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## Ahead of talks with Modi, Vietnam PM calls for deeper economic ties with India

(Agency) Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh Wednesday called for stronger economic cooperation between Vietnam and India, setting an ambitious target of \$20 billion in bilateral trade.

Speaking at the Vietnam-India Business Forum, organised by FICCI and the Embassy of Vietnam, he outlined Vietnam's economic achievements and invited Indian businesses to invest in strategic sectors such as infrastructure, digital technology, and pharmaceuticals.

PM Chinh emphasised the longstanding friendship between Vietnam and India, dating back to 2,000 years. He highlighted upgrading bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership, which, he said, has "opened up a new space for cooperation

across the board." The visiting leader emphasised Vietnam's foreign policy of independence,

Vietnam, particularly in semiconductors, science and technology, innovation, digital transformation,

health and life of our people."

PM Chinh also called for Indian businesses to facilitate Vietnamese companies' integration into their supply chains and urged Indian businesses to consider Vietnam to be a strategic destination.

The Vietnamese PM arrived here on Tuesday night on a three-day state visit to India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On Thursday, he will receive a ceremonial welcome at the Forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan after which he will visit Raj Ghat to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. He will hold bilateral discussions with PM Modi who will also host a luncheon in his honour. PM Chinh is scheduled to call on President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar.



ence, self-reliance, and multilateralism, stating that the country aims to be "a good friend and reliable partner of all countries around the world, and a responsible member of the international community".

He invited Indian businesses to invest liberally in

green hydrogen, pharmaceuticals, renewables, and biotechnology sectors.

He noted that Vietnam currently sources 33% of its pharmaceuticals from India and expressed interest in establishing "a proper pharmaceutical ecosystem in Vietnam to help protect the

## Liquor Policy Case: Big Update On Delhi Deputy CM Sisodia, BRS's K Kavitha's Bail Plea

(Agency) Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, and BRS leader K. Kavitha had their judicial custody extended on Wednesday in the excise policy case. The accused appeared via video conferencing from Tihar Jail as their previous custody period ended.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of Rouse Avenue Court extended their judicial custody until August 9 for the CBI case and until August 13 for the money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The Delhi High Court reserved its decision on a

CBI. Earlier that day, the CBI presented its charge



bail plea filed by CM Kejriwal on Monday. This plea is related to the corruption case initiated by the

sheet against Kejriwal and other accused before a special court.

K Kavitha, BRS Leader

Detained In Tihar Jail, Hospitalised At Delhi's DDU Hospital K Kavitha, BRS Leader Detained In Tihar Jail, Hospitalised At Delhi's DDU Hospital

The ED had already named the AAP and its national convener Arvind Kejriwal in its prosecution complaint regarding the money laundering case.

Supreme Court's Interim Bail Order

On July 12, the Supreme Court granted interim bail to CM Kejriwal in connection with the ED case. Despite this, he remained in jail due to his arrest by the CBI.

## Modi govt persisting with its divisive policy: Sonia Gandhi

(Agency) In a fresh attack on the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre, Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) Chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday accused the ruling dispensation of persisting with the policy of dividing communities and spreading an atmosphere of fear and animosity.

Speaking at the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting here, Gandhi said, "We would have hoped that the Modi Government would draw the right lessons from their significant decline in the Lok Sabha elections. Instead, they are persisting with their policy of dividing communities and spreading an atmosphere of fear and animosity."

"Look at how the rules have been suddenly changed to permit the bureaucracy to participate

in the activities of the RSS. It calls itself a cultural

comes to addressing urgent economic and social



organization but the whole world knows that it is the BJP's political and ideological base," she said.

Referring to the Union Budget recently presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Gandhi alleged that the farmers and the youth were totally ignored. "Over the last few days, many of you have very effectively brought out the Budget's many inadequacies when it

challenges. Pressing demands of farmers and youth in particular, have been totally ignored. Allocations in a number of vital sectors have not done justice to the tasks required to be fulfilled," she said.

Claiming that there has been widespread disappointment, the CPP chairperson said, "In spite of the prime minister, the finance minister and others to talk up the Budget and its so-

called accomplishments. The Union government, especially its top leadership, continues to be self-delusional as crores of families across the country are devastated by mounting unemployment and price rise."

Taking a jibe at the government on the long overdue census, she said, "It is clear that the government has no intention whatsoever to conduct the Census that was last due in 2021." She said this would prevent us from having an up-to-date estimate of the population of the country, especially of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

She said this (delay in the conduct of the census) also means that at least 12 crore of our citizens are denied the benefits of the National Food Security Act of 2013 - now "repackaged" as PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana.

## BSP supremo Mayawati demands caste census

(Agency) Demanding caste census in the country, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati has charged that BJP and Congress were not serious over caste census and were only doing theatrics.

In a couple of tweets on Wednesday on social media X, Mayawati wrote: "The ongoing confrontation between Congress and BJP in Parliament yesterday, especially regarding the caste and caste census, is an attempt to deceive the OBC community and doing theatrics. Because the history of both the parties regarding their reservation,

both openly and behind the scenes, has been strongly

efforts of BSP, the National Caste Census is a special



anti-OBC thus it is not right to trust them at all."

She further wrote: "Like the OBC reservation implemented here due to the

national issue of public interest. The Center needs to be serious about this. Crores of poor, backward and Bahujans also have a

right in the development of the country. In fulfilling which caste census has an important role".

BSP supremo Mayawati was reacting to the heated debate between Congress and BJP MP Anurag Thakur over the caste census in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

Through this post, Mayawati has once again demanded a caste census from the Central Government. On Tuesday, Anurag Thakur had asked Rahul Gandhi about his caste in Parliament. After this, SP President Akhilesh Yadav also came forward and took on Thakur head on in the House.

## Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel Interacts with Women of Sakhimandal --- Self-Help Groups at 'Sakhi Samvad' Event

Gujarat Aims to Empower 7.50 Lakh Women as Lakhpati Didi Under Prime Minister's 'Lakhpati Didi' Initiative: Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel

Celebration of Self-Help Group Women's Success at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel - Chief Minister Urges Sakhi Mandals to Maintain High Product Quality for Greater Public Trust

- Government Aims to Support Full Production-to-Marketing Chain for Self-Help Group Products - ₹350 Crore in Benefits Distributed to 28,000 Self-Help Group Women

Gandhinagar, : Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel addressed women from Sakhi Mandal (Self-Help Groups) at the 'Sakhi Samvad' program held at Gandhinagar's Mahatma Mandir. He emphasized the importance of maintaining high-quality standards of the products to build public trust, noting that the best products will enhance Sakhi Mandal's reputation and drive sales through positive word-of-mouth. At

the event, organized by the Village Development Department and Gujarat Livelihood Promotion Company, the Chief Minister distributed ₹350 crore in benefits to over three lakh rural women

national development through the four pillars of 'GYAN'— Garib (Poor), Yuva (Youth), Annadata (Farmers), and Nari (Women). He noted that this year's budget allocates ₹3 lakh crore for women-

that rural self-help groups will be pivotal in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Rural Development Minister Shri Raghavji Patel welcomed everyone and reaffirmed the government's dedication to gathering women from disadvantaged rural families, providing them with skill training, and securing their livelihoods. The Rural Development Minister assured that the state government has positively addressed the needs and concerns raised by self-help group women during their interaction with the Chief Minister and remains committed to their support. He highlighted that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation for women's empowerment in Gujarat. Under Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel's leadership, the State Government is advancing this vision by providing infrastructure, bank credit, and support to self-help groups, thereby creating self-employment opportunities for women in rural areas. The Rural Minister noted that approximately 3 lakh self-help groups have been established in Gujarat, benefiting



from 28,000 self-help groups. The CM interacted with 17 Sakhi Mandal representatives from various districts, including Dang Ahwa, Banaskantha-Vadu, Panchmahal, and Porbandar, to hear about their success stories. Chief Minister assured that the government will address both minor and major challenges in product marketing and work towards creating a comprehensive chain from production to marketing for Sakhi Mandal products.

focused schemes. The Chief Minister emphasized the importance of empowering rural women with 'Drone Didi' initiatives, which provide drone pilot training to foster self-reliance. Reiterating the Prime Minister's goal, the Chief Minister noted the aim to create 3 crore Lakhpati Didis nationwide to support women, with Gujarat targeting 7.50 lakh Lakhpati Didis. Additionally, the state government has introduced policies to boost product purchases from women entrepreneurs on the GEM (Government e-Marketplace) portal. The Chief Minister conveyed

## Nitin Gadkari Requests Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman To Cut Down GST On Life, Medical Insurance

(Agency) Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to remove the GST on life and medical insurance premiums. This request follows a memorandum from the Nagpur Divisional Life Insurance Corporation Employees Union. The union argues that the 18% GST on these premiums is unfair and burdensome, especially for those seeking protection against life's uncertainties.

"The main issue raised by the Union is related to withdrawal of GST on Life and Medical Insurance Premium. Both life insurance and medical insurance premiums attract a GST rate of 18 per cent. Levying GST on life insurance premium amounts to levying tax on the uncertainties of life," Gadkari wrote in his letter.

Nitin Gadkari Requests Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman To Cut Down GST On Life Medical Insurance

Concerns Over High Tax Rates

The union also highlighted other concerns,

that taxing life insurance premiums essentially taxes individuals for protecting their families against life's



such as differential treatment of savings through life insurance, reintroducing IT deductions for health insurance premiums, and consolidating public sector general insurance companies. These points were included in Gadkari's letter to Sitharaman.

risks. He noted that the 18% GST on medical insurance premiums hinders the growth of this essential sector.

Nirmala Sitharaman Fires Back At Opposition: '26 States Not Named In 2009 Budget Either!'

Opposition Criticism and Government Response

This appeal comes amid criticism of Budget 2024 from various quarters. The Opposition has accused the government of favouring states ruled by its allies, TDP and JDU. Social media users have also pointed out high tax rates for salaried individuals.

The Finance Minister has dismissed these accu-

sations, stating that funds have been allocated to all states. She clarified that not mentioning a state in the Budget speech does not mean it is excluded from funding.

Long-Term Goals Highlighted

The BJP has defended the Budget, saying it aims for a 'Viksit Bharat' or developed India by 2047. They argue that policy priorities reflect long-term goals rather than immediate gains.

Gadkari's letter underscores the need to reconsider GST on insurance premiums, especially for senior citizens who find it cumbersome under current rules. He requested Sitharaman to prioritize this issue along with other relevant points raised by the union.

The union believes that removing GST on these premiums would support social welfare and encourage more people to opt for life and medical insurance coverage.

## Congress Rebuts Anurag Thakur on Gandhi Family Caste, Advocates for Caste Census

(Agency) The Congress party criticised the BJP-RSS on Tuesday, asserting that the Gandhi family's caste is martyrdom, a concept the ruling party will never grasp. This statement came after BJP MP Anurag Thakur's apparent questioning of Rahul Gandhi's caste.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge emphasised the party's commitment to conducting a caste census despite any casteist abuse. "Yes, I am an Indian and a Dalit, but I don't know how many we are. Today, we all need to assess how much our participation is in the progress of this country," he stated.

Kharge accused the BJP-RSS of conspiring to keep marginalised communities backward by hiding their numbers and snatching reservation rights. He said in

He stressed that a caste census is essential for social, economic, and political empowerment of marginalised people. "So that we can take advantage of equal



a Hindi post on X, "The BJP-RSS believe in Manusmriti, but not even an iota on Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution." He further alleged that they aim to continue 5,000 years of social exploitation.

opportunity and share," Kharge added. He accused the Modi government of depriving them of this right. "Ginti Karo get a counting done is our resolution. The Indian National Congress is ready to listen

to any casteist abuse, but we are determined to carry out the caste census!" Kharge declared.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's Criticism

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also criticised Thakur's remarks about Rahul Gandhi's caste in the Lok Sabha. She highlighted that a socio-economic caste census is demanded by 80 per cent of India's population. "Today, it was said in Parliament that those whose caste is not known talk about a caste census," she posted in Hindi on X.

"Will 80 per cent of India's population be abused in Parliament now?" she questioned. She urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to clarify if this happened under his direction.



## Editorial

### RUPEE RECORD LOW

The Indian rupee's slide to a record low against the US dollar underscores the complex interplay of domestic and global economic factors that influence currency valuation.

This development is a stark reminder of the challenges faced by emerging markets in navigating an increasingly volatile financial landscape. At the heart of the rupee's decline is the month-end corporate dollar demand, a regular phenomenon that puts pressure on the currency as companies settle their international transactions.

However, this time, the usual cyclical demand is compounded by several external factors, making the situation more precarious. One significant contributor to the rupee's weakness is the outflow from local equities. Investors are withdrawing funds from the Indian stock market, likely seeking more lucrative opportunities elsewhere. This capital flight can be attributed to a combination of global economic uncertainties and specific concerns about the Indian market's performance and prospects. Moreover, the volatility in the Chinese yuan adds another layer of complexity. As the world's second-largest economy, China's economic health and currency stability have far-reaching implications.

