



## WELCOMING LORD RAM, IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF DELHI



Tonight we are going to celebrate 'Dilli ki Diwali' in a unique way. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal along with his cabinet will do Diwali Puja before the representation of the temple of Lord Ram in Ayodhya. The Puja ceremony will be conducted by the head priest of the Jhandewalan mandir.

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IN BRIEF



**Air quality in Delhi drops to seasonal low**  
NEW DELHI  
A day before Deepavali, air quality has dipped to a seasonal low of 320 – or the “very poor” category in the National Capital Region.

NEWS PAGE 8



**THE HINDU** greets its readers on the occasion of Deepavali  
There will be no issue of THE HINDU dated November 5, 2021 as our office will remain closed for the festival.

Excise duty on petrol cut by ₹5, diesel by ₹10

After Centre's move, most BJP-ruled States slash fuel taxes

**VIKAS DHOOT**  
NEW DELHI  
The Government on Wednesday finally bit the bullet on runaway fuel prices and slashed excise duties on petrol and diesel by ₹5 and ₹10 per litre respectively, citing the need to help farmers for the rabi crop, ease inflation and give the economy a consumption boost.

Cheaper fuel

	Petrol	Diesel
Base price	47.28	49.36
Freight	0.3	0.28
Excise duty	32.9 (-5)*	31.8 (-10)*
Dealer rate	3.9	2.61
VAT	25.31	14.37
Retail price	109.69	98.42

The table lists the retail price buildup of petrol and diesel in Delhi as of Nov. 1. The Centre has reduced ₹5 and ₹10 from the excise duties of petrol and diesel respectively

Celebration of lights



Surreal streaks: A laser show on the banks of the Sarayu river in Ayodhya during Deepotsav, when nine lakh earthen lamps were lit, on the eve of Deepavali, on Wednesday.

Despite bail, long road out of jail

**ARNABJIT SUR**  
NEW DELHI  
While Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan is finally out of jail after paperwork delayed his release on bail, not everyone is that lucky.

DETAILS PAGE 8

Annaatthe to hit 1,200 screens worldwide

It is Rajinikanth's first film after he decided not to take the political plunge

**STAFF REPORTER**  
CHENNAI  
After the COVID-19 lockdowns, ‘Superstar’ Rajinikanth’s *Annaatthe* will release on Deepavali day in about 1,200 screens globally, besides those in India.

situation in most countries because of curbs at public places like theatres has meant that producers of big budget films like *Annaatthe* – which has reportedly been made at a cost of ₹180 crore – have found themselves in a Catch-22 situation.



Sun Pictures has roped in Qube Cinema to assist it in finding theatres abroad.

the box office will decide whether Rajinikanth can continue his solo act as the number one of Tamil cinema, drawing an astronomical salary of close to ₹100 crore, or follow Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan and play roles that suit his age.

PM calls for door-to-door vaccination

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday held a review meeting with senior officials of districts with low COVID-19 vaccination coverage.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Covaxin gets WHO's emergency use nod

Relief for those wishing to fly abroad

**Long wait ends**  
The WHO's emergency use licence for Covaxin has come after over 12 crore doses were administered in the first 11 months of its use in India. A lowdown:

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Central teams rush to States hit by dengue

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI  
The Union Health Ministry has rushed high-level teams to nine States and Union Territories – Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir – reporting a high caseload of dengue to support them in control and management of the disease.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

NCPCR issues notice to NCERT on transgender inclusion manual

Take action, rectify anomalies in document: child rights panel

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI  
Following a right-wing backlash on social media and a complaint from a former Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) *pracharak*, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has issued a notice to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) regarding its new training manual on inclusion of transgender children in schools.

students under the name of gender sensitisation.” The issues of contention were the manual's recommendation to use gender-neutral toilets and remove gender binaries in school infrastructure and processes.

appropriate action in rectifying the anomalies in the document”, verify the background and qualifications of the drafting committee members, and apprise the commission of action taken within seven days.

DUSU challenges university's decision in HC

‘Move to consider only Class XII marks for Kerala board students arbitrary, unfair’

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI  
The Delhi University Students Union (DUSU) has moved the High Court against the university's decision to consider only Class XII marks for the admission of students from Kerala State Board, which determines the grades by combining marks of Classes XI and XII.

