



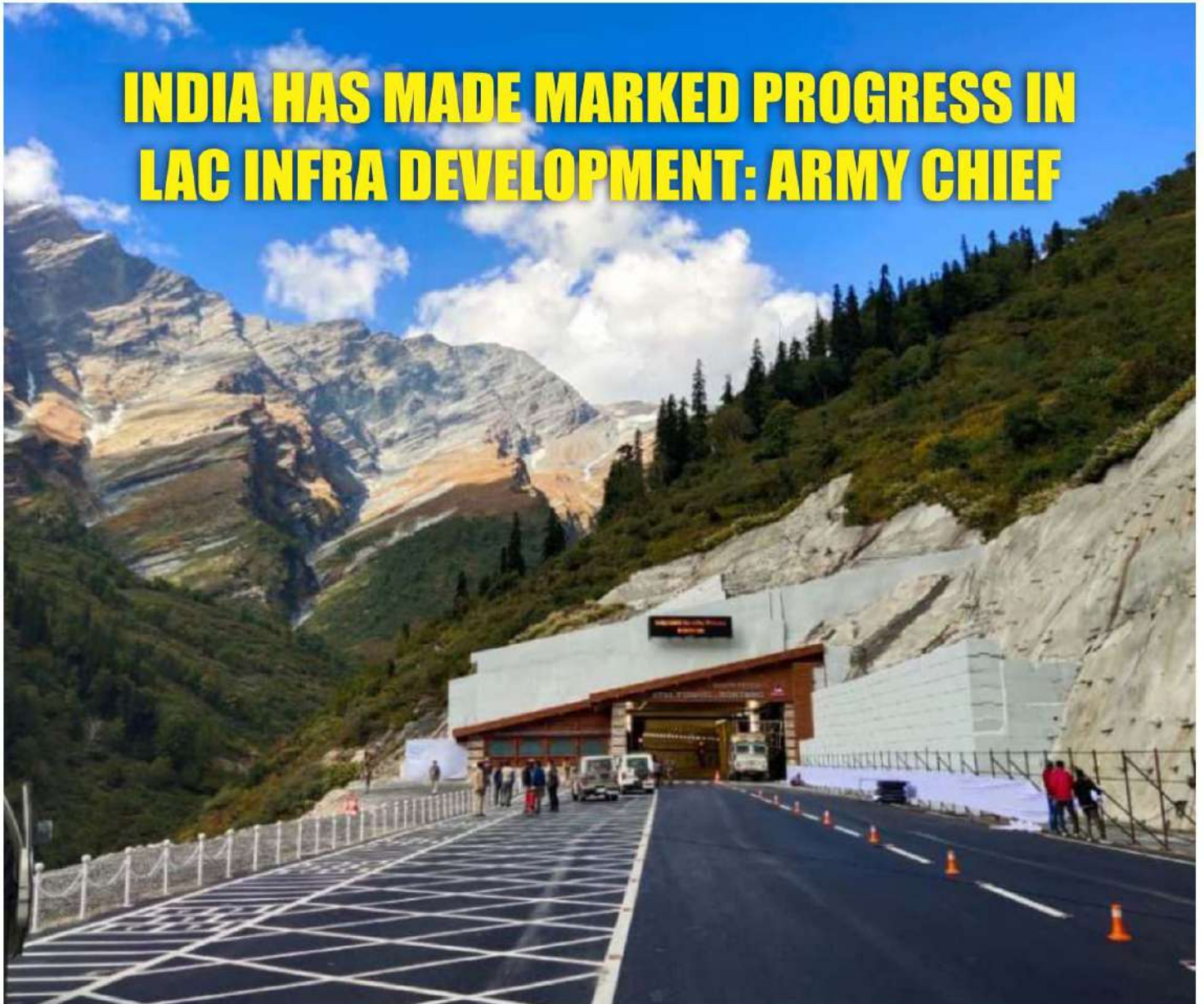
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NEWS MANIA

WEEKLY

Different Voice of Analysis

INDIA HAS MADE MARKED PROGRESS IN LAC INFRA DEVELOPMENT: ARMY CHIEF



Index

Page 10 - Google Meet gains new in-meeting reactions and 360-degree backgrounds

Page 5 - People living in villages along the disputed border can participate in the Meghalaya elections

Page 13 - LIC Aadhaar Shila: Invest Rs 58, earn Rs 9 lakh; features, eligibility of policy

Page 11- The H-1B Cap Lottery's Worst Year In History Is Anticipated To Be 2023





INDIA HAS MADE MARKED PROGRESS IN LAC INFRA DEVELOPMENT: ARMY CHIEF

What is the News?

Recently, the Indian Army chief General has said that there has been a "marked improvement" in India's infrastructure development along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

What are the infrastructure developments along border areas?

-In the past five years, the Border Roads Organisation has constructed close to 6,000 km of roads; of this, 2,100 km has been along the northern borders.

-The frontier road, which runs a total of 1,800 km, will connect various valleys in Arunachal Pradesh. The plan has been re-energised and funding has been assigned. Some work on it is already underway.

-The aspect of all-weather connectivity in both Ladakh and Kameng in Arunachal is already started.

-Further, Atal tunnel has been inaugurated and Shinku la tunnel along the Nemu-Padam-Daricha road is in the final stages of approval.

-The Zojila tunnel and the Z-Morh tunnel, which will link the valley to Ladakh and will be operationalised by the end of the year. The Sela tunnel is likely to get operational by the middle of the year.

While there are reports of infrastructure build-up on the Chinese side, what does not come to the fore is what infrastructure has been developed on our side. Army chief Gen Manoj Pande said on Thursday, stating that there has been "marked improvement" and there are plans not only for all-weather connectivity but also alternative connectivity.

Termining the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China as "stable but unpredictable", the Army chief said that in terms of numbers, there has been a slight increase in the number of Chinese troops opposite the Army's Eastern command, which he said came for training and have remained. He said five of the seven flashpoints have been resolved with the ongoing talks at various levels.

Elaborating on infrastructure development, Gen. Pande said purely in terms of border roads, in the past five years, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed close to 6,000 km of roads pan-India; of this, 2,100 km has been along the northern borders. As for the upgradation of bridges, which are needed to carry guns, tanks among others, as much as 7,450 metres of bridges were constructed, he stated.

"The frontier road, which is a total of 1,800 km, will connect various valleys in Arunachal Pradesh. The plan has been re-energised and funding has been assigned. Some work on it is already underway," the Army chief said.

There is the aspect of all-weather connectivity in both Ladakh and Kameng in Arunachal, he further stated. In Ladakh, there is the Zojila tunnel and the Z-



Morh tunnel, which will link the valley to Ladakh and will be operationalised by the end of the year. "We will have all weather connectivity from that side."

For connectivity to Leh from the other side, Atal tunnel is well known. However, there is also the Shinku la tunnel along Nemu-Padam-Daricha road, which again is in the final stages of approval, Gen. Pande noted. "Once this happens, there will be all weather connectivity from both sides to Ladakh."

Speaking about Arunachal, he said there is also better all-weather connectivity to Towang or Kameng sector. Sela tunnel is likely to get operational by middle of the year and one bridge further South at Nechipu near Bomdila.

"In addition, there is also plan for an alternate connectivity to the all important Darbuk-Skyak-Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) road through Saser la... So there are plans not only for all-weather connectivity but also alternate connectivity," Gen. Pande stressed.

On strategic railway lines being planned, Gen. Pande said that two are planned in the North East and one in Ladakh and the "final survey has been completed and the source of funding is currently under discussion."

"In the context of habitats, especially Eastern Ladakh, we have close to 55,000 troops for whom habitat has been completed," he shared. There has also been covered heated accommodation for 400-odd guns and 500 A-vehicles such as tanks and infantry vehicles, he added.

"Overall, ₹1,300 crore has been spent in the last three years focussing on infrastructure and habitat in Ladakh," he said, adding that there are aspects of locally made Sheela shelters, looking at more green solutions like fuel cells to meet energy requirements and so on.

Speaking of the Army's inventory in terms of vintage and state-of-the-art equipment, the Army Chief said it is presently 45% vintage, 41% current and 12-

15 state-of-art equipment. As per the Army's modernisation plans that are underway, he said it should reach a ratio of close to 35% current and 44% state-of-art equipment.

On the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan, Gen. Pande said the ceasefire understanding reached in February 2021 is "holding well" while cross-border support to terrorism and terror infrastructure continues to remain.

Giving an overview of the transformation of the Army that is underway, Gen Pande said it is being undertaken across five key domains -- restructuring and optimisation, modernisation and technology infusion, Human Resource management like Agnipath scheme, Jointness and integration, and refining and improving systems and processes.

He also shared that the Army is looking to induct women officers into the Regiment of Artillery and the proposal has been sent to the government, which would mark women in combat arms.

Atal tunnel, inaugurated in October 2020, was designed for 3,000 passenger cars per day but almost 7,500 vehicles are crossing it every day, as reported by The Hindu earlier. On the DS-DBO road, 35 bridges on it are currently being upgraded to Class-70 specifications, which will allow them to handle heavy tanks and artillery. The upgradation is expected to be completed in 1-2 years.

Looking for alternatives

The Army has carried out an assessment on the reliance on some of the Soviet and Russian-origin equipment in its inventory in the backdrop of the continuing war in Ukraine and is trying to identify alternative sources for spares and ammunition that has been impacted, the Army chief said.

In terms of supplies from these countries, he said, "Yes, there has been an impact. We have put out a plan to overcome this and as we move forward, we will be able to overcome this challenge successfully."

The sustenance of these weapon systems and equipment, in terms of spares and ammunition, is one issue that we have addressed, the Army chief said, stating, "We got a waiver and sanction to procure, even if it is ex-imports, for the next two to three years. We have 40 such cases, including spares and ammunition, largely pertaining to air defence and tank fleet. We are looking at how the sustenance requirement is met."

He said they are also looking to find alternative sources of supply of these spares and noted that it is a good opportunity for the Indian industry to step up and see in which areas they can meet the Army's requirements.

Further, Gen. Pande said the Army has carried out a detailed analysis of various lessons that it threw for India -- on weapon systems, tactics and operational procedures -- and they will be applied and incorporated in the Indian context

By Dinakar Peri, New Delhi

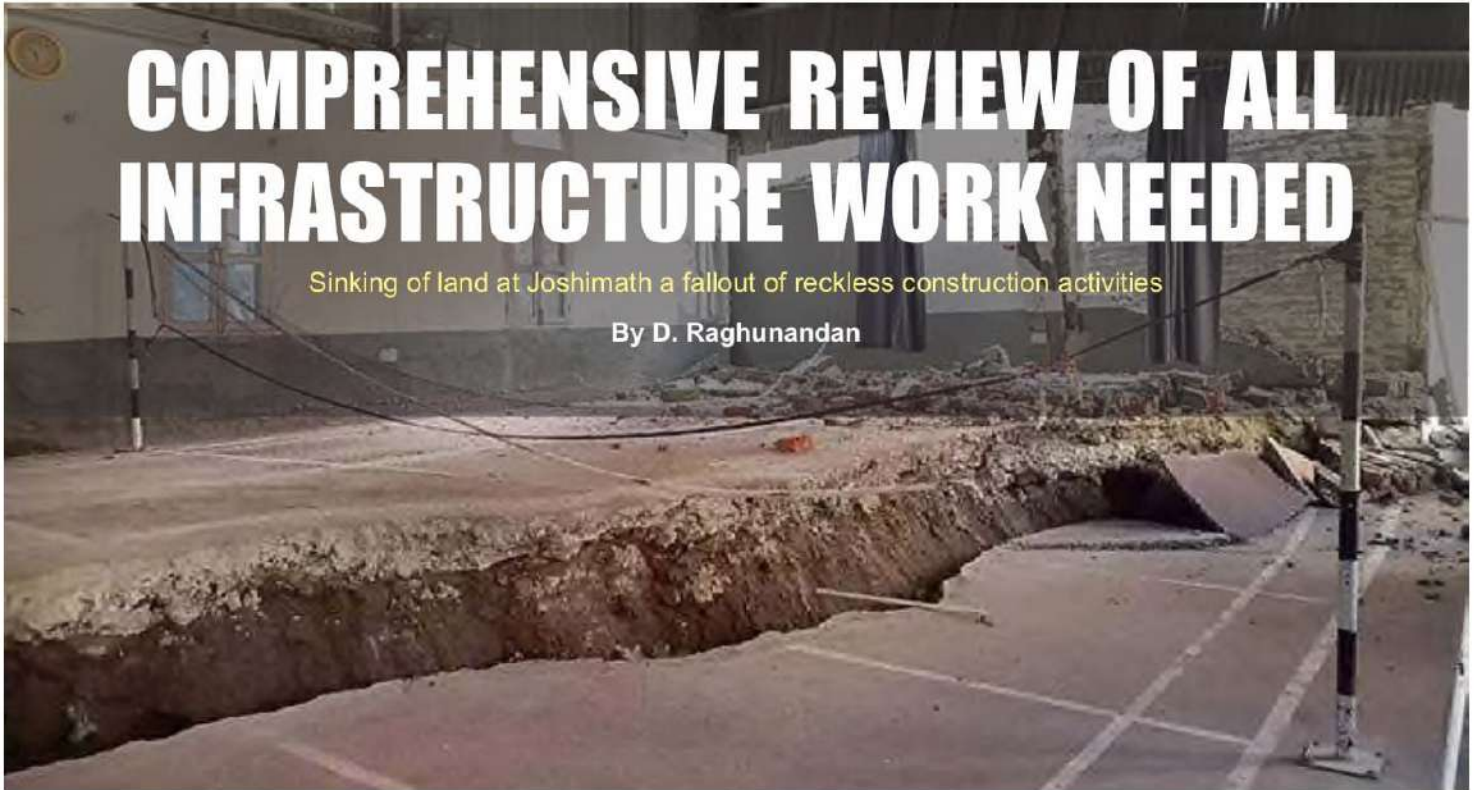
Source: The post is based on the article "India has made marked progress in LAC infra development: Army chief" published in The Hindu on 13th January 2023.



COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ALL INFRASTRUCTURE WORK NEEDED

Sinking of land at Joshimath a fallout of reckless construction activities

By D. Raghunandan



It appears that nothing short of a total disaster will convince authorities, especially under the present government, that reckless development without addressing environmental or social issues, does not lead to progress. The unfolding tragedy in Joshimath, considered a holy town for being the gateway to the hill shrine of Badrinath, is but the latest in a long series of disasters in the Uttarakhand Himalayas caused by unrestrained construction, infrastructure and urbanisation in those fragile mountains. These human-induced calamities, in the western Himalayas in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, have been in the recent past, exacerbated by the effects of human-induced climate change like extreme rainfall leading to floods, landslides and so on.

Joshimath, at an altitude of 6000 feet has now been badly hit by land subsidence i.e., sinking of the land, causing large cracks and structural damage of roads, buildings and other infrastructure affecting almost a quarter of the town. Over 720 houses have so far been assessed as severely damaged in four badly affected zones, and 89 buildings including residences and hotels have been earmarked for immediate demolition as being unsafe for inhabitants and for nearby buildings. Several hundred inhabitants have been shifted to safer locations, while others are awaiting similar arrangements.

Meanwhile affected inhabitants of Joshimath are up in arms at the destruction of their town despite repeated earlier warnings, and at the casual manner in which the district administration, the state government and even the central government has approached the disaster. Their approach is one of dealing with the immediate problem of damaged buildings through evacuation, compensation and shifting to temporary shelters, adding to the long list of "development refugees" in India where people lose their homes, savings and livelihoods while contractors and commercial ventures reap the harvest of destructive development. All those affected by the Joshimath disaster, who are victims of wilful governmental negligence, must be fully rehabilitated and given due compensation immediately so that they too do not have to wait indefinitely as supplicants for what is due to them. However, the longer-term issue of on-going and continuing construction activities related to roads, hydro-electric projects and haphazard urbanisation without taking into consideration the fragility of the mountain ecosystem and its vulnerabilities, must also be addressed. Whereas decisions regarding immediate response measures in the aftermath of the Joshimath disaster were taken at a meeting of state and central government officials, the National Disaster Management Authority, Geological Survey of India, and the National Institute of Hydrology, numerous earlier reports by these very institutions and the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology raising danger signals have been ignored. Study reports by these institutions, including high-powered committees set up by the state government dating back to the famous MC Mishra Committee report of around 50 years ago, and other experts have underlined the geo-morphological, geological and seismic fragility of the region and the consequent dangers of major construction activities.

These experts have pointed out that Joshimath, and many other towns in the region, have been built over very weak and unstable soil and stone substrate consisting of loose material left behind by glacial movement and earlier landslides. This limits the carrying capacity of settlements which have, however, grown haphazardly and to over-burdened size in terms of residents and increasing numbers of tourists. The region is classified as seismic Zone-V, the highest level of vulnerability to earthquakes and seismic activity, which can be exacerbated by heavy construction activity such as blasting and tunnelling as done in the area. Blockage of natural drainage by poorly planned construction can also cause

instability and exacerbate landslides. As a result, satellite data reveal that Joshimath has been sinking at a rate of 6.5cm per year.

The chief minister of the BJP government of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami, has misleadingly described this as a "natural disaster" while, on the other hand, construction activities at the NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugarh "run of the river" hydel project, whose tunnelling work has been undertaken close to the town, and the Joshimath-Badrinath highway, have been halted in response to local anger. Blasting has been prohibited in the area, but locals have pointed to sign-boards announcing schedules for blasting in different construction pockets. Even now, despite the ban on construction, TV channels have reported that, in the absence of any monitoring, some sort of construction activity is taking place in the area. This total lack of regulation and enforcement is characteristic of infrastructure construction in the region. The famous Char Dham Highway linking major religious sites was allowed by the Supreme Court to be widened and proceed unhindered, with no regulation imposed. Joshimath is today paying the price for this "development at any cost" approach.

It is likely that other parts of Joshimath town will also suffer from subsidence in months and years to come. Other towns and locations in the region are also similarly vulnerable. The valley town of Rudrapur has already reported cases of major cracks in residences and other buildings.

It is clear that, whatever measures are taken to tackle the current Joshimath disaster, a comprehensive review is required of infrastructure and other construction activities in the fragile western Himalayan region. What is required is a well conceived pathway towards environmentally sensitive development minimising harm to local residents and visitors.

(IPA Service)





Bornali Biswas
Editor in Chief

Long ago, the late Subrata Mukherjee, a trade unionist, and prominent Trinamool Congress politician noted that Mamata Banerjee's party had shallow roots following the decisive 2011 election victory that dealt a fatal setback to the 34-year-old government of the Communist Party of India Marxists.

He has not only been proven wrong, but the Trinamool Congress has also established itself firmly within West Bengal's political system and spread its tentacles in search of new territories, including Goa, Tripura, Meghalaya, and the byzantine labyrinths of Lutyens Delhi, where power is wielded in both brutally straightforward and enigmatically complex ways. By no means is Mamata Banerjee a one-election wonder? She has received three terms in office. Her group has expanded.

The Trinamool Congress has grown through a combination of spontaneous development, defections, and those who took advantage of incentives, just like other political parties. In West Bengal, where it has absorbed leaders and cadres from Congress, the CPI(M), and even the Bharatiya Janata Party, much to its dismay, this is true of the party's growth and strength. It also applies to the party's expansion in other regions of the nation, where it has given Congress-related leaders and cadres a home and a stage.

Its expansion into other regions of India is the result of Mamata Banerjee's extraordinary political prowess, which allowed her to take on and decisively defeat the BJP's top stars, Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, as well as the massive army of generals and officers that arrived to remove her in 2021.

The question is whether she will be able to maintain her influence in West Bengal as the number of corruption cases against her regime increase and some of her former close friends are allegedly discovered to have accumulated enormous wealth through selling favors, defrauding desperate people looking for government jobs as teachers and even civic police volunteers.

Mamata Banerjee and her rivals and would-be rivals, such as Suvendu Adhikari, the BJP's poster boy in West Bengal, and the slick and seasoned Mohammad Salim of the CPI share the remarkable ability of successful politicians to maintain a clean image despite the corruption in which various members of their party are mired (M). The three of them will face a demanding test of their knowledge, reliability, and guts this year.

It is undeniable that the Trinamool Congress wants to rule the country. It is no secret that it is putting effort towards achieving these goals. Abhishek Banerjee, the National General Secretary of the TMC, laid the cornerstone for a new Trinamool Congress

The Trinamool Congress' organizational skills at the local level will be put to the test, along with Mamata Banerjee's credibility as a leader who can be relied upon to fix problems, during the panchayat elections. The two biggest obstacles will be the involvement of significant party officials in investigations of corruption and the recurrence of violence that skews the results of the panchayat elections.

The violence of any kind during the rural elections would not be permitted, according to her spokesperson Abhishek Banerjee. Mamata Banerjee has provided more details. The activists' meal options are either egg curry and rice or locally sourced fresh fish of the little variety that is easily accessible, daal, and vaggies. The menu is both a promise to stop corruption in the future and a denunciation of former party leaders' and employees' greed and dishonesty.

We'll have to wait and watch if egg curry and rice end up serving as both the panchayat elections' idiom and symbol in 2023. A lot depends on Mamata Banerjee's success, including both her standing in the country and the strength of her connections with the general public.

the party's state general-secretary Kunal Ghosh who faced protests on Wednesday in East Midnapore, forest minister Jyotipriya Mullick faced the heat on the ground in Nadia. On Friday Birbhum MP Satabdi Roy faced similar protests. The TMC's youth wing leader Debangshu Bhattacharya failed to enter a village after being confronted by agitators at Dubraipur in Birbhum. Barrackpore MP Arjun Singh and party state secretary Sayantika Banerjee also faced protests from villagers over the past four days when they went to interact with the people as a part of the party's massive outreach programme ahead of the crucial panchayat polls due this year.

In order to succeed at the national level, both Mamata Banerjee and the Trinamool Congress need to be entirely confident that the results of the next round of elections, namely the crucial grass roots panchayat elections slated for later this year, deliver a verdict that is unequivocally in favour by not only backing minorities and Tribals but also looking into the general big issues which are far beyond corruption.

Why It's Critical For Mamata To Win Handily In West Bengal In The 2023 Panchayat Elections?

Bhavan inside the city as opposed to where it is currently located on the edge of a suburban neighborhood. He claimed that the TMC's philosophy of politics of brotherhood and love would reach every corner of the nation and put an end to polarising politics.

Mamata Banerjee and the Trinamool Congress must have complete faith in the outcome of the key grass-roots panchayat elections later this year if they are to triumph at the national level. These elections are scheduled for later this year. The CPKM and, to a lesser extent, the Congress is after the BJP, thus the party's objective is to stop them. The panchayat elections will be important even if the outcomes cannot be interpreted as a likely indication of how voters would vote in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

TRUTH ABOVE ALL

A "GENIUS" IS FAR TOO RARE !

Utpal Chatterjee



Who or what is a genius? Is every Tom, Dick and Harry we come across a "genius"?

A person may look or talk smart. But does that make him a genius? Is every genius born one?

The questions may go on and on but the answer is a simple "NO"! Roughly defined, a genius is an exceptionally intelligent person with amazing creative power or natural ability.

The Huxley brothers, after extensive research, had arrived at the conclusion that most of the human brain remains dormant.

However, in the case of a genius, the use of the brain would be a few notches higher than the normal.

That the human mind uses, at the most, a mere 11% of the brain's capacity may or may not be a myth.

NOT all Nobel Laureates, for instance, can be labelled "geniuses". So many of them are not at all deserving laureates. But certain individuals down history have been recognised as true geniuses and, for all the right reasons.

To cite a few instances, one can go back to the Renaissance and come up with at least two names.

Those are Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

The first was versatility personified.

Apart from being a great painter, he did a lot for which medical science and aviation, among other sectors, remain indebted to him. The second was an artist who took the breath away with what he did with the Sistine Chapel and David.

Both fascinate millions to this day. In literature, there is Shakespeare and then there is Tagore, both bottomless wells of creativity.

Since the death of the former over four centuries back, more than 400 research papers have been churned out every year. Go to the world of science and consider personalities like Sir Isaac Newton, Madame Curie and Albert Einstein. In the world of music there is Ludwig Van Beethoven and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. There are a few others but the names cited ought to do for now.

All of them continue to inspire and intrigue researchers to this day.

Both Samuel Taylor Coleridge and, much later, an Indian National Professor of great eminence, Professor Debidas Chatterjee, tried hard to explore "Ways and means of creative imagination" and find what made the works of these extraordinary geniuses possible.

What spark sets off the creative process. Both had

made significant progress but, before they could complete their research, they died.

That was, indeed, sad or else we could have had a good idea of how these brilliant minds worked to leave the rest of the world in awe.

Unfortunately, in recent times, you have had several using the term "genius" rather loosely.

If, for instance, a cricket batsman flicks a fast bowler to the fence, the commentator exults, "That was the work of a genius!"

In recent times, following all the sound and fury over Michael Wolfe's "Fire and Fury" a certain Donald J. Trump kept repeating he was "super smart" and a "stable genius".



Whatever is a "stable genius"? Does a real genius, "stable" or otherwise, shout from the rooftops that he is one?

In the good old days, if a "responsible"

person or a leader would talk as irresponsibly, it would be inferred he had "lost his marbles".

Has Trump, the "stable genius" finally trumped himself or lost his marbles completely? Perhaps, he could read a bit about the real geniuses and take a lesson in humility. But, in his case, that may be asking for the moon.

UTPAL CHATTERJEE is an acclaimed Indian journalist and public speaker. He was until recently the Sheriff of Calcutta and its first citizen. He has interviewed 21 Heads of State, nine Nobel Laureates and travelled with Indian Prime Ministers as part of their respective media delegations. Having done his fellowship in Journalism from Oxford, he has travelled abroad on other official assignments more than 50 times across all the continents except Africa and Australia. He is on the panel of experts of BBC, London. Earlier, he worked for several leading Indian national newspapers and journals. In addition to several international and national recognitions, he has recently been recognised for being an OUTSTANDING INDIAN for "his contribution to enriching National values, public service and international journalism"



AMIT SHAH HOLDS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OVER SECURITY ISSUES IN J&K, TO MEET FAMILIES OF RAJOURI TERROR VICTIMS



HM Shah Holds Meet On Security in Jammu

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday chaired a high-level meeting with officials in Jammu, over security-related issues in the Union Territory. Lt Governor Manoj Sinha also attended the meeting. Shah arrived in Jammu this noon to meet the families of those killed in the twin terror attacks in Rajouri. He was received at Jammu Airport by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The high-level meeting held at Raj Bhawan included officers of civil administration and security establishment. Senior officers of different forces and intelligence agencies were also present in it. Home Minister is scheduled to visit Rajouri district's Dhangri village to meet the families of twin terror attack victims. He will also review the ground situation with the security forces.

