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INTERNET LOVES ARMY PILOT'S PROPOSAL TO PARTNER POST P.O.P

A newly qualified Army pilot proposed to his girlfriend right after his graduation ceremony in Nashik — with a helicopter as the backdrop

TO NEW BEGINNINGS AFTER TOUGH TRAINING

The video spread quickly online, with people responding to how genuine and unscripted the whole thing felt. Captain Bharat Bhardwaj called it a "love ka salute" — and joked that while officers give and receive salutes at work, back home, the wife is in charge. For the Captain, the day marked the end of a tough professional journey, and the start of a new one



NASHIK

IS WHERE THE ARMY TRAINS ITS COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • HUBBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURGI

Finally, CBSE heads roll

Board Chairman Rahul Singh and Secretary Himanshu Gupta shifted, replaced with Lokhande Prashant Sitaram & Varun Bhardwaj respectively; OSM system probe ordered



S LALITHA @ New Delhi

IN a major administrative shake-up following controversy over the CBSE's new digital evaluation system for Class XII board examinations, the Centre on Tuesday removed CBSE Chairman Rahul Singh and Secretary Himanshu Gupta with immediate effect and ordered a high-level inquiry into the procurement of the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system used for evaluating answer sheets. The government also announced the constitution of a one-member committee headed by S Radha Chauhan, Chairperson of the Capacity Building Commission, to investigate the award and procurement of services related to the OSM platform. It directed the committee to submit its report to the Department of Personnel and Training within a month.

According to the official order, Chauhan has been authorised to seek assistance from officials of other departments during the inquiry, while the Capacity Building Commission will provide secretarial support. The action came hours after the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education held a meeting with senior officials of the CBSE and the Ministry of Education to review complaints surrounding the implementation of the digital marking system.

Later, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet appointed Lokhande Prashant Sitaram, a 2001 batch IAS officer as the new CBSE Chairperson. Varun Bhardwaj, Indian Information Service officer of 2008 batch was appointed the Board's secretary.

While Rahul Singh was transferred as Additional Secretary in the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Gupta was sent back to parent cadre with the 'extended period of cooling off'.

Controversy erupted after the declaration of Class XII results on May 13, with students and parents alleging widespread discrepancies in evaluation, technical glitches, delays in verification and re-evaluation processes, and lack of transparency in the OSM system.

While student Sidhant Sartak alleged that three tenders were rigged to favour Hyderabad-based Coemtp Edu-Teck Pvt Ltd in the award of the OSM contract, the CBSE in its pushback submitted a report to the committee, defending the implementation of the system. It also said that portal-related glitches had been rectified. The controversy deepened after another student, Vedant Shrivastava, claimed that CBSE had uploaded and evaluated another candidate's answer sheet under his name.

EXPRESS READ

NIA looks at Hamas link in Pahalgam attack

New Delhi: In a significant development in the Pahalgam terror attack investigation, the NIA has flagged the need to examine links between Pakistan-backed terror groups and Hamas based on similarities between October 7, 2023 attacks against Israeli revelers and Pahalgam | P9

Mahesh Aggarwal to take charge as TN DGP today

Chennai: Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, a 1994-batch IPS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, will take charge as the state's new DGP and Head of Police Force on Wednesday. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on Tuesday approved his repatriation from the BSF to TN with immediate effect | P5



Following Karnataka High Court's order, workers remove posters of D Shivakumar in front of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Tuesday, a day before his swearing-in ceremony. The banners had come up after his selection as CM | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

OSM tenders rigged to favour firm'
Sidhant Sartak, 17, made a detailed presentation before a Parliamentary Standing Committee, alleging that at least 15 changes were made across three tenders to favour Hyderabad-based Coemtp EduTeck Pvt Ltd over Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in the award of the OSM contract. His presentation was made in the presence of senior CBSE officials | P9



Major cyber attack as revaluation portal for Class XII opens

A denial of service attack attempt caused 1.5 mn hits on the CBSE re-evaluation portal within 2 mins and over 1 lakh bids of unauthorised file access
CBSE statement

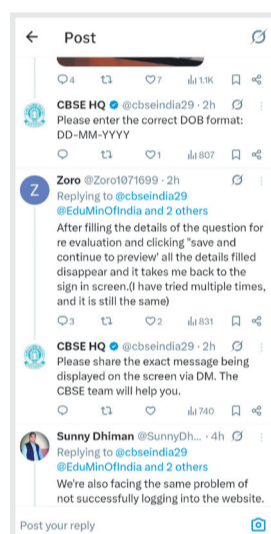
MALICIOUS actors attempted to disrupt services on the Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) Class XII re-evaluation portal through a barrage of cyber attacks on Tuesday, the day it became operational. The Board shared the information after complaints from thousands of students since early morning that they were unable to login to the portal.