When the yuan fluctuates, it reverberates through other emerging market currencies, including the rupee, creating additional pressure. Another factor is the broader trend of tepid risk appetite among investors. In times of economic uncertainty, investors tend to gravitate towards safer assets, such as the US dollar, which is considered a global safe haven. This shift increases demand for the dollar, thereby exacerbating the pressure on the rupee. Despite these challenges, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been actively intervening to manage the rupee's depreciation.

By selling dollars through state-run banks, the RBI has managed to cap the losses and prevent a steeper decline. This intervention, however, appears to be passive, suggesting that the central bank is allowing a controlled depreciation rather than attempting to significantly bolster the rupee. The RBI's strategy seems to be aimed at maintaining a balance. A gradual depreciation can help in making Indian exports more competitive, potentially boosting economic growth. At the same time, it avoids the shocks that a sudden and sharp decline could cause to the economy. This careful calibration is crucial for maintaining economic stability and investor confidence. The jump in dollar-rupee forward premiums, with the 1-year implied yield at its highest level since February, indicates market expectations of further currency volatility.

This is partly influenced by the decline in US bond yields, as investors react to signals of moderating inflationary pressures in the US. The Federal Reserve's upcoming policy decisions will be closely watched, as they will provide further cues on the future trajectory of global interest rates and their impact on the rupee. The underlying economic factors driving the rupee's depreciation must be addressed through broader economic and policy measures. Only a comprehensive strategy that includes strengthening the domestic economy and managing external vulnerabilities can ensure long-term stability for the rupee.

## Maritime Security

(Agency)

The South China Sea has long been a contentious region, but recent developments underscore an escalating threat that demands global attention and coordinated action.

The recent expressions of concern from the Quad nations - Australia, India, Japan, and the United States - highlight the severity of the situation. These nations have collectively decried the intimidating and dangerous manoeuvres occurring in the South China Sea, emphasising the urgent need for enhanced maritime security.

The South China Sea is not merely a regional issue; it is a global flashpoint with far-reaching implications. This body of water is a critical artery for international trade, with an estimated one-third of global shipping passing through. Any disruption here can have profound economic repercussions worldwide. The militarisation of disputed features and the use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels to intimidate other nations signal a blatant disregard for international norms and threaten the stability of this vital maritime

route. India's role in the Quad and its stance on the



South China Sea issue is particularly significant. As a nation with a substantial coastline and a vested interest in maintaining the freedom of navigation and the unimpeded flow of commerce, India's participation in these discussions reflects its broader strategic goals.

By aligning with like-minded democracies, India is not only safeguarding its own maritime interests but also contributing to a collective security framework that aims to preserve the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. The recent actions by China, including repeated clashes with Philippine ships and

(Agency)

The Union Budget 2024 has placed stress on employment and job creation. But how far are these proposals practicable? The Economic Survey admits that the employment situation is serious.

To meet the backlog of employment and ensure development, employment generation of 80 lakh per annum is necessary up to 2030. Before going into further detail, let us see the budget proposals on job creation. The Government has unveiled spending of Rs 2-lakh crore (\$24 billion) for job creation and skilling for 4.1 crore youth in the next five years. The Budget has made provision of Rs 1.48 lakh crore for education, employment and skilling in the current year. The objective is noble as far as it goes.

Critics are apprehensive about the road map and possibilities of attainment of the goals, as there will be many "externalities" on which the Government has no control, as job creation in the present scenario largely depends upon market forces. This proposed \$24-billion spend is associated with the Prime Minister's package of five schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for the young population. These include three employment-linked, incentives-based schemes. The three schemes will be based on enrolment in the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), and

focus on recognition of first-time employees, as well as support to employees and employers, according to the Finance Minister.

The three schemes are as follows: a) Scheme for First Timers: The scheme would provide one-month's wage to all persons newly entering the workforce in all formal sectors. The direct benefit transfer of a month's salary in three instalments to first-time employees, as registered in the EPFO, will be up to ₹15,000. The eligibility limit will be a salary of ₹1 lakh per month. The scheme is expected to benefit 210 lakh youth. b) Scheme of Job Creation in manufacturing sector: This is to incentivise additional employment in the manufacturing sector, linked to the employment of first-time employees. An incentive will be provided at a specified scale directly both to the employee and the employer with respect to their EPFO contributions in the first four years of employment.

The scheme is expected to benefit 30 lakh youth entering employment, and their employers. c) Scheme of support to employers: This is an employer-focused scheme. It covers additional employment in all sectors. All additional employment within a salary of ₹1 lakh per month will be counted. The government will reimburse employers up to ₹3,000 per month for two years towards the EPFO contribution for each additional employee. The scheme is expected to

incentivise additional employment of 50 lakh people. The success of these schemes will depend upon many factors. The roadmap must be revealed in detail without any ambiguity or



confusion. Moreover, the schemes are related with EPFO enrolment.

In many enterprises, Provident Fund accounts are not opened for employees if their number is below 19. Thus, in the MSME sector many enterprises do not offer EPFO coverage. In a growing economy, EPFO accounts should increase over time. But the scenario is highly unstable, characterised by enrolment decline. Preliminary data says there was a 5 per cent drop in new subscribers to EPFO, down to 736,015, and a 10.5 per cent decline in the Employees' State Insurance Corporation, down to 1.16 million, in November 2023 when compared to the previous month.

The November 2023 figures show the sixth consecutive month of decline. The FM also announced a new centrally sponsored scheme on skilling, as the fourth scheme under the PM's package for skilling in

collaboration with state governments and Industry. About 20 lakh youth will be skilled over a five-year period. As many as 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes will be upgraded in hub-and-

spoke arrangements with outcome orientation. Course content and design will be aligned to the skill needs of industry, and new courses will be introduced for emerging needs, Sitharaman added.

She also announced that the Model Skill Loan Scheme will be revised to facilitate loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh, with a guarantee from a government promoted fund. This measure is expected to help 25,000 students annually. Experience tells us that skill development schemes have not been successful in the past in terms of employment generation. Not even per cent of trainees could be absorbed after training from the National Skill Development Corporation. To help youth who are not eligible for any benefit under government schemes and policies, the FM has announced financial support for loans up to Rs 10 lakh for higher education in domestic institu-

tions. "E-vouchers for this purpose will be given directly to 1 lakh students every year for annual interest subvention of 3 per cent of the loan amount," she added. The Finance Minister also introduced a new internship programme, enabling companies to employ interns at Rs 5,000 per month for a year. This would be funded through corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds and the initiative aims to skill 10 million youth over five years. The above schemes may sound big but implementation will be difficult as job creation will depend upon market forces as the government depends a lot on the private sector for fulfilment of their objectives.