The twin terror attacks had left seven people of the minority community, including two children, dead and fourteen others injured in the Dhangri hamlet. While four people were gunned down on January 1 evening, two children were killed and several others injured after a suspected Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast occurred in the same vicinity on January 2 morning. Officials said a multi-tier security cover has been put in place comprising security personnel of the police and the CAPF, while troops of the Indian Army will also guard the higher reaches.

CCTV cameras have also been placed at many locations in the Dhangri village to ensure close surveillance of the area, they said. Senior police and CAPF officers also visited the area on Thursday evening and reviewed the security arrangements ahead of the Home minister's visit.

SHARAD YADAV, WHO WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE POLITICAL PARTY JDU, PASSED AWAY



Former Union Minister and veteran politician Sharad Yadav passed away on Thursday night at the age of 75. Yadav was undergoing treatment at Gurugram's Fortis Hospital for a long time due to a prolonged illness and the news of his death was confirmed by his family. Announcing the demise of Sharad Yadav, the politician's daughter Subhashini Yadav took to social media and wrote "Papa ab nahi rahe (Papa is no more)." Sharad Yadav had been living with his daughter Subhashini since his Rajya Sabha tenure ended in June 2022.

Sharad Yadav was considered one of the most respected socialist leaders of Bihar. He has great political sense. He was also considered a great curator of state politics. He had provided several political tips to Lalu Prasad Yadav during the latter's chief ministerial tenures as well as when he was the union minister of the country.

FOUR THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE EVACUATED FROM JOSHIMATH AFTER A SATELLITE SURVEY

Following a satellite study, 600 homes in Uttarakhand's sinking town of Joshimath were evacuated. "We are aware that 600 homes have been evacuated as of right now. Additionally, 4,000 individuals have been relocated to safer places" informed a senior member of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The lowest levels of Army and ITBP facilities have also shown some vulnerabilities, but suitable safeguards are being implemented, the official said. A high-level central team that was led by Dr. Dharmendra Singh Gangwar, secretary for border management, arrived in Dehradun at the same time and met with Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

More than 200 homes in the sinking town have red cross marks on them because they are hazardous to live in, according to the district administration. It requested that



their residents move to temporary relief centers or rented homes for which each family would receive support from the state government of 4,000 per month for the following six months.

For the relief and rescue operations in the town, members

of the National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force have been dispatched.

In Joshimath, the entrance to Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib, more than 600 buildings have either developed cracks or been substantially damaged. Based on the potential level of risk, the holy town has been separated into three zones: Danger, Buffer, and Completely safe.

The worrying situation has been attributed by experts to unexpected infrastructure growth, notably hydropower projects. Many people have mentioned the National Thermal Power Corporation's (NTPC) hydroelectricity project in this context. This accusation has been rejected by NTPC. The NTPC tunnel does not pass through the town, according to an official statement, and no blasting operations are currently taking place there.

PEOPLE LIVING IN VILLAGES ALONG THE DISPUTED BORDER CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE MEGHALAYA ELECTIONS



Registered voters living in villages along the disputed border with Assam can participate in the upcoming assembly elections in Meghalaya, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar said on Friday. Kumar led an Election Commission of India (ECI) team in a two-day review of poll preparedness in Meghalaya. The visit concluded during the day, "People living in villages along the disputed border can participate in the elections despite what has happened. Both sides have held joint meetings and discussions are taking place at the senior level as well. We are alive to the situation and there is nothing to worry," Kumar said.

"There is no problem. We have reviewed the situation at our end and district officials from both sides have had detailed meetings," he said.

The CEC said the commission has instructed 16 central agencies to work in a coordinated manner in expenditure-sensitive constituencies. "Agencies were asked to follow standard operating procedures in doing proper checks of planes and helicopters coming to the state to avoid any political party or candidate trying to induce voters with cash," he said.

Political parties have to publish at least thrice in local newspapers and TV channels publicising cases pending against candidates with a criminal background and also explain why such people were nominated. He said 21 lakh voters in the state are eligible to exercise their franchise in 55 reserved seats for Scheduled Tribes and five unreserved constituencies.

DHALIWAL WAS ONCE REFUSED ADMITTANCE BECAUSE HE SUPPORTED THE FARMERS' UPRISING; NOW HE HAS BEEN CHOSEN FOR THE PRAVASI BHARATIYA SAMMAN

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the highest award awarded by the Indian government for its settlers abroad, has been chosen for US-based billionaire Darshan Singh Dhalival, 71, who was refused entry to India for backing the farmers' protest against the now-repealed three farm laws.

During the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, which will be held in Indore from January 8 to 10, Dhalival, who moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the US in 1972 from Rakhra village near Patiala and controls the largest chain of gas stations nationwide, has been honored alongside 26 NRIs.

At the Singhu border, close to Delhi, Dhalival was managing langar (community kitchen) for protesting farmers. On October 23, 2021, he arrived at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, but immigration officers refused to let him in after questioning him for a long time. Dhalival claimed that his support for the farmers' uprising led to the request that he return from the



airport. Dhalival was shocked when the prestigious award was announced.

In 12 US mid-west regions, he is involved in the real estate and fuel industries. Dhalival aims to collaborate closely with the Indian government after being selected for the prize in the Business and Community Welfare category. Surjit Singh Rakhra, his brother back home and a former minister in the SAD-BJP government, expressed similar joy about his brother's selection for the honor.

INDIA'S FIRST VANDE METRO TRAINS POWERED BY HYDROGEN

The Indian Railways is now producing eco-friendly Vande Metro trains that will replace the outdated trains that were created in the 1950s and 1960s. These trains will represent a significant advancement because the end user will no longer be the primary emphasis, according to railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. The middle and lower classes will be served by the hydrogen-powered Vande Metro trains. It is safe to claim that these trains will significantly alter daily life for every Indian.



production of 200 new rakes for these Vande Bharat trains of the newest generation. These 200 Vande Bharat rakes will all only be used for sleeping class.

When compared to earlier Vande Bharat variants, these trains will likely have an aluminum body and be 2-4 tonnes lighter. According to the article, the sleeping class coaches would also include wi-fi and LED screens that display passenger information. The trains will also have autonomous fire sensors and GPS systems to make travel easier, safer, and more enjoyable.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

The Indian Railways has introduced the Amrit Bharat Station initiative with the long-term goal of continuously enhancing the infrastructure of more than 1,000 stations. The plan will make sure that all station types have high-level platforms, per the official statement (760-840 millimeters). In fact, the Master Plans created under this plan will fundamentally alter how stations look.

This would entail enlarging the width of the roadways, eliminating unsightly constructions, installing properly constructed signs, creating designated pedestrian walkways, organizing parking spaces, and improving lighting. Given the space available at these railroad stations, an effort will be made to group together various waiting hall grades and types and, where practical, to offer high-quality dining and retail facilities. In waiting areas, suitable low-level dividers may be constructed. (with agency inputs)

Vaishnaw has stated that the design should be available between May and June 2023, while the actual launch date is still unknown.

Vande Bharat 3.0

In 2023, traveling for greater distances is going to become much simpler and more enjoyable. The Vande Bharat-3 design is being developed by the Indian Railways and will include sleeper class and simplify travel on lengthy routes. The Ministry of Railways has officially announced that a tender has been published for the

TWO IS SUSPECTS, BOTH ENGINEERS, ARE CAPTURED BY KOLKATA POLICE IN HOWRAH



Md. Saddam @ Saddam Mullick @ Abdul Mullick (28yrs) S/O- Mh. Mokarram Mullick. Sayeed Ahmed (30yrs) S/O- Nasim Ahmed

Two citizens of Howrah have allegedly been detained by the Special Task Force of the Kolkata Police because of their purported affiliation with the IS chapter in India. Sayeed Ahmed (30) and Md. Saddam, also known as Saddam Mullick, alias Abdul Mullick, was accused of preparing several assaults across the nation.

As an IT engineer who is very skilled with technology and the dark web, Sayeed is an MTeCh like Saddam, according to STF personnel. The accused have recently made numerous trips to India's western and north-western regions to conduct recruiting drives and amass funds.

STF sources claim that both people were taken into custody on January 6 at about 4.30 p.m. from the Vidyasagar Setu link under tense circumstances. They were taken into custody from Vidyasagar Setu's eastern slope, close to where the flanks leading to AJC Bose Road and Kidderpore/Esplanade bound roads split.

On January 7, the accused appeared in court. They spent 12 days in police custody.

From their possession, authorities seized a motorcycle, several laptops, mobile phones, hard discs, pen drives, CPUs, notebooks, and diaries.

Many of their hiding places are currently being searched. Additionally, a number of Jehadi materials, a list of Jehadi channels, and a list of dubious company names funding them through hawala channels have been located. Mohd Makkam, Saddam's father, refuted any claims that his son had engaged in terrorism.

MAN FROM UTTAR PRADESH PRETENDS AS BENGAL CM SECRETARY TO TRICK FACEBOOK FRIENDS, ARRESTED

A 21-year-old guy was detained in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, for reportedly fabricating a Facebook profile to pass as the grievance cell secretary for Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister of Bengal. The accused subsequently got in touch with the IAS officer's friends and tried to swindle them by requesting money from them.

The Mathura resident Bilal created a Facebook account under the name of IAS PB Salim, according to the Bidhannagar cyber cell, which executed the arrest, and requested that potential victims send him money via Google Pay.

Salim serves as the chief executive officer and managing director of the West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited, as well as the chief of the Public Grievances Cell, the Chief Minister's Office, and the West Bengal Minorities and State Development and Finance Corporation.

The IAS official said in his complaint to the cyber cell on September 9 of last year that an unidentified criminal had made a phony Facebook ID using his image from his original social media account. According to the allegation, the accused repeatedly issued friend requests chatted with the IAS officer's friends and began requesting money from them. In order to transfer money, the fraudster also supplied GPay account information.

He utilized a mobile phone to construct the bogus Facebook account, according to IC (cybercrime) Sisir Kumar Naskar, the case's investigating officer.

The cyber unit of the Kolkata Police recently used social media to warn internet users against the pervasive usage of phony personas made on numerous applications and then misused for illegal activities. The most crucial recommendation from the police for social media users is to lock their Facebook or other online profile.

ACCORDING TO THE SUPREME COURT, RELIGIOUS CONVERSION IS A SERIOUS SUBJECT THAT SHOULDN'T BE POLITICIZED

The Supreme Court requested the aid of Attorney General R Venkataramani on a petition seeking instruction to the Center and states to take strict measures to prevent fake religious conversions, noting that religious conversion is a serious matter that shouldn't be given a political color.

In a case where the petitioner sought to stop religious conversions through intimidation, threatening, and deceitfully luring through gifts and monetary incentives, a bench of Justices M R Shah and C T Ravikumar asked Venkataramani to appear and serve as an amicus curiae.

The highest court stated that it appears prima facie that religious conversions are truly taking place.

It declared that the right to convert differs from the right to religious freedom.

Senior attorney P Wilson, who was representing Tamil Nadu, referred to the plea as a politically motivated PIL and insisted that such conversions were not a possibility in the state.

He asserted that the legislature should have the final say in the matter and claimed that the petitioner belonged to a political party and was facing sedition charges.

The Supreme Court ruled that false religious conversion is a severe offense and required prominent attorney Arvind Datar, who was



representing petitioner Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, to appear in person.

Such conversions, according to Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, are a matter of national interest, and the government is taking them seriously.

The top court has previously stated that coerced religious conversion is a serious issue and violates the Constitution, noting that the goal of charity should not be converted.

Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, an attorney, had petitioned the court, asking it to order the federal government and the states to take strict action to stop false religious conversions.

The top court recently stated that forced religious conversion may endanger national security and restrict individuals' freedom of religion, and it urged the Center to intervene and make real attempts to address the extremely severe problem.

If proselytization through trickery, seduction, and intimidation is not prevented, the court has previously issued a warning that a very serious situation will develop.

At a previous hearing, the Gujarat government informed the Supreme Court that religious freedom does not include the right to convert others, and it asked the court to lift the high court's stay on the state law's requirement that conversions through marriage receive the district magistrate's prior consent.

Upadhyay claims in his petition that coerced religious conversion is a widespread issue that has to be addressed right away.

The petition further requests that the Law Commission of India be directed to draft a report and a bill to prevent religious conversion by coercion and financial gain.

The next hearing will take place on February 7.

THE SUPREME COURT DISCUSSES THE FOOD AT MOVIES

Should we start taking jalebis to the movies? asked one of the judges during a Supreme Court hearing on whether patrons can bring food into theatres.

A petition requesting a ban on outside food at theatres was being heard in court. The Supreme Court declared that movie theatres and multiplexes have the power to impose rules and regulations and choose whether to permit outside food and drink.