Major cyber attack as revaluation portal for Class XII opens

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

MALICIOUS actors attempted to disrupt services on the Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) Class XII re-evaluation portal through a barrage of cyber attacks on Tuesday, the day it became operational. The Board shared the information after complaints from thousands of students since early morning that they were unable to login to the portal.

An official statement from the Board said that the portal currently supports usage by 8,000 concurrent users and a total of 16,000 had successfully completed their submissions for re-evaluation of marks by 3 pm. "While thousands of students accessed the CBSE re-evaluation portal today, malicious actors attempted to disrupt services through a barrage of cyberattacks. Most recent being a denial of service attack attempt causing 1.5 million hits on the portal within a matter of 2 minutes and more than 1 lakh attempts of unauthorised file access."



Screengrab of students failing to login to the portal

The platform has been further refined by the CBSE based on student feedback, it said. Session time limits have been extended to make the process more convenient and seamless, it added.

There was enormous criticism from students over the need for Aadhaar verification. In another statement, the CBSE said, "Aadhaar Verification has been included for security reasons." It also clarified that in the case of children who do not have this document, the parent's, relative's or guardian's Aadhaar details may be used. "In this case, the Aadhaar Name, Date of birth and Gender must be of the person whose Aadhaar number is used," it added.

The portal was finally opened to begin the re-evaluation process early in the day with the Board announcing it at 4.42 am on its social media handles.

Annamalai suspense on as Shah summons Nagenthran

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR AND SUBASHINI VIJAYAKUMAR @ New Delhi/Chennai

AFTER aggrieved former Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai met Union home minister Amit Shah on Tuesday, the BJP leadership summoned state BJP president Nainar Nagenthran to Delhi, fuelling speculation of a possible mutual reconciliation.

With the party leadership requesting him to reconsider his decision, sources said Annamalai hasn't formally submitted his resignation yet.

As for Nagenthran, he arrived in the Capital and was scheduled to meet Shah to find an amicable solution.

During his meeting with Shah, Annamalai spoke about his prolonged differences with the state unit leadership after being removed as president of the TN unit in 2025 to patch up with the AIADMK.



Union home minister Amit Shah with TN BJP leader Annamalai in Delhi | P11

Sources said Annamalai had made up his mind to quit and return to Chennai immediately after his resignation is accepted. He intended to part ways without burning his bridges with the top leadership. But since he was asked to reconsider his decision, he may return to Chennai on June 4, sources said. Though he was offered a Rajya Sabha

ticket and a ministerial berth, he declined, preferring to work in TN, sources said.

Annamalai first met BJP national general secretary B L Santhosh before proceeding to meet party president Nitin Nabin. In Tamil Nadu, several district-level functionaries loyal to Annamalai are said to have resigned following reports of his impending exit.

HC acquits 4 in double murder case, slams cop

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Madurai

ACQUITTING four persons in a 2012 double murder case in Dindigul due to a slipshod investigation, the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court on Monday ordered departmental action against the then Thadikombu police inspector who investigated the case.

Justices N Anand Venkatesh and KK Ramakrishnan, who passed the order on a batch of appeals filed by the accused, pointed out that even the amputated part of the victim's arm was not recovered by the probe officer. Four suspects — Selvaraj, Selvapandi, Muthukumar and Thoongan — had

challenged the conviction and life sentence imposed on them by a sessions court in Dindigul in 2023 before the HC bench.