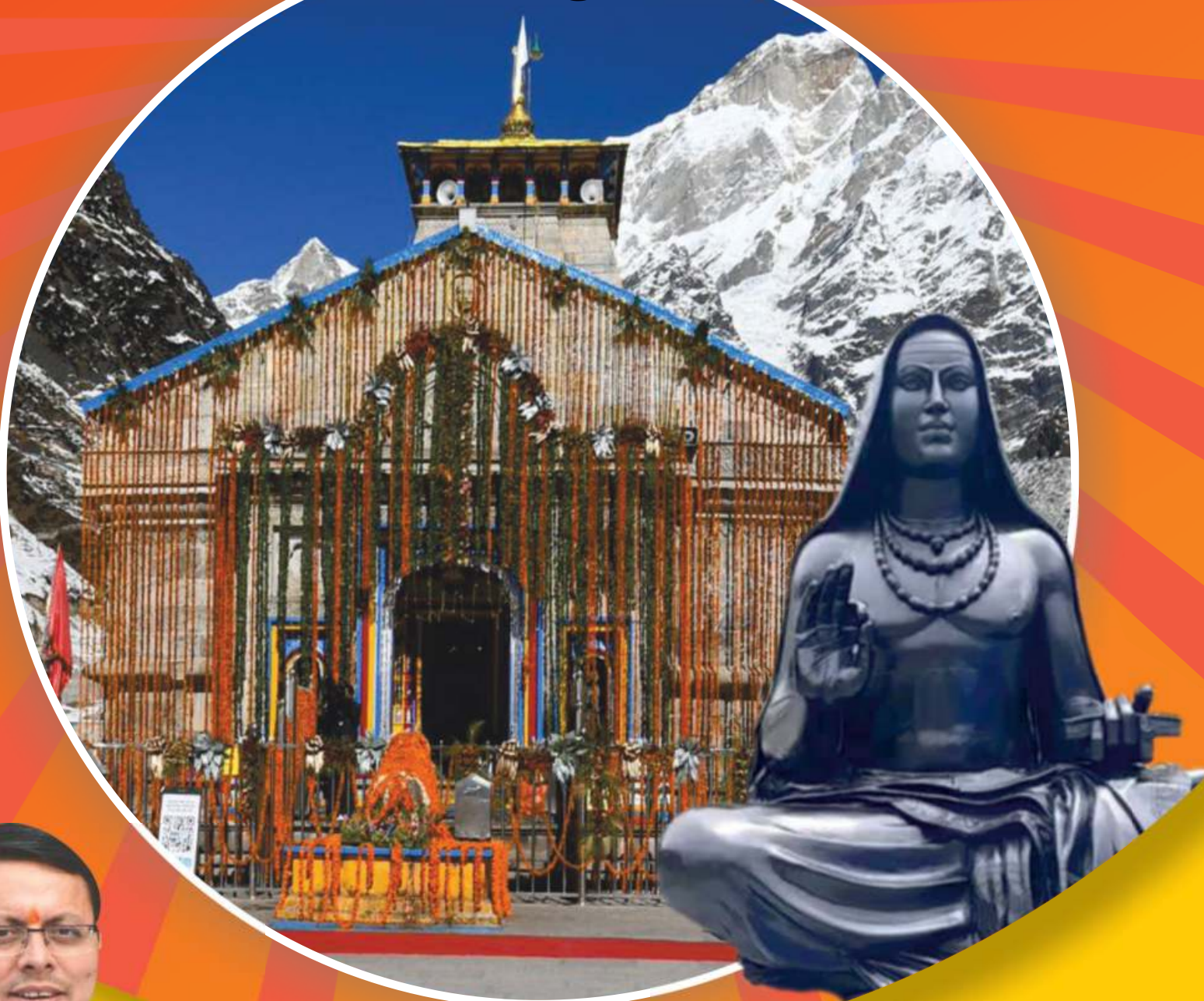
Tough ask: DU's admission process began on October 1 with some colleges seeking perfect scores for courses.

and XII,” the plea stated. The plea added that initially, the university directed that such cases be kept on hold; however, within a few hours, the admissions office circulated an email to colleges asserting that the Admission Advisory Committee has decided that only marks of Class XII shall be considered.