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court's decision to lift the restriction on patrons bringing their own food and water into theatres was overturned by a bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha.

The judges stated that theatres have already been ordered to give free food and clean water,

particularly for minors, and that the High Court had overstepped its mandate. The decision to watch a movie is up to the viewer, but once they enter the theatre, they are required to follow the guidelines set forth by the administration, they claimed.

The judges' attempts to defend the position caused the debates to become humorous.

"If someone were to start eating jalebis inside the theatre, the administration could stop them. Who will foot the bill for cleaning up after the viewer wipes his greasy fingers on the seats? Additionally, tandoori chicken is welcome. Then concerns about bones left in the hallway will surface. That might also annoy some folks. Nobody is pressuring them to purchase popcorn," Chandrachud, Chief Justice, stated.

"For water, we can agree that movie theatres should offer free water. However, if they charge 20 rupees for nimbu paani, you can't suggest that you'll walk outside and get your nimbu, squeeze it into a flask, and make it inside the theatre."

The Chief Justice described an incident from when he presided over the Bombay High Court and heard a case involving adult movies shown on television after 11.00 p.m.

The case at hand was originally dismissed by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court on July 18, 2018, overturning the prohibition on bringing food and beverages into movie theatres. The High Court had stated that because of the ban, individuals are compelled to consume whatever is offered for sale at the theatre.



RIDING CITY BUSES IN GUWAHATI



Nava Thakuria

When a senior minister in Himanta Biswa Sarma's State cabinet takes a ride in city buses of Guwahati to understand the problems of daily commuters, it makes news. So when Assam urban affairs minister Ashok Singhal recently got into a city bus and accompanied common passengers, it received massive media coverage. But the question that arises is, if the young minister had observed a number of difficulties faced by the elderly people along with the women & children in their rides?

Regularity and reliability of city buses in the virtual capital of northeast India, sustained comfortability of passengers (precisely the ladies), extra waiting time period in a prescribed stoppage, behaviour of the bus drivers, conductors and handymen (most of whom are fond of using abusive languages towards passengers and even the pedestrians on duty hours), cleanliness of the

prehistoric city today supports over 15 lakh permanent residents and a sizable number of city dwellers truly depend on the city buses for their daily works. Nearly 650 buses (over 500 owned by private parties) ply in the streets of Guwahati. Lately 100 new compressed natural gas run buses, equipped with the facilities of air-conditioning, fire-detection, global positioning systems, etc, have been introduced in the city. The transport department is expected to operate these CNG buses in a sustainable manner assuring the dignified service to the commuters.

The official city buses routes include Khanapara to Jalukbari, ISBT to Paltanbazar via Nepali Mandir, ISBT to Kachari via Datalpara, Basistha Chariali to Gauhati University via NH 37, Khanapara to Kachari via Ganeshguri flyover, Jalukbari to Khanapara via NH 37, Paltanbazar to ISBT via Lalganesh, Kahilipara to

(over 1200) are also used under the ASTC operation. The corporation assures a reliable, safe and comfortable journey to the passengers. Besides covering rural areas inside Assam, the ASTC buses also reach important locations of different neighbouring States.

Patriotic People's Front Assam (PPFA), a forum of nationalist citizens, recently urged the authorities to focus on the quality night bus service in the city. The forum put a logical question to the State government in general and the transport department in particular why they cannot ensure a sincere city bus service in Guwahati after the dusk even after the law & order situation has improved in the last few years. It added, "Why Guwahatians cannot enjoy a city bus ride after 9 pm on various routes? How long do they have to wait for a consistent bus service till midnight? If the private owners are not ready to operate during night hours, why not the department run their own



vehicles, etc may have also been observed by the media savvy minister.

Moreover, it is hoped that Singhal would pursue these issues with the concerned authorities (along with State chief minister Sarma and transport minister Parimal Shuklabaidya) for a pragmatic resolution. One may remind him that the local authorities in 2015 decided to launch the night city bus service in some selected routes of Guwahati. Those night buses were supposed to start the service from 8 pm till the midnight hours every day. Passengers were appealed to pay fifty percent extra fare, but it was never fully realised and the Guwahatinas might have forgotten about it.

Amingaon via Chandmari, Chandrapur to Dharapur Chariali, Basistha Mandir to Adabari via Chandmari, Basistha Mandir to Adabari via Paltan Bazar, Narengi to Khanamukh via Chandmari, Panjabari to Adabari via Chandmari, Adabari to Hajo, Adabari to Sualkuchi, Chaygaon to Adabari, Khanapara to Khetri, Bornihat to Jalukbari, etc.

Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) runs around 100 city buses across the city. ASTC (constituted under Road Transport Corporation Act 1950 with effect from 31 March 1970) otherwise operates nearly 1100 buses (including over 600 luxury ones) for long distance destinations. A large number of privately owned buses

buses?"

As Guwahati has been initiated to develop and ready to connect many south (and southeast) Asian nations including Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, etc, it should be active and alive till the late night hours. Today hundreds of local young people work in different commercial establishments including shopping malls, restaurants, hospitals, media houses, etc till the night hours and they may not be able to afford private vehicles. Moreover, once the decent night bus service is in place, all kinds of commuters will plan their evening activities accordingly. These positive changes should take place as early as possible.

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'THE NIGHT MANAGER', starring Anil Kapoor and Aditya Roy Kapur!



Kicking off the New Year with power and scale, **Disney+ Hotstar** announces one of its biggest shows for 2023 'The Night Manager'. A high-octane thriller wrapped in lavish drama and picturesque sights, the **Hotstar Specials** series brings together a power-pair - **Anil Kapoor** and **Aditya Roy Kapur** never seen before characters along with **Sobhita Dhulipala**, **Tillotama Shome**, **Saswata Chatterjee**, **Ravi Behl** among others. It's gripping, it's layered, it's complex...it's everything one can expect in a thrilling package. Created and Directed by **Sandeep Modi** and co-directed by **Priyanka Ghosh**, the series is produced by **The Ink Factory and Banijay Asia** and will release soon on **Disney+ Hotstar**.

Gaurav Banerjee, Head - Content, Disney+Hotstar & HSM Entertainment Network, Disney Star said, "The Night Manager in our ambition is the best of high stakes drama! Great actors, stunning locales and a rich plot with juicy twists. We hope viewers have as much fun watching it as all of us have had while making it".

Director Sandeep Modi said, "This is my second association with Disney+ Hotstar and we've tried to raise the bar with this show, be it the storytelling, scale or technical finesse. It's always exhilarating and exasperating in equal measures to helm such a big show and I am super excited to present this tale of espionage, revenge and betrayal to the world".

Actor Anil Kapoor said, "I have always loved working on differentiated content and characters. The first time I read the script, I just fell in love with the character of Shelly Rungta. Shelly is a powerful man, a philanthropist and a perfect balance of wit and evil with imperceptible menace just like the story of the show - a perfect blend of entertainment and great storytelling. I thoroughly enjoyed working with some of the finest from the industry and one of the leading OTT platforms - Disney+ Hotstar and eagerly waiting to see audience's reaction to the show".

Actor Aditya Roy Kapur said, "I have always wanted to perform a multi-layered character in a series with a complex narrative arc, and when the platform approached me to play the title role in The Night Manager, I knew this was just the one I'd been looking for! My character Shaan is the kind of person who can effortlessly make people believe whatever he wants them to, and that perfectly mirrors what we as actors strive to achieve with our craft. I'm glad that the Disney+ Hotstar team and Sandeep Modi gave me this opportunity to play such an exciting character and I can't wait to bring him to audiences in India and around the world!"



KANTARA FAME SAPTHAMI GOWDA TO MAKE HER BOLLYWOOD DEBUT IN VIVEK AGNIHOTRI'S THE VACCINE WAR

After *The Kashmir Files*, one of the blockbuster films of 2022, Vivek Agnihotri's next film is *The Vaccine War*, based on India's fight against Covid-19. After Anupam Kher was revealed to be the first actor in the cast, the filmmaker announced that Saphthami Gowda has joined the film on Friday, January 13. The actress gained nationwide recognition after starring in *Kantara*, last year's other blockbuster film, which was directed and headlined by Rishab Shetty. For Saphthami, it was her second film after making her acting debut in the 2019 Kannada crime drama *Popcorn Monkey Tiger*. On Friday, the *Hate Story* director took to his Twitter and wrote, "At @i_ambuddha, we are so happy to cast one of India's youngest and super talented actor @gowda_saphthami in #TheVaccineWar. Our aim is to give platform to all talented actors from all across India." The actress also tweeted, "I'm glad and excited to be a part of this project! Thank you @vivekagnihotri sir for this opportunity". Quote-tweeting her, Vivek wrote, "Welcome Saphthami. Your role in #TheVaccineWar will touch many hearts."

Sethupathi on Hindi projects

Tamil star Vijay Sethupathi believes the only way for him to be taken seriously as an artist working in a Hindi project is by introducing himself as a co-star of Shah Rukh Khan, Katrina Kaif and Shahid Kapoor.

Twelve years after making his acting debut in Tamil cinema and establishing himself as one of its leading stars, Sethupathi is working on three Hindi projects -- series 'Farzi' with Kapoor, feature film 'Jawan' alongside Khan and 'Merry Christmas' opposite Kaif. "When I get a Hindi project, I have to tell (people) that I'm working with Shahid or that I'm the villain for Shah Rukh sir, working with Katrina, then only I'm taken seriously," Sethupathi said at the trailer launch of his maiden web show 'Farzi' here.

MORE THAN 100 HOOK STEPS TRIED BEFORE 'NAATU NAATU' MOVES FINALIZED: CHOREOGRAPHER PREM RAKSHITH

Some 100 variations of the hook steps, two months of rehearsals and 20 days of shooting... that's what went into creating the perfectly synthesised moves in the global hit "Naatu Naatu" from the film "RRR", says choreographer Prem Rakshith.

The track, filmed on the movie's leading stars Jr NTR and Ram Charan, won the 'best original song-motion picture' award at the 80th Golden Globe Awards this week, beating competition from stars such as Rihanna, Taylor Swift and Lady Gaga. Director S S Rajamouli's brief for "Naatu Naatu" was simple: synchronisation between the two leading men.

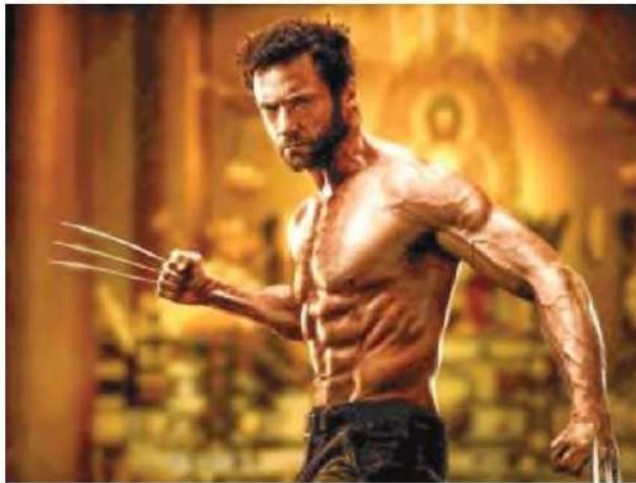


SANJAY DUTT REVEALS WHY HE DID NOT WANT TO TAKE CANCER TREATMENT AND WHAT CHANGED HIS MIND



Sanjay Dutt was diagnosed with Stage 4 Lung Cancer in August 2020 and came out victorious against the deadly disease in October of the same year. At a recent event at a hospital, the 63-year-old actor opened up about his cancer journey and revealed that he initially declined to take the treatment and then changed his mind. Sanjay also shared his first reaction when he heard that he has been diagnosed with cancer. He said at the event, according to per ETimes, "My wife, my family or my sisters, nobody was around me that time. I was all alone and suddenly this guy comes and tells me 'you have cancer'. My wife was in Dubai so Priya came to me. My first reaction was that, once you hear something like this, your whole life reflects back at you." The actor added, "I have a history of cancer in my family. My mom died of pancreatic cancer, my wife (Richa Sharma) died of brain cancer. So, the first thing I said was that, I don't want to take chemotherapy. If I'm supposed to die, I will just die but I don't want any treatment."

Hugh Jackman passed on steroids for Wolverine role: 'Had been told what the side effects are of that'



Last year, the actor was also seen in the family drama The Son, along with Laura Dern, Vanessa Kirby, Zen McGrath, Hugh Quarshie and Anthony Hopkins. Hugh has also said that he had been turning down requests to play Wolverine over the years and had no interest. Until he just 'felt it' in his gut to return. He also added that getting to 'punch the shit out of Ryan Reynolds every day' was a good incentive. Production on Deadpool 3 is expected to start early this year as the film is expected to release next year.

