



BJP, Sena announce alliance, yet to disclose seat-sharing formula

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Pak. invites Manmohan for inauguration of Kartarpur Corridor

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Xi vows to uphold 'one country, two systems' in Hong Kong

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Fraser-Pryce clinches her fourth 100m crown at World Championships

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NEARBY



BJP's first list out, Khattar to contest from Karnal

CHANDIGARH
Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar will contest from his Karnal Assembly constituency as the BJP on Monday announced the first list of 78 candidates for the October 21 elections. The list included ex-hockey captain Sandeep Singh, Olympic wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt and wrestler Babita Phogat. They will contest from Pehowa, Baroda and Dadri seats respectively.

NEWS PAGE 12

Court reserves verdict in Bihar shelter home case

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court on Monday reserved judgment in the Muzaffarpur shelter home sexual assault case in Bihar. Additional Sessions Judge Saurabh Kulshrestha reserved the judgment on conclusion of final arguments. Main accused Brajesh Thakur and 20 others are facing trial. Several girls were allegedly raped and sexually abused at the shelter home.

NATION PAGE 9

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Kerala tops education ranking

Uttar Pradesh placed at bottom of NITI Aayog's School Education Quality Index

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Kerala and Rajasthan have emerged as States with the best quality of school education in the country, with scores of 76.6% and 72.9% respectively, in the NITI Aayog's rankings released on Monday.

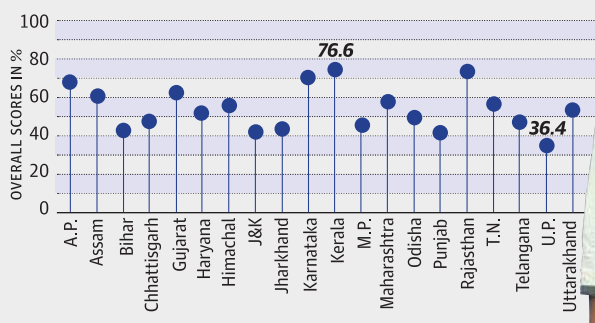
The Union Territory of Chandigarh, however, pipped them overall with a score of over 80%.

Reflecting the huge differences in quality across the country, Uttar Pradesh scored the lowest among 20 large States, with just 36.4%, although the small State of Arunachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Lakshadweep had even lower scores.

The School Education Quality Index (SEQI) is part of the NITI Aayog's effort to rank the performance of

Top scorers

Among big States, Kerala topped the charts in NITI Aayog's School Education Quality Index for 2016-17, while U.P. scored the least



States in across various indicators, including water, health and the ease of doing business, to encourage data-driven policy reforms.

The Centre plans to collaborate with the World Bank to offer performance-linked grants as incentives

for the States with high rankings, School Education Secretary Rina Ray said.

The first edition of the SE-QI assessed the States on the basis of learning outcomes, access, equity, infrastructure and facilities, and the governance processes which

aid such outcomes. The Index is largely based on data from the National Achievement Survey (NAS) of 2017-18 and the Unified District Information on School Education data of 2016-17.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

HC declines to grant bail to Chidambaram in INX Media case

'Investigation is at an advanced stage and the likelihood of his influencing the witnesses cannot be ruled out'

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday declined to grant bail to former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram in the INX Media case, noting that the investigation is at an advanced stage and the likelihood of his influencing the witnesses could not be ruled out.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait

cited the submission of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that two material witnesses (accused) had been approached with the plea not to disclose any information regarding Mr. Chidambaram and his son Karti (the co-accused).

The High Court remarked that though Mr. Chidambaram has been "a strong" Fi-

nance Minister and Home Minister and presently, Member of Parliament, "the fact that he will not influence the witnesses directly or indirectly, cannot be ruled out in view of the above facts."

FIPB irregularities

The 74-year-old was arrested on August 21 from his residence in New Delhi by the

CBI. The case relates to a First Information Report registered by the CBI on May 15, 2017, against alleged irregularities in the Foreign Investment Promotion Board clearance provided to INX Media for receiving overseas funds to the tune of ₹305 crore in 2007, when Mr. Chidambaram was Finance Minister.

In a parallel probe, the En-

forcement Directorate is investigating the alleged offence of money laundering arising out of the FIR.

The High Court, in its 47-page judgment, cited the 'sealed cover' as revealing that Indrani Mukherjee and Peter Mukherjee (accused) met Mr. Chidambaram even before the filing of application before the FIPB unit.

Eight core sectors shrink 0.5% in August

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The eight core sectors that form the bellwether for the Indian economy slumped in August to their lowest growth in four years and four months. The index for these industries contracted 0.5%, the weakest since April 2015.