The private sector does not respond to stark realities of socio economic necessities, but operates with optimum employment aimed at profit maximisation. The apprenticeship scheme is practical as it will up-skill trainees and new entrants to the job market. But after training, will there be recruitment of a huge number of trained people? Many nationalised banks are recruiting apprentices with a salary of Rs 15,000 per month for one year. Their future is uncertain, like the Agniveers of the Indian army. If the market forces do not create enough jobs for recruitment of newly trained apprentices, the scheme will be a fiasco like many other experiments in the past.

More stress needs to be

given for promotion of manufacturing and service industries since the agriculture sector suffers from an excess labour syndrome. We need non-farm sectors to grow to absorb new entrants in the job market. Last but not the least, the government must fill up vacancies in their own establishments to promote employment. The employment scenario is critical. According to CMIE, unemployment rose sharply to 9.3 per cent in June 2024 from 7 per cent in May. While the Labour Participation Rate (LPR) rose to 41.4 per cent in June from 40.8 per cent in May, and up from 39.9 per cent in June 2023, the rural unemployment rate rose to 9.3 per cent in June from 6.3 per cent in May. The urban unemployment rate climbed from 8.6 to 8.9 per cent.

LPR is made up of people working or willing to work and actively looking for a job among the total working-age population (15 years and above). We require a concrete action plan for the generation of more employment. Government should form a committee consisting of experts and industrialists to formulate a long-term strategy for employment generation. Indirectly incentivising the EPFO recipients or apprenticeship will not bring any big change. We will create skill and capacity but will there be enough recruiters?

## The heroes behind those who guard us

Over the last two months, South Kashmir has been hit by militancy; our frontline warriors from the army are engaged in fighting insurgents.

Young officers and jawans have laid down their lives. Last year on 22

November, 29-year-old Capt. Pranjal fell to the bullets of the enemy during a midnight operation to flush out terrorists who were hiding in a hut in the dense thicket of the Rajouri sector of Kashmir. Sensing danger to the lives of civilians,

especially women and children, Capt.

going to see his ten-month-old daughter for the first



Pranjal came out of his cover to pin down the terrorists, got caught in the volley of fire and laid down his life. A few days before that fateful day, a boulder had hit him during action; unmindful of the injuries he suffered, Capt. Pranjal headed back into action to protect his land. The foundations of such grit and commitment, the zeal to serve the nation comes from the family of these brave souls who sign up to die for the nation - "that I will observe and obey all commands... of any superior officer set over me, even to the peril of my life". A young person marrying into the forces is aware that for the spouse it is the nation that comes first, and that he/she will lay down their life without a wink.

A few decades ago, during a train journey from Delhi, our co-passenger was an army officer who was returning home after a posting in Siachen. He was

time. My thoughts immediately went to his wife; enduring pregnancy and childbirth in the absence of her loved one. The birth of a child is a milestone in one's life and the absence of the husband at such a momentous occasion is unfathomable. Most often, armed forces' spouses handle life alone; pregnancy, childbirth, sleepless nights nurturing the infant, important occasions in children's lives, first words, first steps, first days at school, birthdays, anniversaries, et al.

I am baffled when people complain about even small things in life. How oblivious people are to the conditions and sacrifices of the armed forces personnel who facilitate their comfort, safety and freedom. Most people assume that life in the armed forces is an endless stream of swish parties, liquor, bungalows and canteen facilities. The families of defence personnel are made of equally strong grit as those serving in uniform. The spouse shoulders responsibilities as a single parent. Dealing with their own insecurities and managing the children's, is a daily affair. For those whose spouses are posted at the borders or on critical missions, the torment of an unwanted phone call haunts them. Yet, they neither spread the fear nor let it get the better of them.

It is amazing to see the pride in the children of

Defence personnel. For them, there is no greater hero than the one at home. Often, they are oblivious to the dangers that loom in the line of duty, not knowing if their hero would return wrapped in the Tricolour. I remember during the Kargil War, my young kids asked their dad if he would be fighting in the war. He didn't say, "no, I'm in the Navy, and right now, it's the Army that is fighting". Nor did he say, "I've finished my sea postings, so I don't have to go". "I will go immediately if I'm called", was his reply, ready to be at the service of the nation. The kids were too young to understand the gravity of the situation, but for them it was a matter of great pride if their father would be fighting in the war.

This is the case with all uniformed personnel of the Armed Forces and their families. Such readiness to be available to the nation comes first, everything else is secondary. Recently I asked a young soldier on duty in Kashmir, if he ever thinks of his family while heading into an operation. His reply melted me. He said, "I can only see my country (mera desh) and nothing else comes before me, I'm infused with courage and energy." It is common in the armed forces, that by the time you unpack your belongings and set up the house, your next transfer order will be in hand. Nearly every three years, new postings are routine. In one year, we saw three transfers; we had to follow the ship as she moved ports.

Despite the displacement children experience - new school, new friends, new environment - there is a unique stability one can see in them. Their capability to adapt to situations and places is astounding. After the screening of my documentary film on the INA veterans, a middle aged lady raved about how patriotic her son was and how he loved the army. When I suggested to her that he should then join the army, she came her reply "I've only one son, how can I let

him go". Maj. Akshay Girish who laid down his life during the terrorist attack at Nagrota in 2016, was the only son to Meghana and Wg.Cdr. Girish.

Despite knowing the risks and travails of serving in the army, his parents let him serve the nation. Seventeen members of Akshay's family are from the armed forces. At the wreath-laying ceremony of Akshay at Bangalore, his 80-year-old grandfather, Lt. Col. Murthy said "this boy has achieved what we could not - martyrdom". Twenty-two-year-old Vijayant Thapar laid down his life during an operation that captured the strategic post 'Knoll' in the Drass sector during the Kargil war. He knew death was lurking around the corner and even wrote a note to his parents. He was the fourth generation army officer in the family. Yes, there are people waiting to die for the nation to die protecting her borders and her people. Families of Defence personnel are the backbone of our men and women in uniform. They don't crave recognition, sympathy is the last thing they need.

My son, a student in the US, during a conversation mentioned to someone there that his father served in the Indian Navy. They immediately asked him to thank him for his service. When my son pointed out that he was in the Indian, not the US Navy, their reply was, "why should that matter. He served his country with honour, and is deserving of respect". Contrast this with the way our men in uniform are being drawn into public discussion. I cannot forget what a politician once said on a television show "army is answerable to the people". Yet another drew flak for saying those who have no food to eat join the army. Another celebrity said they signed up to die and that's nothing great. Unshaken by these aberrations, the families stand by their sons and daughters and spouses to serve the nation first.