# SHRI KEDARNATH DHAM

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Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

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Uttarakhand**



**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

## *Inauguration & Foundation Stone Laying* of reconstruction works in Shri Kedarnath Dham

- **Aadi Guru Shri Shankaracharya's Samadhi & Statue**  
Spiritual experience for devotees by visiting at reconstructed Samadhi
- **Residential complex for Teerth Purohit**  
Lodging facilities for Teerth Purohits in Kedarpuri itself
- **Construction of flood safety and Ghats at the bank of the river Saraswati**  
Flood control wall constructed to guard against disaster
- **Load-bearing wall for flood control at the bank of river Mandakini**  
Flood control by load-bearing wall at the bank of river Mandakini
- **Bridge on river Mandakini for Garud Chatti**  
Smooth Movement will be facilitated with the help of reconstructed bridge between Garud Chatti and Kedarpuri
- **Redevelopment of Sangam Ghat and Rain Shelter in Shri Kedarnath Dham**  
Pilgrims will be benefitted because of redevelopment of Sangam Ghat and they will be guarded from Rain
- **First aid centre and Tourists Facility Centre**  
Unwell pilgrims will get adequate treatment & Tourists will be benefitted through Tourist Facility Centre
- **Mandakini Astha Path Queue Management, Mandakini Water ATM and Mandakini Plaza**  
Mandakini Astha Path Queue Management will made the Darshan easy and comfortable and clean water will be available at Water ATM
- **Administration Office and Hospital Building**  
Help will be provided to pilgrims for information, complaint & assistance and dedicated medical services will also be accessible in the hospital
- **Kedarnath Teerth Sthal and Museum**  
Pilgrims will get complete information of the history of Kedarnath
- **Saraswati Civic Amenities Building**  
Locker, Changing Room, Toilet and Clean Drinking Water facilities will be available in the building for pilgrims.

by  
**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

In the August presence of

**Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Gurmeet Singh**  
Governor, Uttarakhand

**Pushkar Singh Dhami**  
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

**Satpal Maharaj**  
Tourism & Culture Minister, Uttarakhand

on Friday, 5th November, 2021 at 8:30 am at Shri Kedarnath Dham, Uttarakhand

Live Telecast on : DD News

**Timings**  
**DELHI**

**THURSDAY, NOV. 04**  
RISE 06:35 SET 17:35  
RISE 05:41 SET 17:20

**FRIDAY, NOV. 05**  
RISE 06:36 SET 17:34  
RISE 06:50 SET 18:02

**SATURDAY, NOV. 06**  
RISE 06:37 SET 17:33  
RISE 08:02 SET 18:49

**Delhi Weather** max min

Delhi City 30 16  
Safdarjang 30 16  
Palam 29 18

**Delhi Palam Today**  
29°C A dry weather to prevail. The misty morning turns slight warm day with mainly clear sky. Night will be cool and hazy.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
28°C The weather will be dry and comfortable with mainly clear sky. Night remains cool and hazy. Pollution level will be moderate.

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**THE HINDU**  
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# Hindu Sangharsh Samiti says namaz row resolved

Muslim community denies consent, calls internal meet today

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
GURUGRAM

Leaders of the Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti on Wednesday said the district administration officials in a meeting with the representatives of the two communities had conceded that public places could not be used for religious activities and no such places were ever designated in Gurugram for offering of Friday prayers.

Accusing the administration of acting under pressure from right-wing groups, the Muslim community called for an internal meeting on Thursday to choose representatives to engage with the administration. Gurgaon Nagrik Ekta Manch co-founder Altaf Ahmad, present at the joint meeting, said the discussion at the Deputy Commissioner's office was sabotaged by right-wing group representatives and Muslim Rashtriya Manch (RSS) wing representative Khurshid Ra-



A press conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders after the joint meeting in Gurugram. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

jak, who were driving their one-point agenda of suppressing Muslims. He added that the Muslim community was shocked to know that the Gurugram administration had cancelled eight of the 37 spots of Jumma Namaz agreed upon in 2018.

## 'No designated places'

"The Samiti president, Mahavir Bhardwaj, and the Muslim Ekta Manch chairman, Shehzad Khan, in a joint statement to the media after the meeting agreed that offering of namaz could not be allowed at public places, but

they added that the prayers could not be stopped immediately and more time be allowed. The number of places for offering namaz this Friday would be mutually decided upon after a meeting between the two groups. The Samiti's president said the administration rejecting the existence of the list of 37 designated places for namaz had paved the way for amicable resolution to the matter," said a press statement issued by the Samiti.