Growth in five sectors of

the Index of Eight Core Industries fell into the negative zone in August. The index had registered a growth of 2.7% in July 2019 and 4.72% in August 2018. Within the index, the coal sector saw the sharpest contraction at 8.6%.

DETAILED REPORT ON PAGE 15

CAD SHRINKS PAGE 15

Help at hand



Going under: Rescuers evacuating an elderly man at Rajendra Nagar in Patna on Monday. Parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are reeling due to floods after heavy rain in the past few days, with the death toll mounting to 136. *RANJEET KUMAR (PAGE 9)

Scientists excavate 'ancient river' in Uttar Pradesh

The paleochannel linked the Ganga and the Yamuna near Prayagraj

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

The Union Water Ministry has excavated an old, dried-up river in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad) that linked the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. The aim is to develop it as a potential groundwater recharge source, according to officials at the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), a body under the Union Jal Shakti Ministry that coordinates the cleaning of the Ganga.

The "ancient buried river" as it was described at a conference organised by the Ministry, is around 4 km wide, 45 km long and

consisted of a 15-metre-thick layer buried under soil.

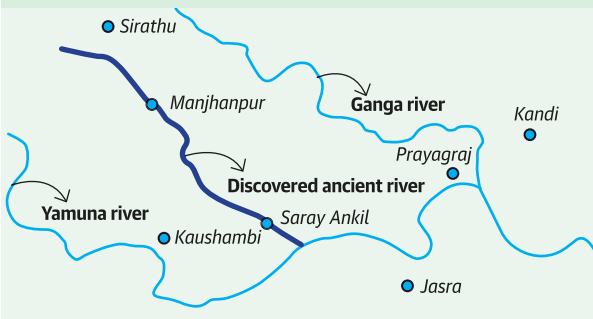
According to Executive Director, NMCG, D.P. Mathuria, the discovery was made last December by a team of scientists from the CSIR-NGRI (National Geophysical Research Institute) and the Central Groundwater Board during a helicopter-borne geophysical survey covering the Prayagraj and Kaushambi region in Uttar Pradesh.

These paleochannels reveal the course of rivers that have ceased to exist.

The newly discovered river, according to Mr. Mathuria, was a "buried

River unearthed

A team of scientists have discovered an "ancient buried river" that links the Ganga and the Yamuna. The map shows the possible course of the paleochannel



paleochannel that joins the Yamuna river at Durgapur village, about 26 km south of the current Ganga-Yamuna confluence at Prayagraj.

The genesis of the paleochannel's discovery

followed a 2016 report of a seven-member committee, headed by Professor K.S. Valdiya of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), commissioned by

the Water Resources Ministry.

This report concluded that evidence from palaeochannels suggested that the mythological Saraswati river did indeed exist. They claimed to have based their conclusions on reports and maps of palaeochannels in north India and a separate, ongoing project by the Central Groundwater Board to map the aquifers (extremely deep stores of groundwater) of India.

"Knowledge on subsurface connectivity between Ganga and Yamuna rivers will play a very crucial role in planning of Ganga cleaning and protecting safe groundwater resources," Mr. Mathuria said.

Unaware of Rajoana remission: Punjab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

The process to commute the death sentence of Balwant Singh Rajoana, convicted of killing former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, is "under way", a senior Home Ministry official said on Monday.

The Ministry said it had taken an in-principle decision to commute his death sentence to life imprisonment, and the decision would soon be conveyed to the President.

However, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said the State government was yet to receive any communication from the Ministry, adding that the Centre had taken an independent decision on the release of the prisoners.

DETAILS ON PAGE 12

SC pulls up Gujarat for not paying Bilkis Bano

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Nearly five months after the Supreme Court ordered the Gujarat government to give 2002 riots victim Bilkis Bano ₹50 lakh in compensation, a house and a job to tide over the "devastation" of her family, the court learned on Monday that the State is yet to budge on the judicial order from the highest court.

"Why have you not paid her? Why have you not paid?" Chief Justice Gogoi asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Gujarat government.

Mr. Mehta said the State may be filing a review.



Bilkis Bano

The court, in a detailed decision on April 23, had described the tragedy of Ms. Bano's past. It had noted how her infant daughter was "smashed" against the wall in their house before her own eyes. Ms. Bilkis was herself pregnant when she was gang-raped by the mob. Se-

ven members of her family were also killed by the mob at Randhikpur village near Ahmedabad on March 3, 2002.

It ordered the Gujarat government to pay her the compensation and provide her a job and a house in two weeks. But nothing had come out of it.

The Chief Justice asked Mr. Mehta whether the April order would at least be made good now considering the "peculiar facts" of the case.

Mr. Mehta asked for four weeks for the government to arrange employment for Ms. Bano. The CJ, however, decided on two.

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