James Cameron reveals Leonardo DiCaprio didn't want to do Titanic: 'He thought it was boring'



HE DIDN'T WANT TO DO A LEADING MAN. I HAD TO REALLY TWIST HIS ARM TO BE IN THE MOVIE
JAMES CAMERON

In an interview with People Magazine ahead of the 80th Golden Globes ceremony, director James Cameron revealed that Leonardo DiCaprio was not eager to star in the epic disaster romance film. "He didn't want to do a leading man. I had to really twist his arm to be in the movie. He didn't want to do it. He thought it was boring. [He] accepted the part only when I convinced him that it was actually a difficult challenge. It didn't surprise me, first of all, that he's made a lot of authentic choices going forward. And secondly, I never doubted his talent." said the director who was nominated for his work on Avatar: The Way of Water. Earlier, James Cameron had revealed that Leonardo did not wish to audition for the movie and read the part. It was James Cameron who made sure that The Wolf of Wall Street actor gave the reading test as it was compulsory for the part. Ahead of its 25th year anniversary, the director has also said that he cannot believe Titanic would have been the film it is without the presence of its two leading stars, Leo and Kate.



Miss Universe Thailand 2022 wears recycled dress as tribute to father

The 71st Miss Universe edition will be held on January 14 at the New Orleans Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. Many people have their eyes set on the screen and are watching the contestants representing their countries in stunning gowns. Among the contestants, Thailand's Ang Sueang-am has won everyone's hearts by wearing a recycled dress.

SANAM SAEED SAYS WHOLE OF PAKISTAN 'GREW UP ON BOLLYWOOD', BUT INDIANS DON'T KNOW ABOUT PAKISTAN



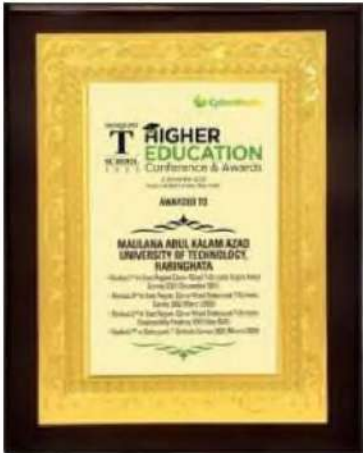
Pak actor Sanam Saeed says that Pakistan knows a lot about Indian culture but India is not aware of the minute details of her country's culture. Pakistani actor Sanam Saeed has said that generations of the "whole of Pakistan" grew up on films and content from Bollywood and they know minute details about India, but Indians are not as exposed to the art and culture of Pakistan. Sanam found stardom after her TV show Zindagi Gulzar Hai opposite Fawad Khan aired in Pakistan in 2012. Two years later, Indian audience got to watch the show and they became popular in the country as well. Asked about the kind of films she watches, Sanam told Indian Express in an interview, "Personally, I am more of a Hollywood binge watcher. But the whole of Pakistan has been raised on Bollywood, from our grandparents to us, we know Madhubala, Kareena Kapoor stuff to now Deepika Padukone. We have seen all the generations. We have literally grown-up consuming Bollywood, the song, the dance, the culture, the way they eat, the way they do pooja. Hum sab jaante hai Indian mein kya hoto hai (We know what happens in India). But India doesn't know what happens in Pakistan."

GOOGLE MEET GAINS NEW IN-MEETING REACTIONS AND 360-DEGREE BACKGROUNDS



Google revealed that its video calling app Meet is gaining emoji reactions to enhance the in-meeting experience. These reactions will allow you to express yourself even when you are muted. They will show as a small badge in the sender's video tile and float up the left side of the screen. Reactions from multiple users will trigger a burst of emojis. The search engine giant says that the burst is based on engagement, with bigger bursts when more people use the same emoji in succession. The emojis are also customisable, meaning you'll be able to select from different skin tones. By default, reactions will be turned on. But they can be turned off from the Admin console. Alongside emoji reactions, Google Meet will also roll out 360-degree backgrounds in the "coming weeks" on Android and iOS for all users. These backgrounds offer a more immersive experience because they make use of gyroscope/orientation data. Initially, you'll be presented with oasis, mountain temple, and sky city options, but there are more options coming soon.

MAKAUT AWARDED AMONG THE TECHNOLOGY SCHOOLS FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology (MAKAUT), WB has been awarded for its continuous achievements in higher education among the Technology Schools in December 2022 by Cyber Media Research (CMR) in association with Dataquest (DQ). MAKAUT, WB has been ranked first in the Eastern Region (Zone-wise) among the Technology Schools (T-Schools) in Digital Index Survey conducted in December 2021.

Among the T-Schools in India in 2022 MAKAUT, WB had ranked second in the Eastern Zone in the March 2022 survey. It has been ranked Second in Eastern Region Employability Ranking in September 2022. It was ranked Seventh in

VIETNAM'S ALMA RESORT RINGS IN YEAR OF THE CAT WITH "TET VILLAGE" FROM 21-26 JANUARY

CAM RANH, NHA TRANG — Family resort Alma will welcome the Lunar New Year with a six-day program jam-packed with merriment including its Tet Village which will host an array of traditional games and competitions.

Tet, short for Tet Nguyên Đán, marks the first day of Lunar New Year and is Vietnam's most significant celebration. It is a time for families to reunite and honour their ancestors. Vietnamese celebrate Tet by cooking traditional dishes, cleaning their houses, visiting relatives and going on pilgrimages. Colours red and yellow are considered to bring fortune and can be seen all around during the celebratory period.

From Lunar New Year's Eve, Saturday January 21st, until Thursday January 26th, Alma will host festivities including buffet dinners, dragon dances, making lucky envelopes, smashing lucky balloons, and cupcake-making and decorating classes.

Overlooking one of Vietnam's best beaches, Long Beach, the resort kicks off its Tet program with a floating champagne breakfast, guests trying their hand at crafting the quintessential Tet staple "Banh Chung" Chung cake, wrapping sticky rice and mung bean inside dong leaves at Alma Food Court, a kite flying competition on Alma's hill, a Tet movie at the Alma Cinema and more.

From the first day of Tet, the 30-hectare resort's Tet celebrations will be anchored by the lantern-adorned Tet Village at Alma Food Court which comes to life daily from 9am to 6pm with huts brimming with traditional snacks and drinks.

The village's line-up of traditional activities includes



picking lucky envelopes, calligraphy, stilt walking and the folk dance 'bamboo dance', with participants tapping and sliding bamboo poles on the ground while dancers step over and in between them. Competitions include 'smash the watermelon', whereby blindfolded participants, after being made to spin around, try to hit and break ripe watermelons with a bamboo stick at the direction of the crowd.

"As we bid farewell to the Year of The Tiger, our Tet village will be a hive of activity and festooned in red and gold

decorations to symbolize our hope for prosperity and good health for all as we welcome the Year of the Cat and spend quality time with our loved ones," says Alma's managing director Herbert Laubichler-Pichler.

Alma Garden will host Vietnamese, Asian and international-themed dinner buffets at Alma Garden on Monday, January 23rd to Wednesday, January 25th. Other activities to be held throughout the resort's Tet program include cocktail-making classes for adults, and a 'discovery garden tour' of the resort's 1,000 sqm nursery garden, home to bananas, coconuts, papaya, squash, passion fruit, sunflowers, daisies and various local flowers, for the kids.

Le Spa's two-hour 'Lunar New Year Retreat', priced at VND 1,000,000, starts out with a hot tub steam session followed by a 'Fancy Foot' massage and 'Nourishing Shampoo'. The treatment finishes with warm ginger tea with Tet jam, a ginger jam with dried lotus seeds.

Alma's 'Lucky Room Package' is valid for stays from January 15-31, 2023. It starts at VND 8,900,000 for two nights in a one-bedroom superior suite for two adults and two children inclusive of daily international buffet breakfast at Alma Garden, one dinner for two adults. Other inclusions include a 'nourishing shampoo' for two adults at Le Spa, participation in all of the Tet Village's complimentary activities, and complimentary use of all outdoor sports courts, Splash Water Park, mini golf, the Kids Club and Active Youth Club, the Science Museum and the gymnasium.

Dataquest T-Schools Survey in March 2022. Cyber Media Research (CMR) in association with Dataquest (DQ), the country's oldest and most respected IT-TeS industry journal, regularly conducts a Digital Index Survey amongst various engineering colleges of India. The aim of this study is to determine the Top Technology (T) Schools (offering B.E., B.Tech. or similar undergraduate degree-level technical courses) in the country and rank them on a list of carefully selected parameters. Among the Top Tech-Enabled T-Schools, MAKAUT, WB has been placed in the Third Position.

The DQ-CMR Top T-School Survey is a highly respected and pioneering barometer of the state of technical education in India. The T-School rankings, based on DQ's Digital Marketing Framework PACE (Promote-Analyze-Convert-Engage), are much sought-after by the industry. It offers deep insights at a national level, as well as regional level, on the talent pool and where to hunt for the best talent. Dataquest, A Cyber Media publication, has been a pioneer in tech-media since 1982. It is the first tech media to advocate the enhancement of technology adoption in the field of higher education. Thereby it recognizes the overall ranking of engineering colleges since 2005.

THE LEAD CAST OF INDIA'S FIRST EVER ACTION FILM ABOUT AN ANIMAL LOVER VIGILANTE "LAKADBAGGHA" LAUNCHED RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S "PURANO SEI" SONG IN KOLKATA

The lead cast of India's first ever action film about an animal lover vigilante "Lakadbaggha" - Anshuman Jha, Ridhi Dogra, Milind Soman, Parash Pahuja reached Kolkata at Roots to launch the song Rabindranath Tagore's "Purano Sei". The song has been recreated by Belgian Maestro Simon Fransquet.

India's first ever action film about an animal lover vigilante "Lakadbaggha" (Hyena) opened to a rousing reception at its Premiere as part of the prestigious Kolkata International Film Festival. The film, which is inspired by real events in Kolkata, deals with the illegal animal trade industry.

Anshuman Jha said, "Rabindranath Tagore's Purano Sei has been re-composed by Fransquet & sung by Shruti Pathak for the said film. And the audiences in Kolkata will get to hear this 21st century rendition of a Tagore Classic. Lakadbaggha is my love letter to dogs (and animals at large) & I can't wait for the world to meet Arjun's character on January 13th. He is ordinary



& that's his super power. This is a universal film with an Indian soul set in Kolkata & the action is nothing like anything you have seen before."

Ridhi Dogra added, "Lakadbaggha is truly a special film - it has action thrill but also a soul. Akshara, my character is the grey between the world's of the protagonist and the antagonist. It is obviously special for its my big screen debut. And I can't wait for the world to watch it in January 2023."

Speaking to the media, Milind Soman said "It's exciting to be part of a unique action film like 'Lakadbaggha'. Every aspect of the story and characters is so unusual and

well thought out. I loved how intrinsically Krav Maga as an exciting martial art is incorporated in the script. Anshuman has had a lot of training in Krav Maga and the choreography is specially designed to highlight this martial art. I'm playing a martial arts instructor and Anshuman's father and the shoot schedule was intense. Working alongside passionate people has been something I have always enjoyed. It's a character I've never played before - a Bengali father and a martial arts trainer, it was loads of fun."

The film is also officially Selected to Open the HBO South Asian International Film Festival in New York, 2022. And has action by the stunt team behind Ong-Bak (Kecha Khamphakdee) & Force Square. And has a hyena (Lakadbaggha) in the middle of the narrative about Indian Street dogs. Produced by First Ray Films, whose last release was the LGBTQ+ themed 'Hum Bhi Akele, Tum Bhi Akele', the film is set to hit the big screens in 2023.



TRIAL OF TETSUYA YAMAGAMI, ALLEGED KILLER OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE, BRINGS GUN LAWS INTO FOCUS



Japanese prosecutors indicted the man suspected of killing former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, according to local media. The Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper reported that the Nara District Public Prosecutors Office indicted the assailant, Tetsuya Yamagami, 42, on murder charges, reports Xinhua news agency. He was also indicted for violating Japan's gun control laws, the report said. The formal charges came following Yamagami undergoing an extended six-month psychiatric trial to determine whether he was mentally fit to be held criminally responsible for his actions.

Yamagami was arrested on the spot on July 8 last year after allegedly shooting the former Prime Minister at close range with a

handmade gun while the latter was delivering a speech in the western prefecture of Nara, just two days ahead of upper house elections. Yamagami, a former Maritime Self-Defense Force worker, allegedly held a grudge against the controversial Unification Church for financially ruining his family by soliciting huge amounts of money in donations from his mother. This amounted to around 100 million yen (\$774,000).

The killer reportedly believed Abe had links to and had promoted the dubious organisation and claimed this factored in to his reason for assassinating the former Prime Minister.

THE H-1B CAP LOTTERY'S WORST YEAR IN HISTORY IS ANTICIPATED TO BE 2023



The H-1B cap lottery is set to have its worst year ever in 2023. According to experts, this year's registrations could reach 500,000, resulting in the approval of around 85,000 additional H-1B visa petitions. In a recent piece, US immigration attorney Robert Webber explains a few causes for the same. Look over here.

Registering electronically: In principle, the system, which debuted in 2020, is a terrific idea because it may make the entire process incredibly simple for employers. But in practice, it is really rather unworkable.

The number of registrations increased from 274k to 308k in 2021, and to 483k in 2022.

The US labor market is still strong: The US Department of Labor said on January 6 that 223,000 new jobs were generated by the American economy. 1.7 jobs are available for every job seeker, in other words.

Now that the US economy is robust, getting an H-1B sponsorship from a consulting firm is one of the easiest ways to enter the labor market. Thus, a further increase in demand is likely.

Layoffs at tech companies: Even if an F-1 student already works at Amazon, Twitter, or Meta, their chances of being selected in the lottery are slim amid high-profile tech layoffs.

