the match fees of cricketers participating in the upcoming National T20 Championship from 100,000 rupees per match to 10,000 per match with reserve players getting 5000 per match. The tournament begins on March 14

The reduction in match fees has caused concern among players and the board is also considering spending less on development of domestic cricket. According to sources, the head of domestic cricket in the PCB, Abdullah Khurrum Niazi, has been "reducing facilities" for domestic players in the last few months. "The players who were first being offered accommodation at five-star and four-star hotels are now being offered cheaper accommodation. Air travel has also been reduced for them besides fees," a source said.

# Pak cricket in ICU because of incorrect decisions: Afridi

March Former captain Shahid Afridi has questioned the of all-rounder Khan to the Shadab national T20 squad, saying Pakistan cricket is in ICU because of incorrect decisions

Minister Narendra Modi

following their return

from Barbados in July.

Out of favour since the last T20 World Cup, Shadab was recalled and also appointed vice captain to Salman Ali Agha in Pakistan's T20 squad

for the away series against New Zealand. "On what basis has he been recalled. What are performances domestic cricket or other-

wise that he had been picked again," Shahid said during a media interaction.

The flamboyant allrounder said unless decisions are taken on merit nothing will change in Pakistan cricket. "All the time we talk

about preparations and when an event comes and we flop then we talk about surgery. Fact is Pakistan cricket is in ICU because of incorrect decisions, he said.

He noted that whenever a new Chairman takes charge he comes and changes everything.

decisions and policies. We keep changing captains, coaches or some players but in the end what is the accountability for Board officials," the former skipper questioned.

"There is no continuity

consistency in the Board's

He said it was sad to see coaches blaming players to save their jobs and the management players and coaches to save their seats. "How can our cricket

progress when there is a sword hanging constantly over the captain and coaches' heads, Afridi added.