Deputy Commissioner Yash Garg did not respond to repeated calls.

# 'Pollution from crackers can make air quality severe post-Deepavali'

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality is expected to deteriorate to "severe" level on Friday and Saturday if pollution from firecrackers is 50% of what was seen in 2019, said authorities.

But if there is no additional pollution from firecrackers, the air quality is expected to remain in the "very poor" range, which has been continuing since Tuesday.

The city's air quality on Wednesday worsened slightly (314) from Tuesday (303) but continued in the

"very poor" category, according to the Central Pollution Control Board's 4 p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours and considered the day's AQI.

## Stubble fires to go up

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to PM2.5 in Delhi is expected to go up from 8% on Wednesday to 20% on Deepavali and 35%-40% on Friday and Saturday, said government-run monitoring agency SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research).

"However, if we consider 50% of firecracker load of 2019, then AQI is predicted to enter severe category during November 4 to 6. It is predicted to improve slightly on November 6 evening onwards but will fluctuate between high-end of very poor and severe range," SAFAR said in a statement.

"Even a smaller increment in the local emissions due to firecrackers is likely to have a significant deterioration impact during November 4 to 6 and may put the AQI in the 'severe' category," SAFAR said.

# Govt. announces e-market for city traders

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced 'Dilli Bazaar', an e-marketplace, where every small and big entrepreneur from the Capital will have their own e-commerce store.

He said the portal would give a global online identity to entrepreneurs and enable

shoppers to go on virtual walkthroughs of Delhi's markets.

"The Delhi Government has taken up an initiative that is going to bring prosperity to the ventures of Delhi's traders and businesspersons," Mr. Kejriwal said in a digital briefing.

"One will be able to showcase all their products and

services on this portal. Virtual bazaars are being developed on this portal," he said.

Prominent markets ranging from Khan Market, Lajpat Nagar and Sarojini Nagar would have a presence on the portal which, the Chief Minister said, was expected to be up and running by August next year.

# Woman found murdered in rented house

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

A 28-year-old woman was found murdered at her residence in south Delhi's Mehrauli on Wednesday, the police said.

DCP (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said the police received a PCR call at 2.45 a.m. from the victim's husband. Avdesh Kumar, a worker at a sweet shop, found his wife lying unconscious with a head injury at their rented accommodation when he returned from work. It appeared that she had been brutally beaten up by someone, the husband told the police.

When the police reached the spot, the victim had already been shifted to a hospital where doctors declared her brought dead.

A case under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC was registered and the crime scene was inspected.

The couple had shifted to the house along with their two children two days ago, the police said.

# Case registered in multilevel parking collapse

AAP demands probe; inquiry revealed technical malfunction, says SDMC official

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

A day after part of an automated multilevel parking facility at Green Park collapsed, damaging a few cars, Delhi Police on Wednesday took suo motu cognisance of the incident and registered a case at Hauz Khas police station. No injuries were reported and the parking area was subsequently closed.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) alleged corruption in

the construction of the facility, which was built by the BJP-ruled South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), and sought a probe into the matter.

"Yesterday (on Tuesday), the automated stack parking unit at Green Park completely collapsed. And it's important to note that this was such a renowned parking system that it was inaugurated twice by two Union Ministers," AAP chief spokesperson

Saurabh Bharadwaj said.

AAP leader Atishi said the facility built by the corporation collapsed within a year and it was a clear proof of corruption by the BJP. "It's necessary to investigate which contractor and officer were given the responsibility of the construction. Their links with BJP leaders should also be looked into," she said.

SDMC standing committee chairman B.K. Oberoi,

however, said investigation revealed that the electrically operated floor plates (which are used to shift cars) had "collapsed due to a technical malfunction".

"There were no irregularities in the construction. The floor plates got dismantled and fell inside the facility. The parking system had indicated an error on multiple occasions and the supervisor should have checked it," Mr. Oberoi said.

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Scores level after bypolls: Chidambaram

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI Former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Wednesday claimed that the bypoll results in Assembly constituencies show that "the honours are even" today between the BJP and the parties opposed to it.