Lottery losers from the previous year: Since a record number of people registered for the lottery in March 2022, there were also a record number of lottery losers that month. Many of them will give it another shot this year.

Slow PERM labor certification procedure: For some graduates who are not from India or China, their employers are willing to sponsor them for PERM and then attempt to move them through PERM and into the I-140/I-485 process in order to obtain an EAD/AP work/travel document without having to deal with the H-1B cap.

The process is incredibly slow despite the cleverness of the technique. These candidates will therefore exert pressure for H-1B sponsorship if the F1 to green card process is not moving forward.

The emerging problem of Visa Bulletin cut-off dates for ROW (Rest of World) means that there are people who would like to do an end-run on the H-1B cap lottery are unable to do so, adding yet another group of people seeking the finite capped visas, the expert continued. This is true for those going from F-1 to EB-2 NIW to green card, or being sponsored for a green card through PERM.

INDIAN WOMAN ALLEGES 'INDECENT BEHAVIOUR' BY PAKISTAN DIPLOMATS

Approximately one month after the initial incident, the Indian woman reported receiving WhatsApp messages from the officials involved. The Pakistani government has announced that it is investigating reports of inappropriate conduct by one of its officials at its consulate in Delhi. A woman has come forward accusing staff members of making unwanted sexual advances towards her during her visit to the consulate in 2022 to apply for a visa. According to the woman's statement to News18, she wanted to travel to Pakistan as she was invited by a varsity to deliver a lecture. When she first arrived at the embassy for a visa, she was told to come in May after Eid. However, another official at the consulate told the woman that he can process her visa application. She further told the media outlet that she was taken to another room and asked general questions first and then the conversation crossed a line as she was asked about her marital status and sex life. "He then asked me about my sex life. I found that uncomfortable," she said as quoted by



News18.

She also alleged that the two Pakistan officials began talking about the Khalistan movement and the Kashmir resolution, completely steering the conversation from the matter. Pak diplomats allegedly asked her to criticise PM Modi in articles. Approximately one month after the initial incident, the woman reported receiving WhatsApp messages from the officials involved. According to her, the two men were offering her money in exchange for writing articles critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The woman stated that the men were

messaging and deleting their messages simultaneously, but she was able to capture screenshots.

Pakistan foreign ministry takes cognizance of incident

In a statement, the Pakistani Foreign Ministry emphasized the importance of proper behavior and etiquette towards visa and consular applicants, and that all diplomatic staff are instructed to conduct themselves professionally. The ministry also stated that there is zero tolerance for any mistreatment or misconduct towards individuals visiting Pakistani Missions. The ministry spokesperson expressed surprise at the timing and manner in which the allegations were made and highlighted that there are established procedures in place to address public grievances. The incident has caused tension between the two countries, and the investigation is ongoing. Any misconduct must be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated to ensure justice for the victims and accountability for any wrongdoings.

BAPS SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE VANDALISED IN MELBOURNE BY ANTI-INDIA ELEMENTS

BAPS Swaminarayan Temple in the Mill park area of Melbourne was allegedly vandalised by anti-India elements with anti-India slogans written on the walls of the temple, located in the suburb of Mill Park, The Australia Today reported. Patel, an onlooker who does not want to reveal his first name told The Australia Today, shared how he witnessed the vandalised walls of the temple when he visited the site on Thursday. "When I reached the temple today morning all walls were coloured with graffiti of Khalistani hatred towards Hindus," Australia Today quoted Patel as saying. He added, "I am angry, scared, and dismayed by the blatant display of religious hatred towards the peaceful Hindu community by Khalistan supporters." BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir stated that they are "deeply saddened and shocked by these acts of vandalism and hate. It said that they have remained committed



to "peaceful coexistence and dialogue to all faiths." BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir further said that they have informed the authorities regarding the incident, as per The Australia Today report. Meanwhile, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in a video message has extended "warmest wishes" to Pramukh Swami Maharaj ji and the BAPS organisation upon his 100th birth anniversary.

The video message of the Albanese has been shared by Australia's High Commissioner to India, Barry O'Farrell. "Your Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj on behalf of all Australians, I send my warmest wishes to you and BAPS organisation upon the 100th anniversary of the birth of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj," said Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. He further added, "I pay tribute to his legacy, his message of serving those...something we can all strive for and as he said, in the joy of others, lies our earn. This legacy lives on here in Australia." Anthony Albanese said that Australia is proud of the BAPS community which has built temples across the nation in the "richest Australian society." He further said, "I look forward to the completion of the large new BAPS temple in Sydney."

FRANCE STABBING: SEVERAL HURT IN KNIFE ATTACK AT PARIS CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION, ATTACKER 'NEUTRALISED'

Several people have been stabbed by a knife-wielding man who attacked several passengers at the Paris central railway station on 11th Jan, according to French media reports. France's Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin was quoted by media reports as saying that several people were injured in the attack before the police 'rapidly neutralised' the attacker. Media reports, quoting unnamed police sources, said police opened fire early on Wednesday on the attacker who was armed with a knife and injured several people. The suspect was shot by police multiple times and arrested after the attack at Gare du Nord at around 6.45 am. Interior Minister Darmanin initially confirmed



that the attacker injured several people at the station through a tweet but gave no other details on their number or the extent of the injuries. Paris police said the incident at the Gare du Nord station is now over but offered no other immediate details. The man's motivations were not immediately clear, the Paris police added.

Pictures shared by social media users showed armed police guarding a cordon on the station concourse. The transport hub is one of the busiest in Europe, with Eurostar trains to London and others to northern Europe. Some rail departures have resumed since the stabbing, which saw the station evacuated and a security perimeter established, the French train firm SNCF said on its website. The fresh knife attack comes after another attack at Gare du Nord last February, when French police shot and killed a man who stabbed two officers, giving them minor injuries. It was not thought to be terror-related.

Makar Sankranti

It is said that the "Greatness of a culture can be found in its festivals". India, a land of festivals and fairs, proves its cultural integrity with a wide variety of festivals celebrated across it throughout the year. Makar Sankranti is one such festival. It is the first major festival of the year celebrated on the 14th or 15th of January depending on the solar cycle. The harvest festival is both a religious and seasonal observance and is dedicated to Surya, the sun god. The literal meaning of its name refers to the sun's transit into Makara (Capricorn) rashi (zodiac sign). It also marks the end of winter months in India, and after it, the short winter days start to become longer and the long winter nights start to become shorter. Thus, it is the last day of the month of Poush and marks the beginning of Magha following the Indian Calendar. It is noted that after this day, the sun starts its apparent movement (called Uttarayan) towards the north. Due to its astrological significance, it is considered to be an auspicious day, and any good deed or donation is believed to be fruitful. The festival's signature food is a sweet dish made of Sesame seeds and Jaggery. Another enjoyable aspect of this day is the tradition of flying kites. The morning sky remains awash in a variety of brightly coloured and artistically designed kites. The festivities related to Makar Sankranti have different names depending on the region it is celebrated in. It is famous by the name of Lohri in the northern states of the



country like Punjab and Haryana; Makar Sankranti in Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and West Bengal; Magh Bihu in Assam and the well-known Pongal in Tamil Nadu. Even though this harvest festival is associated with different names and customs in different regions of India, its overall objective of fostering happiness, cohesion, and wealth throughout the nation remains the same.

Shraddha Gupta Grade – IX Indus Valley World School



The SARS-CoV-2 virus has evolved and flourished in numerous new forms since the emergence of COVID-19. While some only led to minor symptoms, others caused major damage. But each new strain typically exposes people to a distinct set of symptoms or a different timetable of health issues.

Early in the pandemic, chest pain, fever, coughing, and loss of taste and smell were some of the most prevalent symptoms, especially with Alpha and Delta types. However, symptoms became more tolerable after COVID-19's Omicron emerged. The occurrence of a sore throat, a runny nose, a headache, and weariness increased.

Myalgia appears to have replaced fatigue as the most common COVID symptom, according to reports.

Myalgia may be a sign

Myalgia is reportedly once again a top COVID symptom, according to reports from the Zoe Covid Study App. According to some theories, inflammatory chemicals generated by immune cells in reaction to the virus cause myalgia, also known as muscular aches and pains.

When the Omicron first appeared in 2021, this particular symptom was one of the more prevalent ones.

Myalgia typically affects unvaccinated people more severely, according to South African physician Angelique Coetzee, who discovered the Omicron type first. However, those who have received the vaccination can still get the illness.

Symptoms of COVID myalgia

Myalgia, often known as muscular aches and pains, is discomfort that can be felt locally or may be coupled with more generalized pain. It is defined as a long-lasting or temporary soreness of the muscles that happens both at rest and during the action.

According to Zoe, people typically experience distress due to COVID-related muscle soreness that affects the shoulders or legs.

How to identify COVID-19

The usual duration of myalgia brought on by COVID is two to three days, however, it can sometimes last longer.

The easiest approach to determine whether you are infected or not is to take a COVID test.

In addition, it is important to keep an eye out for any COVID-19 signs.

Most typical symptoms

The most typical COVID signs and symptoms include:

- Sore, scratchy throat
- Fever
- Runny nose
- Headache
- Persistent cough
- Fatigue

How to stop COVID from spreading

Older folks, those with impaired immune systems, and those with pre-existing medical disorders are still at high risk from COVID-19.

To combat the SARS-CoV-2 virus, it is essential to wear your masks, keep a distance from others, practice good hand hygiene, and remain isolated if you experience symptoms similar to COVID.

The significance of vaccinations

A COVID-19 vaccine is a safer, more dependable strategy to develop protection than being ill with COVID-19, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Although severe diseases are still common, experts think that getting vaccinated is presently one of the best strategies to avoid them.

WHAT ARE THE 7 CHAKRAS IN HUMAN BODY AND THEIR EFFECTS?

When a person is surrounded by positive energy from all sides and follows his favorable directions, then his 7 chakras are in the right direction.

To live an ideal life, it is very important for any person to energize his body and this can be done easily through yoga. Although science has made a lot of progress, but yoga has been considered the best option to keep the body healthy. For your information, let us tell you that when a person is surrounded by positive energy from all sides and follows his favorable directions, then his 7 chakras are in the right direction and fully charged to remain happy continuously.

7 Chakras in our body and their effect on life

First of all, you should know that there are a total of 114 chakras present in our body, but mainly 7 chakras have been given importance, namely Muladhara Chakra, Sahasrara Chakra, Ajna Chakra, Anahat Chakra, Manipur Chakra, Vishuddha Chakra and Swadishthana Chakra. Before awakening any chakra, it is necessary to meditate. It becomes all the more important that you need a peaceful environment to meditate. In this, sitting in a meditative posture in a quiet place, focus on your breath. Doing this helps in awakening the chakras. However, if you have awakened all these 7 chakras, then it is also very important to keep it under control.

Swadishthana Chakra: This chakra is related to the water element present in our body. If this chakra is awakened, all kinds of bad qualities like physical problems and disorders, cruelty, laziness, and disbelief are destroyed. Not only this but any type of disorder in the body is caused due to improper water elements.

Muladhara Chakra: This chakra is located between the anus and the genitals. According to Yoga Shastra, it is told that if

we meditate on this place, it gives us valour and bliss. It has also been told that if Muladhara Chakra is not active, then due to this the person often suffers from serious problems like constipation, diarrhea, piles, colitis, and high blood pressure.

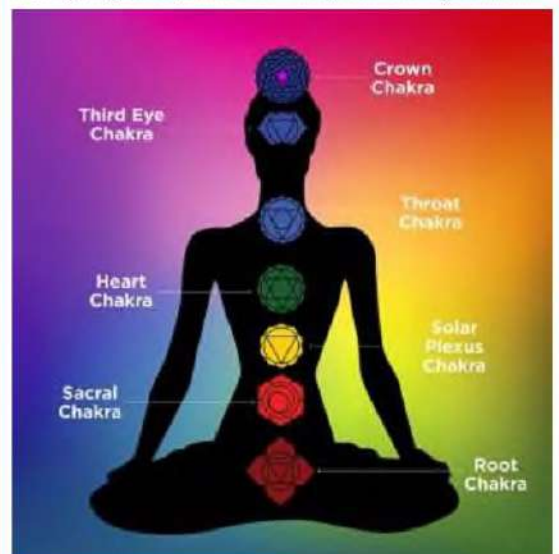
Manipur Chakra: Due to the Manipur Chakra present just above the navel, all the things that are jealous, fear etc. in our body do not get awakened. It is said that if all the energy generated through yogic activities is collected in this chakra, then by doing so you can become a Karmayogi.

Ajnya Chakra: This chakra is located between the two eyebrows of our body. Explain that awakening this chakra gives intuition, imagination and the ability to deal with situations. You can also understand that by its awakening, a person gets self-knowledge.

Sahasrara Chakra: This chakra is said to be located in the center of the brain. This chakra is believed to be related to inner and outer beauty and connection with spirituality. Although, there are many problems in awakening this chakra, but after its awakening, ultimate bliss is attained.

Vishuddhi Chakra: Vishuddhi Chakra is present in our throat and lets us tell you that its awakening is related to communication, self-expression etc. Along with this, our speech becomes pure and music education is also proven.