According to prosecution, the deceased, Kannan and Periyasamy, were relatives and

Kannan was married to the daughter of Selvaraj, one of the accused. The suspects developed enmity with the victims after the marriage between Kannan and Selvaraj's daughter ended in divorce. On May 18, 2012, as the victims were on their way to a Tasmac shop in Thadikombu, the four accused and three others, including Kannan's ex-wife, allegedly came to the spot in an auto and attacked them with sickles. P7

Four killed in car-lorry crash near Tiruchy



The mangled remains of the car that collided with a lorry on Tuesday | EXPRESS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Tiruchy

FOUR persons were killed and three others sustained injuries when a car collided head-on with a lorry at Jambunathapuram near Musiri in Tiruchy district on Tuesday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Murugesan (50) and his son Karthik (28), natives of Perambalur, his relative S Balasubramanian (31) and his wife Kavitha (25), natives of Varadakshiyar Street in Srirangam. The injured are Murugesan's wife Chithra (45), daughter Narmatha (28), and Balasubramanian's son Yegan (1). They are undergoing treatment at Musiri Government Hospital.

According to police sources, the incident took place when Murugesan, his family members and relatives were travelling from Srirangam to a temple in Kodumudi in the car. The vehicle was driven by Balasubramanian. As they neared an oil mill at Jambunathapuram on the Thuraiyur-Perambalur road, Balasubramanian allegedly lost control of the car, and it collided with a lorry coming from the opposite direction, sources said. P7

No role for third-party mediation in border dispute with Nepal, says India

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Tuesday firmly rejected any role for third parties in resolving its boundary dispute with Nepal, responding to remarks by Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah in Parliament on Sunday in which he called for involvement of the UK and China in efforts to resolve the border issue.

The Indian response came amid a deepening political controversy in Nepal, where Shah's comments have triggered protests and repeated disruptions in Parliament. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India had



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Nepal's Rastriya Swatantra Party president Rabi Lamichhane in New Delhi Tuesday | P11

taken note of both Shah's statement and a subsequent clarification issued by Nepal's Foreign Ministry. Reiterating New Delhi's long-

standing position that boundary issues must be addressed bilaterally, he pointed out that most of the India-Nepal border has already been settled. "While close to 98% of the India-Nepal boundary has been demarcated, there are some unresolved segments. The shifting of the course of Gandak river has resulted in this situation. There are cases of cross-border occupation and encroachment of the boundary which are currently being mapped jointly," he said.

The fallout from Shah's comments paralysed Nepal's Parliament for a second consecutive day on Tuesday.

Malabar's football aspirations manifest in the flesh at 2026 FIFA WC

RONNIE KURIAKOSE @ Kochi

KERALA'S love affair with football has found a moment of history. Tahsin Mohammed Jamshid, who has roots in Kannur, has earned a place in Qatar's 26-member squad for the FIFA World Cup. He has also become the first Malayali to make a World Cup team.

The 19-year-old, however, won't be the only player with Indian heritage at the football

gala. Nishan Velupillay, whose roots trace back to Tamil Nadu, will be representing Australia. Born and raised in Qatar to parents from Malabar region, Tahsin was named in the final squad after figuring in the country's probable list. He is also the first player of Indian origin to feature in the Qatar Stars League. He plays for Al-Duhail SC, the country's oldest football team.

"Tahsin may be playing for

Another with TN roots

Nishan Velupillay, whose roots trace back to Tamil Nadu, will be representing Australia. Velupillay, 25, has seven senior caps and three goals for Australia, having debuted for his country against China and scoring in 2024

Qatar, but Malabar's aspirations run through his veins. His parents moved to Qatar in 1996. It was during an inter-

school football tournament that he was first scouted," said D Ravi Kumar, a veteran journalist who has covered the football scene in Qatar extensively.

Tahsin trained at Aspire Academy for Sports Excellence, which is globally renowned for its state-of-the-art facilities, and went on to represent Qatar at the Under-16, Under-17 and Un-

der-19 levels. "It is not common that players of different origin feature in a national side, but because of Tahsin's exceptional talent, he was considered," Ravi said.

Tahsin's international debut came during the World Cup qualification campaign against Afghanistan. Though included in the squad against India, he did not feature

in the match but later played in Qatar's decisive final two qualification fixtures.

"The boy plays as winger. But under Julien Lopetegui, the head coach of Qatar, we may see him move into a more defined position in midfield," Ravi said.

Tahsin is the second son of Hibasil Jamshid, a Thalassery (Kozhikode) native working as a chief accountant in Qatar, and Shyma.



TMC SUPREMO MAMATA PROTESTS ATTACKS

Former CM addresses a sit-in protest against the attacks on party leaders and workers in Kolkata on Tuesday | P10