"Here is a thought provoking analysis - BJP won seven seats and its declared allies won eight seats. Congress won eight seats. Non-BJP parties won seven seats of which only one seat was won by a crypto-ally of the BJP, namely YSR Congress."

"The honours are even today. Which way will the wind blow in 2022?" Mr. Chidambaram added.

"It's Diwali and inflation is at its peak. It's not a matter of joke. I wish the Modi government had a sensitive heart for the public," former Congress president Rahul Gandhi tweeted.

Bangladesh national held for terror links

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a Bangladeshi national for his alleged association with banned terror outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

The case pertains to online recruitment and radicalisation of the youth by the JMB. The arrest of accused Mohammed Abdul Mannan Bachu was made during a search operation in West Bengal on Tuesday.

Bachu belongs to Bangladeshi Chaddhi in Bangladesh's Barisal. He has been living at Panchghara in South 24 Parganas, West Bengal.

The latest searches also led to the seizure of electronic devices, fake Indian Voter ID cards, Aadhaar cards and other papers used to create such identification documents.

BJP meeting to review bypoll results

J.P. Nadda to address national executive on Sunday; Modi to deliver concluding speech

NIJSTULA HEBBAR NEW DELHI The BJP will get into a huddle on Sunday for the long-delayed meetings of the party's national executive, and on top of the agenda will be the Assembly elections next year as well as a review of the just-concluded byelections which yielded mixed results for the party.

The meeting will be held from morning to mid-afternoon, and will be kicked off by BJP president J.P. Nadda's address to the executive. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver the concluding address.

As COVID-19 protocols are in place, only national executive members of the party who live in Delhi, national office-bearers of the party and Union Ministers who are members of the national executive will be asked to be present in person, while those outside Delhi have been asked to join virtually.



Dealt with a blow: Congress workers celebrating in Mandi in Himachal Pradesh on Tuesday. The BJP lost all the seats they contested in the State.

A day after the results of the byelections to 29 Assembly seats and three Lok Sabha seats across 11 States, BJP leaders admitted that in the case of Himachal Pradesh at least, where the party lost all the seats it was contesting, a review into the

causes of defeat was important and was going to take place soon. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, himself an MP from Himachal Pradesh, speaking to the news agency ANI said in Dharamshala that "the Himachal Pradesh will call a

timely meeting, discuss people's mandate and look for reasons behind it. Learning from it, steps will be taken to make necessary improvements so that the lotus [the BJP's electoral symbol] blooms again in 2022 [when Himachal Pradesh goes for Assembly polls]."

When pressed for the reasons for the party's loss in the State, Mr. Thakur refused to pinpoint any one reason, while Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur had pointed to high prices being a factor.

Local factors

"It's too early to say anything. Results came in different States of the country. The BJP won all five seats in Assam, we won in Madhya Pradesh, won one out of two seats in Karnataka. Every State has its own local issues for bypolls, every party brainstorms over it, we will do it too," he said.

A political resolution, likely covering issues such as the farmers' protests over the three controversial farm Bills, the vaccination programme and the situation in Jammu and Kashmir will be debated and passed during the national executive meeting as well.

Temples now get funds: Adityanath

'Only kabristans benefited earlier'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LUCKNOW



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said the previous Governments in the State were spending public money on constructing boundary walls of kabristans, while his Government was spending the money on reconstruction and beautification of temples. Mr. Adityanath was speaking in Ayodhya during the Deepotsav event.

Yogi Adityanath during Deepotsav celebrations in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

Mr. Adityanath said those who loved kabristan invested public money on such places. And those who love dharm and sanskriti are using the money on the uplift of religion and culture.

mark that if a kabristan was being constructed, a sham-shaan should too.

In Ayodhya, Mr. Adityanath also announced that the free ration being distributed to the poor in the State would be extended till Holi next year, coinciding with the 2022 Assembly elections. This would benefit 15 crore people, he said.

In the past too, in particular in the 2017 Assembly election, Prime Minister Modi himself had drawn a parallel between two communities in a contentious re-

Congress likely to revisit its alliance with the RJD in Bihar

Before polls, seat sharing ran into troubled waters

SOBHANA K. NAIR NEW DELHI The humiliating results in the byelection to two Assembly seats in Bihar has made the Congress sit up and rethink its relationship with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) as many leaders in the State feel that the alliance is dragging them down. In both seats, its vote share is far below the victory margins of the winning Janata Dal(U). On the other hand, the RJD is ready to forget and forgive, irrespective of the ugly spat. Bhakta Charan Das, Bihar

State in-charge of the Congress, told The Hindu that the results and the events preceding it would be analysed before the party takes a call.