## Preserving Heritage

India, a land of cultural consciousness, great traditions, and rich heritage, is home to 43 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Among these, 34 are natural, seven are cultural, and one, Kanchenjunga National Park, is of mixed type.

This impressive number places India sixth in the world for the number of heritage sites recog-

nized globally by UNESCO. Despite numerous invasions aimed at destruction and loot, India has managed to preserve many monuments and much of its cultural ethos. These heritage sites are living symbols of India's contribution to human civilization, playing a crucial role in tourism, education, and local economies. As India hosts the 46th World

Heritage Session for the first time, global attention is focused on the conservation of heritage.

It is a matter of pride that despite being a high-ranking country in terms of heritage sites, India is hosting this session now, thanks to its visionary leadership that prioritises heritage alongside development. This event underscores the importance of

preserving and promoting India's identity and heritage on the world stage. For these efforts to be sustainable, it is imperative to instil a sense of responsibility and awareness about heritage conservation in the young generation, starting from the school level and extending through university education.

Heritage sites in India,

ranging from the prehistoric caves of Bhimbetka to the iconic Taj Mahal and from Ajanta and Ellora to the natural splendour of the Sundarbans, encapsulate the essence of the country's rich cultural and natural history. These sites attract millions of tourists every year, contributing significantly to the economy.



### WESTERN RAILWAY TO RUN SPECIAL TRAIN BETWEEN UDHNA AND BHAVNAGAR TERMINUS

Mumbai, 31st July, 2024 For the convenience of passengers and with a view to clear extra passenger traffic, Western Railway has decided to run Special Train on Special Fare between Udhna and Bhavnagar Terminus.

Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, the details of the special train is as under: 09021/09022 Udhna - Bhavnagar Terminus (Weekly) Special (08 Trips) Train no. 09021 Udhna - Bhavnagar Terminus Special will depart from Udhna every Monday at

22.05 hrs and will reach Bhavnagar Terminus at 08.45 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 05th August to 26th August, 2024.

Similarly, Train no. 09022 Bhavnagar Terminus - Udhna Special will depart from Bhavnagar Terminus every Tuesday at 19.00 hrs and will reach Udhna at

07.10 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 06th August to 27th August, 2024.

Enroute this train will halt at Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Nadiyad, Ahmedabad, Gandhigram, Sarkhej, Dholka, Dhandhuka, Botad, Dhola, Songadh, Sihor and Bhavnagar Para station in both directions.

This train comprises of AC Chair Car, Sleeper Class & General Second Class coaches.

The booking for Train No. 09021 & 09022 will open from 02.08.2024 at all PRS Counters and on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

### WR EXTENDS TRIPS OF TWO PAIRS OF SPECIAL TRAINS

Mumbai, For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand, Western Railway has extended the trips of two pairs of Special Trains on Special Fare.

According to a press release issued by Shri Vineet Abhishek - Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, details of these trains are as under:

1. Train No. 09622

Bandra Terminus - Ajmer Weekly Special has been extended up to 26th August, 2024. Similarly, Train No. 09621 Ajmer - Bandra Terminus Weekly Special has been extended up to 25th August, 2024.

2. Train No. 04712 Bandra Terminus - Bikaner Weekly Special has been extended up to 29th August, 2024. Similarly, Train No. 04711 Bikaner - Bandra

Terminus Weekly Special has been extended up to 28th August, 2024.

The booking for the extended trips of Train Nos. 09622 & 04712 will open from 01st August, 2024 at all PRS Counters and on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

### WESTERN RAILWAY'S JAGJIVAN RAM HOSPITAL CONDUCTS CPR WORKSHOP FOR RPF PERSONNEL

Mumbai, Incidences of heart attack or cardiac arrest are increasing day by day and unexpectedly it is now becoming a grave concern for the youth, which is an alarming situation for our country. In such a situation, learning and creating awareness about Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) has become a must for all, especially for the frontline staff. Proper administration of CPR can save lives before medical assistance is available. Going ahead in this direction, recently Western Railway's Jagjivan Ram Hospital organized a workshop on performing CPR for RPF personnel, who are one of the frontline staff of Indian Railways.

According to a press release by Shri Vineet Abhishek - Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, around 100 RPF personnel and 25 other staff participated in the workshop. The aim of the programme was to edu-



Glimpses of the Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) workshop for RPF personnel organized by WR's Jagjivan Ram Hospital.

cate the staff about the proper technique of advanced CPR, use of AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and the new advancements in this noble procedure. Dr. Shishir Kumar Roul, Head of Department & Additional Chief Health Director-Cardiology at JRH delivered a lecture on Chest Pain to Heart attack and

cardiorespiratory arrest, in which he emphasized on the various symptoms of heart attack as well as its complications if it is ignored or not detected on time. He also explained the major preventive steps to avert heart attacks and emphasized on periodic health check-ups of the staff. A team from Revive Heart Foundation from Holy

Family Hospital led by Ms. Sumaiya Raghavan presented important information regarding this subject through a presentation and live demonstration of CPR. Dr. Avinash Arka, Senior Divisional Medical Officer, Cardiology in his own unique way created awareness among people through his poem.

All the participating RPF staff were asked to perform the CPR on different emergency situations and all steps were performed as per guidelines, which were monitored under the supervision of well trained and certified CPR trainers of JRH. The workshop was planned under the guidance of Dr. Mamta Sharma, Medical Director of JRH.

Shri Vineet further stated that conducting such workshops for frontline staff will become beneficial and create awareness about heart diseases and the proper way to administer CPR and its life saving ability.

### Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 Director Steps Down Following Criticism

(Agency) The director of the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 vision for a complete overhaul of the federal government has stepped down, a spokesperson for the think tank confirmed Tuesday. The Heritage Foundation President Kevin Roberts stated that the group is adhering to its original timeline. Paul Dans' departure follows the project's completion of its goal: uniting over 110 leading conservative organisations to create a unified conservative vision aimed at devolving power from the unelected administrative state and returning it to the people.

However, former President Donald Trump has increasingly disavowed and criticised Project 2025, leading to speculation that his campaign influenced Dans' exit. "President Trump's campaign has been very clear for over a year that Project 2025 had nothing to do with the campaign, did not speak for the campaign, and should not be associated with the campaign or the President in any way," Trump campaign advisers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita said in a statement.

Trump Campaign's Stance on Project 2025 Reports of Project 2025's demise would be greatly welcomed and should serve as notice to anyone or any group trying to misrepresent their influence with President Trump and his campaign — it will

not end well for you," added Wiles and LaCivita.

controversy surrounding it. The think tank remains



Despite this, many Trump allies and former top aides contributed to the project, which proposes mass firing of government employees and sweeping changes to American life.

Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign and top Democrats have repeatedly linked Trump to Project 2025 as they argue against a second Trump term. The project has been a focal point in their criticism, highlighting its potential impact on American governance.

Heritage Foundation's Vision The Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 was built as a tool for any future administration to use. According to Roberts, it successfully brought together numerous conservative organisations to form a cohesive vision aimed at reducing the power of the administrative state.

The project's completion marks a significant milestone for the Heritage Foundation, despite the

decentralising federal authority. Paul Dans' exit from Project 2025 comes at a time when political dynamics are increasingly complex. The Heritage Foundation continues to push forward with its agenda, undeterred by external criticisms or political pressures.

The departure of Dans signifies a pivotal moment for Project 2025, yet it also underscores the ongoing efforts by conservative groups to reshape federal governance. The Heritage Foundation remains committed to its mission of empowering citizens by

committed to its mission of empowering citizens by

### Hamas Leader Killed! Here's About Ismail Haniyeh's Upcoming Funeral In Tehran

(Agency) A national day of mourning for the death of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh has been announced by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Palestinian flags will be flown at half-mast for the day, as the Palestinian official news agency Wafa reported.

Three days of mourning for Haniyeh have been declared by Iran, according to state media reports. A funeral for Haniyeh will be held in Tehran on Thursday at 8 am local time. After which his body will be transferred to Qatar's capital, Doha, for prayers and burial.

Russia To Qatar: Global Reactions After Assassination Of Hamas

Leader Ismail Haniyeh In Tehran Russia To Qatar: Global Reactions After



Assassination Of Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh In Tehran

The ceremony will take place in the national mosque of Qatar, the largest in the country. Haniyeh will be buried in Lusail, north of Doha, in the

### South Africa's Mandela Legacy Sites Earn UNESCO World Heritage Status

(Agency) President Cyril Ramaphosa has expressed his approval of the inclusion of several iconic South African sites associated with the late President Nelson Mandela as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These sites, collectively named 'The Human Rights, Liberation and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites,' were recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The announcement was made during the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in New Delhi, which concludes on Wednesday. The sites include 14 locations linked to Mandela, who spent 27 years as a political prisoner

before becoming South Africa's first democratically elected President after the

gratitude to UNESCO for honouring the country's history and rich legacy.



end of apartheid. "Collectively, this serial property demonstrates the events and ideas that served as the core of South Africa's liberation struggle, which continues to inspire humanity embracing reconciliation, a quarter century later," stated Ramaphosa's office on Monday. The statement also expressed

The 14 components of these sites embody strong memories and beliefs in the triumph of human rights, liberation, and reconciliation. Among these are the Union Buildings in Pretoria, where Mandela first took office, and Constitution Hill in Johannesburg, which houses South Africa's highest judicial office and was

once a notorious prison where both Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi were held. Global Recognition and Additional Sites

The Union Buildings now join other global landmarks such as the Kremlin, Kasubi Tombs, Taj Mahal, and The Vatican on the World Heritage List. Additionally, three Middle Stone Age sites were also inscribed by UNESCO in recognition of South Africa's significant contribution to understanding modern human behaviour origins.

The inclusion of these two serial properties brings South Africa's total number of World Heritage Sites to 12. The Presidency has called on all South Africans, government spheres, management authorities.

### Boeing Jet Panel Loss Sparks Washington Hearing Investigation

(Agency) A preliminary report to seal holes left for Alaska Airlines plane was initially installed at a Spirit AeroSystems facility in Wichita, Kansas. However, it was removed at Boeing's plant so workers could repair damaged rivets.

These plugs are only meant to be opened for maintenance and inspections. The NTSB intends to use information from the upcoming hearing to finalise its investigation and make safety recommendations.

The hearing will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday. It aims to gather comprehensive details about the blowout incident and ensure such occurrences do not happen in the future.



from the NTSB revealed that four bolts, crucial for securing the part to the jetliner, were missing when the plane left a Boeing factory near Seattle. This was before its delivery to Alaska Airlines.

Installation and Maintenance Details The door plug on the

### North Carolina Governor Backs Harris, Points to Robust VP Choices

(Agency) North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, who recently confirmed he would not be running as Vice President Kamala Harris's running mate, expressed his enthusiasm for the Democratic Party's options for her. Speaking at a public event in Brunswick County with US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan, Cooper reiterated that it was not the right time for him or the state to be on a national ticket.

Cooper, who is barred by term limits from seeking reelection this year, had been considered among a dozen potential contenders for Harris's vice-presidential pick. He has been actively supporting President Joe

Biden's reelection campaign and now extends his

is the right person for this country."



support to Harris. "I am going to work every day to see that she is elected," Cooper told WECT-TV. "I believe that she will win, and I look forward to this campaign because she has the right message and she

Concerns Over State Leadership Cooper revealed that one of his concerns about joining the national ticket was the potential actions of Republican Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson if he left the state

to campaign. The state constitution stipulates that "during the absence of the Governor from the State ... the Lieutenant Governor shall be Acting Governor." Robinson is currently running for governor this fall.

"We had concerns that he would try to seize the limelight because there would be a lot, if I were the vice presidential candidate, on him, and that would be a real distraction to the presidential campaign," Cooper said. He cited an instance when Robinson held a news conference during his absence to announce a "NC Solidarity with Israel Week" proclamation after an attack inside Israel.

Environmental Funding Celebration

At Tuesday's event at Green Swamp Preserve, Cooper and Regan celebrated a USD 421 million grant aimed at reducing climate pollution across North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. The funds will be used to preserve, enhance, or restore coastal habitats, forests, and farmland, according to Cooper's office.

Cooper had withdrawn from consideration for Harris's running mate well before her vetting process began. This information was confirmed by two individuals familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the search process.

Cooper remains committed to supporting Harris's campaign and believes in her ability to lead. His decision not to run was influenced by both state concerns and his belief in Harris's suitability for the role.



# Permission granted for 7 new medical colleges in UP; classes to begin this session

(Agency) In a significant accomplishment for the Yogi Adityanath government, the National Medical Commission (NMC) has approved the launch of MBBS programmes in seven new medical colleges in Uttar Pradesh for the 2024-25 academic session.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had discussed with Union Health Minister JP Nadda the recognition of 13 new medical colleges in the state. Following these discussions, the National Medical Commission has issued Letters of Permission for seven government medical colleges for the 2024-25 academic session.

Earlier, the NMC had denied permission to these 7 medical colleges to run MBBS courses in the current

academic session for not fulfilling the norms. At the same time, the remaining 6 medical colleges will appeal to the NMC again, and if all goes as planned, they are likely to receive their Letters of Permission soon.