Anahat Chakra: The Anahat Chakra is located in the heart of a human being and it is said that the person who succeeds in awakening it destroys things like hypocrisy, worry, attachment and ego from his life.



Mercantile Post

CITROEN C3 EV INDIA LAUNCH SOON, OFFICIALLY TEASED



Citroen is all set to enter the electric vehicle (EV) market in India and will shortly release an EV based on the C3. The fact that established automakers like Maruti Suzuki and Toyota have yet to join the segment might benefit Citroen. The freshly released Tata Tiago EV is its sole real competitor in the electric vehicle segment.

As part of its C-cubed initiative for innovative vehicles, Citroen will introduce the C3 electric car. Citroen intends to roll out a fleet of cheap, space-saving compacts under this strategy. The CMP platform, developed by Citroen, will serve as the foundation for all of these vehicles. In addition to the domestic market, Citroen cars manufactured in India will seek out foreign customers.

The C3 Electric might have a range comparable to the Tiago EV, given that Citroen plans to sell it for a reasonable price. It seems that C3 will have a slightly increased range in order to better compete with the Tiago EV. The upcoming all-electric Citroen C3 electric has been teased in a video.

EMPLOYEES' DA CLIMBED BY 4%, AND SALARIES ROSE



Good news has arrived for government workers. On New Year's, thousands of employees received a sizable present. The DA has been raised by the state government by 4%. (DA Hike News). Your income will be increased as a gift starting on January 1, 2023. On January 1st, the government made the announcement of the increase.

Let us inform you that the DA for employees was enhanced by the Tamil Nadu government. M.K. Stalin, the state's chief minister, has approved a rise in the daily allowance (DA) for all public employees, including teachers, retirees, and family pensioners. Employees and pensioners will start receiving 4% more DA going forward.

You Will Receive 38% DA

Let us inform you that this raise becomes effective right away. From this point forward, employees will receive a dearness allowance at a rate of 38% rather than 34%.

Chief Minister Stalin informed thousands of workers that the state's 16 lakh employees would profit from the rise in DA.

HOW TO ACTIVATE JIO 5G ON A PHONE AFTER IT HAS DEBUTED IN 78 INDIAN CITIES

The 5G era will dominate in 2023. Following the debut of their 5G services by Jio and Airtel last year, the telecom companies have been expanding the availability of those services across the nation. The Mukesh Ambani-led company has formally acknowledged that Jio 5G service has already been launched in 75 Indian locations. The most recent ones are Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur.

It should be mentioned that only 5G smartphones can use 5G. Jio is collaborating with OEMs to add 5G functionality to all handsets with 5G capabilities. With the release of the most recent iOS upgrade, eligible Apple iPhone models can now also use 5G.

Change your settings if you reside in one of the



forementioned cities and are still unable to utilize Jio 5G. Simply navigate to the Settings menu, select Network Settings, and then select 5G. You can now utilize 5G on your phone if the Jio 5G service is available in your area.

Users will only be able to utilize 5G, it should be emphasized if they have gotten a Jio 5G invite, which should be available on the MyJio app. Eligible consumers will also receive the Jio 5G invitation over WhatsApp from Jio. You'll have to wait longer if you're still unable to see the invitation.

Later this year, Reliance Jio is anticipated to introduce 5G plans. As of right now, the telecom provider has stated that customers who have signed up for a Jio plan costing Rs 239 or more would be able to enjoy Jio 5G. Now, we advise you to upgrade to 5G at your own risk because many consumers are reporting call drop issues and that their data allotment is running out very soon.

HOW TO TRANSFER PF BALANCE FROM OLD COMPANY? HOW TO CHECK PROVIDENT FUND BALANCE?



Provident fund is a great savings instrument. Its main aim is to generate retirement funds. A portion of your salary is deducted every month. It gets added to your retirement corpus that you can take out after retirement. It also gives people tax breaks. Hence, people don't find that they are paying the provident fund year after year. However, what happens when you shift your companies and don't use the

some provident fund account? Well, you can transfer the PF funds of all previous companies into your current PF account. Here's how to do that.

For that, you need information like your UAN number, bank account numbers, mobile phone, Aadhaar. All these details must be linked to your UAN.

How to check your PF balance.

Log on to <https://unifiedportal-mem.epfindia.gov.in/memberinterface/>. Punch in your UAN number and password and captcha code.

Go to the Members profile. Check your personal details.

View the passbook option. Punch in your details again.

Details of all the PF accounts will be visible in a drop down menu. The bottom most id will be your current company.

Click the view passbook to see your balance.

To transfer your balance, check your old company's service history and see the entry date and exit date have been updated by the old companies. Go to the online services option and click One Member One EPF Account option. Push the transfer button.

A new page will appear wherein your personal information, details of your existing companies and current company will be displayed.

Enter your UAN details. PF IDs of all your previous companies will appear. Select the one whose money you want to transfer to your current account.

You will get an OTP for authentication. Fill the OTP

Additionally, thousands of pensioners will receive higher pensions. The state administration considered employee representation before making this choice.

What Will the Price Be?

Let us inform you that the state government would incur an additional cost of Rs 2,359 crore as a result of this action. He made a plea to the employees, referring to the increase in DA as a New Year's present, to join the government's initiatives for the welfare and development of the populace.

In the near future, the central government will also raise the DA.

Let us inform you that the federal government will shortly enhance the employees' daily allowance as well. The government may announce an increase in the employees' daily allowance (DA) during the month of January itself. The government is anticipated to be able to raise the dearness allowance by 4%

LIC AADHAAR SHILA: INVEST RS 58, EARN RS 9 LAKH; FEATURES, ELIGIBILITY OF POLICY

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has policies for every section of the society. This is the reason that it is the market leader in the insurance field. It also has plans for all income groups. LIC Aadhaar Shila policy is for the low and middle income groups with the minimum sum assured of Rs 75000 and the maximum at Rs 3 lakhs. You can set aside a paltry sum per day to invest in the LIC Aadhaar Shila plan. It is a long term investment like most LIC policies. It also gives a person death cover. If a person invests Rs 58 every day, she will get lakhs of rupees at the time of maturity. Let's examine the key features of the plan.

LIC's Aadhaar Shila is a non-linked, participating, individual, Life Assurance plan. It



offers protection as well as savings. It provides financial support for the family in case of the unfortunate death of the policyholder and a lump sum amount at the time of maturity. It also has the loan facility.

Sum Assured on death is seven times of annual premiums and 110 percent of basic sum assured.

Minimum basic sum assured is Rs 75000 and

maximum is Rs 3 lakh.

Minimum age of entry is 8 years and maximum age of entry is 55 years. The policy term is 10 to 20 years.

This plan is exclusively for women. The minimum plan term is between 10 and 20 years. The maximum age for maturity is 70 years. It also has the loyalty addition feature.

Premiums have to be paid in monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annual mode.

If your age is 20 years and you invest at the rate of Rs 58 every day, you will have invested Rs 21918 per year. After 20 years, your invested amount will be Rs 429392. At the time of maturity, you will get Rs 794000.

SMARTPHONES TO GET TOUGHER WITH THE NEWEST CORNING GORILLA GLASS VICTUS 2

Gorilla Glass has been designed into more than 8 billion devices by over 45 major brands for more than a decade

Smartphones today are bigger, faster and more capable. These devices contain every information one needs at their fingertips and that's precisely why people are keener to ensure that they are well protected. But that also makes them a tad bit heavier, and the all-glass body makes them more susceptible to damage should they fall. With the latest Corning Gorilla Glass Victus 2, OEMs can now provide consumers with smartphone protection that was previously unheard of.

"Smartphones are the center of our digital lives, and the requirement for exceptional scratch and drop resistance has only increased with our growing reliance on clear, damage-free displays," said Dave Velasquez, Vice President and General Manager, Corning Gorilla Glass. "We challenged our scientists not only to create a glass composition that was durable enough to better survive drops from waist height onto rougher surfaces than asphalt, but to improve cover-glass performance for larger and heavier devices. With more sophisticated and varied designs, today's smartphones are nearly 15% heavier, and screen

sizes are up to 10% larger, than they were four years ago – increasing both the stress on the cover glass and the probability of damage. Gorilla Glass Victus 2 redefines tough for consumers and OEMs."



Source : Media Release

KNOW ABOUT INDIAN ARMY DAY

Indian Army Day 2023: January 15, 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of Indian Army Day. As a nation, we have come a very long way since the formation of the Indian Army in 1947. Celebrating this day is an opportunity to take pride and recognize the commitment of our soldiers to protecting our freedom and defending our values. The Indian Army has fought numerous battles throughout its history – both internal and external – and has consistently proven itself to be an admirable force in maintaining peace, stability and order in India. On this special day, let's honor the brave men and women who have given their lives for our safety and security. Let's take a moment to remember their courage, heroism and sacrifice as we commemorate 75 years of service from the Indian Army. January 15th is celebrated as Indian Army Day every year. It marks the day when Field Marshal KM Cariappa took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief, in 1949. The day is celebrated to honour all those who have served and are serving in the Indian Army. It is also a day to remember all the brave soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for the country.

Indian Army Day is celebrated with a grand parade at the Cariappa Parade Ground in New Delhi, which is attended by top military and political leaders, as well as families of soldiers. Other events include wreath-laying ceremonies, gun salutes, and Guard of Honour for veterans.

THE HISTORY OF INDIAN ARMY DAY

The Indian Army came into being on 15 August 1947 with the independence of India from British rule. The first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army was field marshal General Sir Claude Auchinleck. The Indian Army has fought in a number of wars and battles, including the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947, the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965,



the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, the Kargil War of 1999, and the Operation Vijay against Pakistan in 1999. It has also been an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Indian Army celebrates its Army Day on 15 January every

year to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) Kodandera M Cariappa became its first commander-in-chief. On this occasion, parades and other military shows are held at different locations across India.

WHY WE CELEBRATE INDIAN ARMY DAY

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and it is

commanded by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Now that we know a little bit about the Indian Army, let's find out why we celebrate Indian Army Day.

HOW TO CELEBRATE INDIAN ARMY DAY

Indian Army Day is celebrated on 15th January every year to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) Kodandera M. Cariappa took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, in 1949. The celebrations begin with a wreath laying ceremony at Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate followed by Guard of Honour at Rajpath. A lot of functions are organized by various regimental centers and units of Indian Army all over the country which include exhibition, talks by veterans, open house, debates, symposiums, sports meet, cultural programmes etc. The main aim behind celebrating this day is to pay tribute to all the soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for the nation and also to spread awareness about the role and responsibilities of Indian Army among people.

SANIA MIRZA GETS SELECTED FOR NDA; DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH SAYS INDIAN FORCES HAVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RELIGION



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on January 13 said Indian Armed Forces have opportunities for the youth of all castes and religions. Singh said this as he praised UP girl Sania Mirza for her selection to the National Defence Academy (NDA). Addressing the convocation ceremony of a university, Singh said, "Indian Armed Forces have opportunities for the youth of all castes and religions. A Muslim girl Sania Mirza will become India's first female Muslim fighter pilot after successful completion of the course." Sania Mirza, hailing from Jasovar village under the Mirzapur Dehat Kotwali Police Station, aspires to become a fighter pilot like the country's first woman fighter pilot Avni Chaturvedi. "There was a time when women were hardly represented in Defence forces but today women are deployed on warships and in extreme areas like Siachen," added the Defence Minister. Sania Mirza, daughter of a TV mechanic from Mirzapur, has cracked the entrance exam of the NDA.

INDIAN ARMY PLACES ORDER FOR 1,470 MAHINDRA SCORPIO CLASSIC SUVs, ANAND MAHINDRA SAYS THIS



The Mahindra Scorpio is an important brand for the Indian UV giant, so much so that the company currently sells two iterations of the Scorpio in the Indian market - Mahindra Scorpio-II and Mahindra Scorpio Classic. The Indian Army has placed an order to acquire 1,470 units of newly launched Mahindra Scorpio Classic SUV for 12 units of the armed forces. The update was shared by Mahindra Automotive on Twitter. The handle wrote, "We're proud to announce the order for 1470 units of the Scorpio Classic for 12 units of the Indian Army across the nation. We thank the #IndianArmy for their trust in us." Replying on the post, Chairman Anand Mahindra said, "Jai Hind...".

SITUATION ALONG INDIA-CHINA BORDER STABLE BUT 'UNPREDICTABLE', SAYS ARMY CHIEF GEN MANOJ PANDE



Days after the Tawang clash in Arunachal Pradesh, Army chief General Manoj Pandey on Thursday (January 12, 2023) said that the situation along the India-China border is "stable" but "unpredictable". In an annual press conference, Pandey said that the Army

troops have been able to maintain a robust posture along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to defeat any evil design of the adversary in a firm and resolute manner. He added that adequate deployment of troops has been made along the LAC to deal with any challenge. The Army chief also said that India and China have been able to resolve "five of the seven issues" that were on the table. "We continue to talk both at the military and diplomatic levels," he added.

General Manoj Pandey also spoke on the

situation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir and said that the ceasefire understanding that was agreed to in February 2021 is holding well. However, cross-border support to terrorism and terror infrastructure remained, he said. He also said that a proposal for the induction of women personnel into artillery units has been sent to the Centre. "In furtherance of the vision of Nari Shakti, the Indian Army will commence induction of women officers into the Regiment of Artillery that entails a fair share of frontline combat.