Congress is upset with Lalu Prasad's comments in the run-up to the polls.

While admitting that the party's performance in the bypolls was sub-par, he also put the blame on the RJD. "Lalu Prasad Yadavji's comments that the Congress and the RJD have reached an understanding, signalling voters that it's a friendly match, because of which even the ones who were keen on us decided to desert us," he said.

Ms. Das added that the alliance should be based on a "clear-cut understanding" between the two sides. "Otherwise, it is meaningless to

be together," he added. The Congress decided to go solo after the RJD refused to concede Kusheshwarthan to it. The Congress got only 5,603 votes in Kusheshwarthan, which is 20 fewer than the tally of Chirag Pas-

wan's Lok Janshakti (Ramvilas). The JD(U) won by more than 12,000 votes. In Tarapur, the Congress got only 3,590 votes whereas the victory margin for the JD(U) was 3,852.

The prolonged identification with the RJD has marginalised the Congress in Bihar. Leaders point out that in the 1995 Assembly election, the only instance when Mr. Lalu Prasad formed a majority government in the State, the Congress had a 16% vote share and 29 seats. To serve the interests of individual leaders in the State, the party, instead of occupying the Opposition space, went soft on the RJD. Nitish Kumar and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) moved into the vacuum

left by the Congress. In the 2000 election, the Congress's vote share fell to 11%, with the party winning 23 seats. All the 23 Congress MLAs supported Mr. Yadav's minority government. "The Congress practically subsumed its identity within the RJD. And the slide that started from 1995 has not halted since," a senior Congress leader said.

While the RJD, the Congress leaders argue, will retain the Muslim and Yadav vote bank in the Assembly election, there is always a strong recoil. "There is a deep-seated fear among the voters that, if the RJD comes to power, the misadministration of Lalu Prasad's regime will return. This leads to an

aggressive counter polarisation. Why should we carry this baggage?" a senior Congress leader said.

Congress leaders also say that in the Lok Sabha election, the Yadav vote bank has already started deserting the RJD.

"We have to think about the longer run, especially the next Lok Sabha election in 2024," a Congress leader said.

Dispute over candidates The RJD does not share this sentiment. What happened in these bypolls, senior RJD leader Manoj K. Jha said, was episodic in nature, with a dispute over the candidate.

ginalised community but the Congress was not on board with it. "These results categorically tell you that the RJD has got votes from non-traditional quarters. Our vote share has actually gone up. The alliance with the Congress remains robust and State-level leaders should refrain from making denigrating remarks against the RJD, which doesn't do their [Congress] party a favour," Mr. Jha said.

RJD leaders are confident that the Congress's central leadership will prevail over the State leadership. "The truth is that they will never break ties since the party's Delhi leadership would not want to lose a trusted ally," another RJD leader said.

Government of Odisha, "e"-Procurement Notice INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) Bid Identification No. C.C.E.Dk.I.(R&B) 07/2021-22

THANJAVUR CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION RE-TENDER NOTICE Dated: 02.11.2021

தஞ்சாவூர் மாநகராட்சி ஒப்பந்தப்பணிகள் குறிப்பிடக்கூடிய வர.02/2021

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT NIT No. 17/2021-2022/BCMC/MW/CHENNAI Dated: 02.11.2021

Central Coalfields Limited A Miniratna Company (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited) NOTICE

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, सभाग-द्वितीय उदयपुर मु. बांसवाड़ा

CENTRAL POWER RESEARCH INSTITUTE P.B. No.8066, Sadashivnagar PO, Bengaluru - 560 080

NOTICE INVITING GLOBAL TENDER - CPRI/BLR21/NIT14 Date: 03-11-2021

AUGMENTATION OF SHORT CIRCUIT TEST FACILITIES AT HIGH POWER LABORATORY, CPRI, BANGALURU PACKAGE 2: SHORT CIRCUIT TESTING TRANSFORMERS (3X1400MVA)

TOWERS CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL) (A Government of Gujarat Undertaking) Gandhinagar

Tenders are invited by TCGL for following works: 1)Selection of Agency on turnkey basis for Tent / Craft Stalls/Food Stalls Facility at Dholavira In 2021-22.