In addition, approval has been granted to increase the number of seats in various medical colleges across the state, including those operated under government, private, and PPP models.

Following this, the Department of Medical Education has begun preparations for counselling to accommodate 10,500 MBBS seats for the current academic session.

Director General of Medical Education (DGME) Kinjal Singh said here on Wednesday that, "For the government medical colleges in Agra and Meerut have had their seat counts increased by 72 and 50, respectively, bringing the total to 200 seats at Agra Medical College and 150 seats at Meerut Medical College."

According to DGME Kinjal Singh, the PPP-mode medical colleges in Shamli, Maharajganj, and Sambhal have also received Letters of Permission for 150, 150, and 50 MBBS seats respectively, for the 2024-25 session. "Similarly, a new medical college in Gorakhpur, a private institution, has been granted LOP for 50 MBBS seats for this academic session. GS Medical College in Hapur has also been allowed to increase its MBBS seats by 100, bringing the total to 250 seats."



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# Mathura police administration alert on 15th August, Janmashtami and Hariyaleetij, DM-SSP held meeting

Mathura. Mathura police administration has started preparations for Shri Krishna Janmashtami and Hariyali Teej. Today, a seminar was organized by District Magistrate Shailendra Kumar and Senior Superintendent of Police Shailesh Kumar Pandey in the District Collectorate Auditorium with the police/administrative officers regarding the upcoming festivals like Independence Day, Shri Krishna Janmashtami and Hariyali Teej etc. and necessary guidelines were given to all concerned.

SSP Shailesh Kumar Pandey said that on August 26, on the occasion of Shri Krishna Janmashtami festival, devotees from all over the world come to Mathura for darshan. Along with Mathura, we also visit

places like Govardhan, Vrindavan, Barsana, Gokul etc. Police arrangements are being made regarding this. In this regard, the need for police force in devotees coming for Hariyali Teej. Warning of heavy rain for three days in the district, alert issued Mathura. The possibility of heavy rain, thunder and lightning in Mathura along with other districts between July 31 and August 2. In view of this, the district administration has issued an alert. District Magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh has alerted the people of the district regarding the safety of life and property and has appealed to take necessary preventive measures and gather necessary resources so that any untoward incident and possible loss of life can be avoided. Farmers have also been appealed to protect themselves from this heavy rain, thunder and lightning and make arrangements to keep their crops/crop produce at a safe place. He said that many incidents of lightning are taking place in the state



SSP Shailesh Kumar giving information

# Delhi IAS Students Death Case: Survivor Narrates Reality Of The D-Day

(Agency) He survived the Saturday tragedy at the coaching centre in Delhi but 21-year-old Rishabh Pal says he will forever feel guilty for not being able to save his fellow students including Tanya Soni who had spurred him not to give up hope when he feared that their end was near. Rishabh, a resident of Ghaziabad, was among the 25-30 students who were trapped in the basement of the building on the July 27 evening, where Tanya, Shreya Yadav and Nevin Dalvin died due to flooding following rain.

"We were in the library when the water started entering the building. About 10 to 12 students, who were near the gate, managed to rush out but about

10-15 of us got trapped due to the heavy flow of the water on the stairs," said there was no need to panic and we would be saved. She also said: 'Let's form a human chain'. We tried forming the chain but due to the flow of water we could not hold on," he said. Delhi Rajendra Nagar IAS Aspirants Death: Were Students Locked In Flooded Basement Due To Biometric? FactCheck

"The water kept gushing in, Tanya and Shreya stood on a table. I somehow mustered courage and started climbing the stairs. Halfway along the stairs, a house-keeping staff extended his hand towards me and pulled me up," Rishabh said. "Behind me, my friend Jaideep and a few others came out. Then, the staff members of our institute brought a rope to pull the others who were stuck in the water," he said. Rishabh said Tanya and Shreya might not have moved towards the stairs as they may have been scared of the intensity of the water gushing inside. "I don't know about Nevin as I did not notice him in the library.



Rishabh, a civil services aspirant from batch M33 at Rau's IAS Study Circle that started in June. Delhi IAS Students Death Case Survivor Narrates Reality Of The D-Day

# INDIA Bloc Moves Motion Against PM Narendra Modi For Backing Anurag Thakur's 'Caste' Remark

(Agency) Congress MP Charanjit Singh Channi has filed a Privilege Motion notice in Lok Sabha against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This action follows Modi's tweet praising BJP MP Anurag Thakur's speech, which included remarks that were later expunged from the House records. Channi claims that by promoting these remarks, the PM showed contempt for the House.

Prime Minister Modi had lauded Thakur's speech on X, calling it a "must hear." He described it as a perfect blend of facts and humour, exposing what he termed as the dirty politics of the INDI Alliance. Thakur's speech was a political counter to Rahul Gandhi's address in the Lok Sabha.

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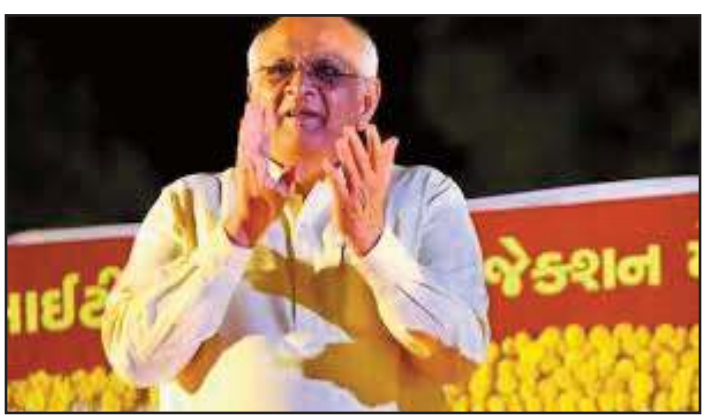
# Gujarat Government Supports Underprivileged Daughters As "Parallel Parent" under Vhali Dikri Yojana

Over 2.37 lakh Girls Enrolled in the scheme in the last five years "Vhali Dikri Yojana" empowers NaariShakti by checking female foeticide and educating daughters Daughters born after August 2019 will receive financial aid for Education, Marriage As of March 2024, Gujarat Government allocates ₹494.14 crore under the scheme Financial Aid Starting from Rs 4000 & up to Rs. 1 lakh will be provided to beneficiary daughters taking admission in class 1, class 9 and at the time of attaining 18 years of age

Gandhinagar, 31 July, 2024: Under the guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the leadership of Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel,

Gujarat is consistently promoting girls' education and well-being. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat, initiated the "Kanya Kelavani Rath Yatra" program which continues till date with active government support and empowers the women of Gujarat. Building on the success of the Kanya Kelavani Rath Yatra program, the Gujarat government launched "Vhali Dikri Yojana" in 2019 to support daughters from the underprivileged families.