MEET CAPT SHIVA CHOUHAN: ARMY'S 1ST WOMAN OFFICER POSTED IN SIACHEN TRAINED IN ICE WALL CLIMBING, AVALANCHE RESCUE

After she lost her father at the age of 11, Captain Shiva Chouhan's mother, who is a homemaker, overcame every hurdle so that her daughter could become an army officer. On January 2, 2023, the Bengal Sapper officer finished a most difficult climb to become the Indian Army's first woman officer to be operationally deployed in Siachen Glacier.

While the army celebrated her achievement by tweeting that it broke the glass ceiling, recognition also came from the country's topmost leader— Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who shared the tweet, said this illustrated "spirit of India's Nari Shakti". After completing a month's arduous training at Siachen Battle School along with other personnel, Capt Chouhan was deployed in Kumar Post at the world's highest battlefield. The officer was commissioned into the army only in May 2021, and took up the challenge of leading the Sura Soi Engineer Regiment at a battlefield with one of the harshest climates.

Capt Chouhan belongs to Rajasthan and completed her schooling from Udaipur. She is a graduate in civil engineering from IJR Institute of Technology, Udaipur. "She lost



her father at a young age of 11 years and her mother, who is a housewife, took care of her studies. Since her childhood, she was motivated to join Indian armed forces and showcased unparalleled zeal during training at OTA (Officers Training Academy), Chennai, and was commissioned into the engineer regiment in May 2021," an army official said while quoting her profile. Only after a year of service, the young officer displayed grit and determination by successfully leading the Sura Soi Cycling Expedition covering a distance of 508 km from Siachen War Memorial to Kargil War Memorial, which was conducted on Kargil Vijay Diwas in July 2022. Based on her exemplary performance, she was chosen to undergo training at the Siachen Battle School where she underwent rigorous training alongside other officers and soldiers.

This included endurance training, ice wall climbing, avalanche and crevasse rescue and survival drills. In spite of various challenges, Capt Chouhan successfully completed her training and was all set to be deployed at Siachen. Her team of Sappers will be deployed at Siachen for three months, and be responsible for numerous combat engineering tasks.

The Siachen Glacier is located at a height of around 20,000 feet in the Karakoram range. The highest militarised zone in the world, soldiers posted there have to battle frostbite and high winds. Defence minister Rajnath Singh conveyed his best wishes to Capt Chouhan and said he was happy to see more women joining the armed forces and take every challenge in their stride. "Excellent news! I am extremely happy to see more women joining the armed forces and take every challenge in stride. It is an encouraging sign. My best wishes to Capt Shiva Chouhan," he tweeted. Women officers have been posted as far as the Siachen base camp, which is at about 9,000 feet, as part of their regular postings along with the unit.

(With PTI inputs)

ARYSTANBEKOVA AND NUPBAY WINS WOMEN'S DOUBLES



Jangjun Kim of Korea knocked out top seed Adhithya Ganesan 7-5, 6-3 in the boys semifinals of the ITF junior tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Friday.

Moving with energy and hitting with intensity, the Korean stopped the American of Indian origin with a clinical performance. Adhithya recovered from being down 1-4 in the first set to be on par, but found the Korean a hard nut to crack, as the match progressed in the other semifinal, Ivan Lutkin of Russia retired early in the second set, owing to a hip strain, against compatriot Timofei Derepasko.

In the girls section, top seed Ashton Bowers overcame the teasing game of Indra Lepage of Belgium, with patience and a strong game, to win in straight sets. Ashton was unable to serve out the match in the tenth and 12th games of the second set, as the wiry Belgian sustained the fight, but the American handled the eventual tie-break with competence.

In the final, Ashton will play Yloda Mincheva of Russia, who eased past the other American, Alexia Harmon, for the loss of three games.

The boys doubles title was won by top seeds Ayush Bhat and Amir Milushev, while the girls doubles title was won by third seeds Asylzhan Arystanbekova and Aiya Nupbay.

NATIONAL SHOOTING SELECTION TRIALS



Esha Singh came up with a strong performance from start to finish to emerge on top in women's air pistol in the National shooting selection trials at the Dr Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad, on Friday.

After topping qualification with 581, two points ahead of Rhythm Sangwan, the 17-year-old Esha topped the semifinals with 249.3 and beat the reigning national champion Divya TS 16-14 in the climax. Esha shot 10.0 to 9.9 by Divya, to clinch the top spot, after the two were tied 14-14.

Olympian Yashaswini Singh Deswal made it to third place ahead of Shikha Narwal, while Rhythm, Padma Devaram, Malaika Goel and Yashika Goel got eliminated in the semifinals.

In men's air pistol, Sarabjot Singh beat Shiva Narwal 17-11 for the top spot, after having qualified on top with 587.

In the men's rifle 3-position event, World Cup gold medalist Akhil Sheoran was brilliant as he beat Olympic quota winner Swapnil Kusale 17-11, after having scored an impressive 592 in qualification.

Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, who had topped the first trial, shot 594 in qualification but placed fifth eventually, behind Olympians Chain Singh and Sanjeev Rajput.

SIDHARTH SHARMA, HIMACHAL PRADESH BOWLER, DIES AGED 28

Sidharth played his last game against Bengal in December at the Eden Gardens.



Himachal Pradesh pacer Sidharth Sharma passed away in a private hospital in Vadodara late on Thursday 12th January. The 28-year-old had been on the ventilator for the past two weeks and succumbed to multi-organ failure. A member of the Himachal Pradesh senior team, Sidharth last played against Bengal at the Eden Gardens in December and claimed a fiver in the first innings, and followed it up with a brace in the second essay. He fell sick and was eventually hospitalised while travelling with the team to Vadodara for an away fixture against Baroda.

"It is unfortunate. He was fine and played the first two matches of the Ranji Trophy. Before the game against Baroda, he felt unwell and we got him admitted to the

hospital. After a few tests, it was found that his creatinine levels were high. His kidneys and subsequently other organs were affected. The doctors tried their level best but could not save him," Arun Dhumal, the former president of the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association and current chairman of the IPL Governing Council, told media.

Dhumal was in constant touch with Baroda Cricket Association president Pranav Amin to ensure Sidharth received proper treatment. "In between, he had shown signs of improvement for a day, and we were quite hopeful that he would come out of it. But unfortunately, there were multiple organ failures," Dhumal said.

Born in Una, Sidharth made his first-class debut for Himachal Pradesh in 2017-18 and had picked up 25 wickets in Ranji Trophy since then.

He featured in the Vijay Hazare Trophy - his first List A tournament - in 2021-22 and claimed eight wickets in six outings. He was part of the tournament-winning side.

"He was a very good prospect for the HPCA and it's a big loss for the association, his family and everyone who knew him. He had lots of dreams, but unfortunately, we could not save him," Dhumal said.

Sidharth's old friend and HP teammate Prashant Chopra was with him in Vadodara. "The team had reached Vadodara on December 31. He was running a fever, so the team doctor asked him to rest up. When I joined the team the next day, he was still unwell and by the day after, he had started throwing up and his condition deteriorated," Chopra said.

"By late evening, he was shifted to the ICU and by night, he underwent dialysis. He was conscious, and would constantly keep asking the team manager about the side. But during our match, we got to know that things worsened."

The players ensured they rushed to the hospital soon after the match got over and stayed there till midnight. The practice continued for the next few days. Chopra, who has known him for years, remembers him as a soft-spoken cricketer who enjoyed life.

"We would call him Love Charger - based on a popular song. He would often dance to this and thus everybody started calling him by that name. He enjoyed life but was serious about the game. When he made his Ranji Trophy debut, he was my roommate, but then, he was left out for a while. He made a comeback and played the most important role during the knockouts of the Vijay Hazare Trophy in Jaipur. He played a key role in our title win," Chopra said.

According to Chopra, Sidharth's father was with the Indian Army and did not initially want him to play cricket, but he pursued the sport. "When he was in the ICU, he regained his consciousness but could not speak, so he asked the nurse to get him a piece of paper and wrote to his father: Mujhe cricket khelne se rok na mat. Mujhe khelne dena (Please don't stop me from playing cricket). Our manager was there, and when he told us this, we could not hold back our tears."

Unfortunately, Sidharth couldn't make it back to the pitch to play his favourite sport again.

STARTING WITH A WIN OVER BHAVANI DEVI, FENCER JOSNA SEEKS MORE COMPETITIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

When fencer Josna Christy Jose made her senior National debut in Raipur in January 2017, she did not have any burden of expectations from anybody. But the 19-year-old entered the sabre final, where she shocked international Bhavani Devi in a tight final, and won the National gold on her first try. "I don't think she lost because I was a very good fencer then, she may have played it easy since I was just a beginner and then it was probably difficult for her to come back," said Josna on the sidelines of the sub-junior Nationals at the Regional Sports Centre here. But while Bhavani's graph kept rising - she won the Commonwealth championship gold and became the first Indian fencer to qualify for the Olympics in Tokyo two years ago - since, Josna's did not hit big time, though she won



silver, behind the famed fencer, in four Nationals after that.

"After my gold, we had a camp in Pune, went for the Asian championship but there was no major turning point or change in my fencing life then," said the young woman from Wayanad who trains under National sabre coach Sagar Lagu at the SAI (Sports Authority of India)

centre, Thalassery.

She feels that if she had received international training at that stage, things could have been different. "However much we train, we need quality competitions to do well, the more we get the better we can be," she said.

Josna was a part of the Indian women's sabre team that won the Commonwealth championship bronze in London last year and she also competed in World Cups in Georgia and Tunisia in 2022.

"I haven't had foreign training at all. We have a few fencers training abroad now but we need to send a bigger group, and in groups for training, to assess and help out each other," she said.

'THE FIGHT FOR OUR DREAMS BEGAN AT 6': SANIA MIRZA PENS EMOTIONAL POST PRIOR TO FINAL GRAND SLAM BEFORE RETIREMENT

Sania Mirza, who is set to retire after next month's Dubai Masters, reflected on her long and illustrious journey in the sport in an emotional Instagram post prior to the 2023 Australian Open, the final Grand Slam of her career. She expressed her gratitude for the support she has received throughout her career, and her excitement for the upcoming tournament. Mirza's retirement marks the end of an era for tennis, as she has been a trailblazer for the sport in India.

The 36-year-old wrote, "Thirty (yes, 30!) years ago a 6 year old girl from Nasr School in Hyderabad, walked on to a tennis court at Nizam Club with her young mom and fought the coach to let her learn how to play tennis

as he thought that she was too little :). The fight for our dreams began at 6!"

She added, "My Grand Slam journey started with the Australian Open back in 2005. So, it goes without saying that this would be the most perfect Grand Slam to end my career with."

"As I got ready to play my last Australian Open 18 years after I played my first, and then the Dubai Open in Feb, have so many emotions flashing through me with pride and gratitude, perhaps, being the foremost. I take pride in everything have been able to achieve over the last 20 years of my professional career and I am so grateful for the memories that I have been able

to create. The greatest memory that I will carry with me for a life time is that of the pride and happiness that I saw on the faces of my fellow countrymen and supporters each time I achieved victory and reached milestones in my long career."



“Artizen's Column”

Poem of the week

Encomium for the Moon

By Riddhi Dey

What beauty you speak of, standing on
this land,
Of this land, of all on this land?
I've spoken too of beauty in reiterating
verses

That sings in monotony of echoed
praises.

But she hides behind shrouds of
beauteous white

At nights the poet, painter bides their
time.

She teases them with fleeting glances,
But beauty she is
For her, you must abide.

She has her companions too - a jewelled
tribe -

But none that overwhelms her
brilliance;

They glide with her and smile at her
But to reap her laudation, would not
bribe.

On nights she dresses in her kercheif -
the lunar halo-
A herald for stormy affrights,
And sometimes serendipitous auguries.

Unknown, distant and scarred
But in milluon praises she resides;
In scripts and canvas and speech
In million more she will.

But beauty she is...
So she must hide.

Art of the week



Balance
By Shrabantika Adhya

Koi fish are usually paired with yin yan symbol. The symbol of balance. They symbolize strength as well as good fortune, especially with wealth. The sides of black and white are said to resemble a female and a male koi swimming together, representing the harmony of two opposite energies coming together as one, creating a perfect balance.



Face of the week

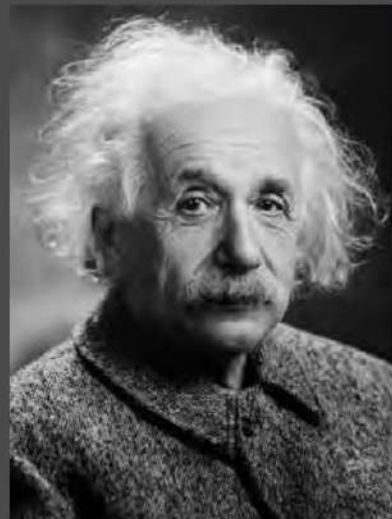
Niyan Varun Shah
Let the child in you always
run free

Shot of the week



A new tomorrow
By Titli Das
"Every sunset is a opportunity to reset"- Richie Norton

Thought of the week



Logic will take you from A to B
Imagination will take you
everywhere.
-Albert Einstein