OFFICE OF THE DY. DIRECTOR (HORTICULTURE) EAST DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. DELHI CHANDRAWAL: WATER WORKS NO.1 CIVIL LINES: DELHI-54

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVERNMENT OF N.C.T. OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) IX SEC-11 ROHINI DELHI-110085

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT SMS HOSPITAL, JAIPUR (Sawai Man Singh Road, Tonk Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan 320011)



# U.S. puts Israeli maker of Pegasus spyware on 'black list'

Biden Govt. wants 'to stem the proliferation of digital tools used for repression'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

U.S. authorities on Wednesday put the Israeli maker of the Pegasus spyware on a list of restricted companies...



Under lens: An NSO office near the Israeli town of Sapir. AP

NSO fired back at the decision, saying its 'technologies support U.S. national security interests and policies by preventing terrorism and crime'.

'We will advocate for this decision to be reversed,' a NSO spokesperson said...

to the so-called 'entity list' means exports to them from U.S. organisations are restricted.

Critics say the widespread availability of software such as Pegasus now allows even cash-strapped authoritarian governments to effectively purchase their own answer to the United States' National Security Agency...

'Today's action is a part of

the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to put human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy...

## Zero click

Following the initial concern over Pegasus, a subsequent wave of worries emerged when iPhone maker Apple released a fix in September for a weakness that can let the spyware infect devices without users even clicking on a malicious message or link.

The so-called 'zero click' is able to silently corrupt the targeted device, and was identified by researchers at Citizen Lab, a cybersecurity watchdog organisation in Canada.

Israel's defence establishment has set up a committee to review NSO's business, including the process through which export licenses are granted.

# In stunning upset, Republicans win Virginia Governor race

Joe Biden had won the State in the general election last year

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN WASHINGTON

Republicans won big in Virginia on Tuesday night, with their gubernatorial candidate, businessman Glenn Youngkin, beating former Democratic Governor Terry McAuliffe...



Glenn Youngkin

The former President sent out messages of endorsement for Mr. Youngkin (and claimed credit for his victory), but Mr. Youngkin was careful not to get too close to Mr. Trump...

However, also of note, is that Virginia and New Jersey have historically elected Governors from the opposing party of the sitting President in off years...

The outcome of Tuesday night, however, suggested that Democrats' strategy - at least in the State - of rallying voters against Mr. Trump did not work.

Mr. Youngkin, a 54-year-old former private equity executive, had a two-percentage point lead on Wednesday morning, when 99% of the vote had been counted.

## Central issues

Central issues in the campaign were education and the economy. Critical Race Theory - which analyses how systems and institu-

tions maintain and engender racial disparities - became a Republican talking point in the race, though it is not taught in Virginia schools.

Mr. Youngkin also rejected mask mandates in schools and said parents' rights to 'decide what's best for their children', must be respected.

He also committed to raising teacher salaries above the national average and making historically large investments in education.

On the economy, like his opponent, Mr. McAuliffe pledged to increase jobs, backed an increase in the minimum wage and said he would introduce mandated paid sick and family leave across the State.

## Other races

In other races on Election Day, Boston elected city council member Michelle Wu as Mayor, the first woman Mayor and person from an ethnic minority group to hold the post.

New York elected Eric Adams, who will become the second African American in the Mayor's seat.

As The Hindu went to press, the New Jersey Governor race was tight without a clear victor, with Democratic incumbent Philip Murphy and Republican contender Jack Ciattarelli running neck and neck.

# Fed to begin slowing economic aid

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON

The Federal Reserve will begin dialling back the extraordinary economic aid it has provided since the pandemic erupted last year...

In a statement on Wednesday, the Fed said it will start reducing its \$120 billion in monthly bond purchases in the coming weeks...

The Fed will slow its \$80 billion in Treasury purchases by \$10 billion a month and its \$40 billion in mortgage-backed securities by \$5 billion in November and December...

If the pace is maintained, the bond purchases would end altogether in June. At that point, the Fed could decide to raise its benchmark short-term interest rate, which affects many consumer and business loans.