Through "Vhali Dikri Yojana", Gujarat government acts as a "parallel parent" for daughters from the underprivileged families. The unique initiative provides financial assistance to daughters to facilitate their education, marriage



Shri Bhupendra Patel, the Minister for Women and Child Welfare, stated, "Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi champions 'Women Led Development'. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, we are dedicated to the cause of women empowerment through the Vhali Dikri Yojana. The initiative has been launched to propel the educational, economic, and social empowerment of girls, with over 2 lakh already enrolled. These girls will receive financial support for their education and marriage."

# Xiaomi India Raises the Bar with Redmi Pad Pro and Redmi Pad SE 4G: A New Era of Entertainment & Productivity Tablets

LUCKNOW, 31 JULY 2024: Xiaomi, a global leader in technology and innovation, is thrilled to build on the success of its tablet category by introducing two new models to the Redmi Pad Series - Redmi Pad Pro 5G and Redmi Pad SE 4G. Adding to the excitement, Xiaomi has also revealed the launch of the limited Panda Edition for its most recent Xiaomi 14 CIVI in three attractive pop colors: Panda White, Hot Pink and Aqua Blue. The #PandaDesign edition of Xiaomi 14 CIVI brings the perfect mix of chic and playful. With its sleek Black Mirror Glass and Luxe Vegan Leather, it's more than just a smartphone—it's a lifestyle upgrade. Introducing our first cellular tablet Redmi Pad SE for young professionals and

students at INR 9,999/- only ensures seamless integration with Xiaomi smartphones. It is available in Redmi Pad Pro 5G

Accessories include the Redmi Smart Pen and Redmi Keyboard, each priced at INR 3,999, and the Redmi Pad Pro Cover at INR 1,499.

Redmi Pad SE 4G: The Redmi Pad SE 4G provides immersive viewing and efficient multitasking, delivering exceptional value and performance with practicality. It features a compact 8.7-inch 90Hz display and dual speakers with Dolby Atmos, complemented by a 6650mAh battery, MediaTek Helio G85 processor, and 4GB RAM for efficient performance. With TÜV Rheinland Low Blue Light and Flicker-Free certifications for eye comfort, it is available in Forest Green, Urban Grey, and Ocean Blue. The Redmi Pad SE Cover adds protection and improves viewing



Designed for the modern user, the Redmi Pad Pro 5G combines advanced features with seamless 5G connectivity, pushing boundaries and empowering creativity and productivity. Tailored for creative professionals and entertainment enthusiasts, it features a 12.1-inch 2.5K XL display with a 120Hz refresh rate, quad speakers with Dolby Vision Atmos, and a 10000mAh battery for up to 16 hours of video playback. Xiaomi HyperOS Graphite Grey, Quick Silver, and Mist Blue, with optional accessories like the Redmi Smart Keyboard and Smart Pen to enhance productivity. The Redmi Pad Pro will be available starting at INR 19,999, with an INR 2000 discount for ICICI and HDFC Credit Cards and EMIs. The Redmi Pad Pro 5G is priced at INR 22,999 for the 8GB + 128GB variant and INR 24,999 for the 8GB + 256GB variant, inclusive of the same discount.

# Recent Israeli Strikes On Hamas And Hezbollah Impacts Oil Prices And Geopolitical Tensions

(Agency) Geopolitical risk has sharply escalated in the oil markets following Israeli airstrikes that resulted in the deaths of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and senior Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukur. This development has caused a significant spike in oil prices, with West Texas Intermediate (WTI) surpassing \$77 and Brent crude approaching \$81.

Recent Israeli Strikes On Hamas And Hezbollah Impacts Oil Prices And Geopolitical Tensions Photo Credit: Unsplash Airstrikes Target Key Figures

On Tuesday, Israeli forces carried out two major strikes. The first airstrike targeted Fuad Shukur in Beirut, who Israel accused of orchestrating a

rocket attack on the Golan Heights that resulted in the deaths of 12 civilians, mostly children, as reported by Reuters. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant described Hezbollah's actions as crossing a "red line," prompting retaliation with three rockets launched into the Haret Hreik neighborhood in Beirut. Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati condemned the attack as "blatant Israeli aggression," while Iran's Foreign Ministry criticized it as "a blatant violation of the attack. This event has dramatically heightened regional tensions and is expected to hinder ongoing Gaza ceasefire negotiations, with Iran, Qatar, Jordan, and Lebanon all condemning Israel's actions.

Strikes On Hamas Impact Oil Price Surge - Here's Why

The immediate aftermath of the strikes saw a notable increase in oil prices, reversing a month-long decline that had seen WTI and Brent crude hit seven-week lows despite previous regional conflicts. The dual strikes on Beirut and Tehran represent a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict, threatening to plunge the region into a more extensive war, as reported by a local media outlet.



Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity." The second strike, which has had a more profound impact on global oil markets, occurred hours later in Tehran. Ismail Haniyeh, who was in Iran for the swearing-in of President Masoud Pezeshkian, was killed in

# AAP demands Central relief package for Kerala in the wake of landslides in Wayanad

(Agency) The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), on Wednesday, demanded that the Centre should allocate an appropriate relief package to Kerala in the wake of the massive landslides in the Wayanad district of the state that claimed more than 100 lives.

Raising concern over the situation arising from the devastating landslides in Wayanad in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, AAP MP Raghav Chadha said, "I stand before you (the Chairman) with a heavy heart to mourn the tragic loss of lives due to the catastrophic landslides in Wayanad. Yesterday, nature unleashed its fury and in an instance several families were torn apart."

"I, on behalf of my party (AAP), offer our deepest

condolences to the people of Wayanad. Your pain is immeasurable and your loss is shared by every citizen of this nation. As we grapple you through this darkest hour." "It is imperative that we respond to this disaster with the urgency and the com-

passion it demands. I call the attention of the Minister (Home) to allocate an appropriate relief package to the state of Kerala," he added.

Chadha said this package should not only provide immediate financial assis-



with the enormity of this tragedy, we stand in unwavering solidarity with the affected families," he said. The AAP parliamentarian further said, "Let me assure you that you are not alone in their grief. We are with you and we will support

tance to the affected families but also support the long term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. "We must ensure that the survivors must have access to safe housing, medical care and psychological support to help them rebuild their lives," he added.

He also gave suggestions to strengthen the early warning system, improve infrastructure resilience, conduct community training, enhance inter-agency coordination and comprehensive rehabilitation. "I certainly feel this is not the time for political differences or regional biases. This is a moment for coming together as one nation to protect and support our citizens," added Chadha.