# Taliban commander killed in hospital attack

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KABUL

A Taliban military commander was killed when his men responded to an Islamic State suicide bomb and gun attack on a hospital in Kabul...

seized Kabul. 'When he got the information that Sardar Daud Khan Hospital was under attack, Maulvi Hamdullah (Mokhlis), the commander of the Kabul corps, immediately rushed to the scene...

'He tried to stop him but he laughed. Later, we found out that he was martyred in the face-to-face fight at the hospital,' he added.

In a statement, the Islamic State-Khorasan said five of its 'fighters carried out simultaneous coordinated attacks' on the site.

# Shock in China as tennis star accuses top leader of sexual abuse

Peng Shuai says Zhang Gaoli, then Tianjin party boss, assaulted her 10 years ago

ANANTH KRISHNAN HONG KONG

Top Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai's allegations of a sexual assault and subsequent years-long affair with a senior Communist Party of China leader and former Vice Premier has triggered intense debate in China...



Peng Shuai, left, and Zhang Gaoli



li, you have said you are not afraid,' she said, 'but even if it is only me like an egg hitting a rock or moth going to the flame seeking self-destruction I will tell the truth about you.'

Ms. Peng's are the latest of a series of sexual misconduct allegations that have targeted men in power in China...

Ms. Peng said she had been invited home by Mr. Zhang, who was 65 at the time, and his wife, and his wife had stood guard by the door when the attack happened, which left her in shock and in tears.

She said the two then began an intermittent affair, until Mr. Zhang was in 2012 promoted to the highest echelons of power in China as the seventh-ranked member of the Politburo Standing Committee...

Neither Chinese authorities nor Mr. Zhang have as yet responded to Ms. Peng's statement.

She said in the message she had no evidence for her claims, but added she was determined to tell the truth. 'For someone of your standing Vice-Premier Zhang Gao-

purged for corruption routinely accused by party authorities of carrying on sexual relations with many mistresses, what is unprecedented about Ms. Peng's case is that both figures are household names in China and Mr. Zhang occupied one of the country's highest offices. The sensitivity of Ms. Peng's allegations against a former senior official brought even tighter censorship restrictions than the usual. On Wednesday, Ms. Peng's name could not be searched for on Weibo while people were barred from posting information about the case on WeChat.

## Significant and rare

Teng Biao, a lawyer and legal rights activist previously based in Beijing who is now in the U.S., observed how significant and rare it was for anyone to speak out about top officials.

'Former vice premier, Politburo Standing [Committee] member Zhang Gaoli, allegedly raped tennis star Peng Shuai. Based on what Peng has written, it's not an

affair. It is rape,' he said on Twitter. 'Top Communist Party leaders have unlimited power in China. [It is] extremely rare a victim dares to disclose their scandals.'

Lu Pin, a Chinese feminist activist who is editor of *Feminist Voices*, saluted Ms. Peng's courage in speaking out and said the latest case underlined the continuing relevance of the 'Me Too' movement in China.

'Peng Shuai's revelation is very important. It allows people to see the real life of China's top leaders as never before, behind the power-wrapped morality,' she said on Twitter. 'Imagine their excessive abuse of power being so authentically identified under the witness of so many people. Why does everyone know that Peng Shuai's revelation is too real?'

She said 'every victim bravely stood up, awakened people irreversibly, and demonstrated and encouraged the next victim to stand up and shake society more and more powerfully.'

Starting in 2018, numerous Chinese women spoke out against instances of sexual misconduct, from college students speaking out about their professors to an employee at tech giant Alibaba. In September, a court in Beijing ruled against Zhou Xiaoxuan in the first 'Me Too' case that went to court after a three-year trial. Ms. Zhou had accused a well-known host working for the State broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) of sexually harassing her at their workplace.

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA Public Works Division Aurangabad E-Tender Notice No. 22 Of 2021-2022

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION Central Offices, Stores and Purchase Dept, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560 027

Table with 4 columns: Tender Nos., Nomenclature, Tender Value in Lakhs Rs (Approx.), Last date for submission of tender @17.00 Hrs. Includes various procurement items like Creme Wove Paper, Jumbo Thermal Roll, etc.

TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD E-TENDER NOTICE: TANGEDCO / SHORT / PP-16 / 2021

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF TELANGANA LIMITED, HYDERABAD e-TENDER NOTICE





