

## 10th century Kadamba inscription written in Kannada and Sanskrit found in Goa

**The Hindu Bureau**

MANGALURU

An inscription written in Kannada and Sanskrit and said to be of 10th century A.D. Kadamba period has been discovered in the Mahadeva temple at Cacoda in southern Goa.

T. Murugeshi, a retired associate professor of ancient history and archaeology, Mulki Sundar Ram Shetty College, Shirva in Udupi district, studied the inscription. According to Mr. Murugeshi, its epigraph is engraved in Kannada and Nagari characters.

He states: "... The inscription opens with an auspicious saying 'be it

well' (*Swasthi Shri*), and records that when Talara Nevayya was administering the mandala, his son Gundayya having taken a vow to fulfil his father's desire of capturing a gopura of the port of Goa, fought and died after fulfilling his father's wish. Very interestingly, the record is composed as a vocal statement on the death of his son from the mouth of a lamenting father. It is in the literary style of Talangre inscription of Jayasimha I of the same period..."

Mr. Murugeshi said that the Kadambas of Goa were the subordinates of Chalukyas of Kalyana. Chalukyan emperor Tailapa II appointed Kadamba Shas-

thadeva as mahamandaleshwara of Goa for his help in overthrowing the Rashtrakutas. Kadamba Shasthadeva conquered the city of Chandavara from the Shilaharas in 960 A.D. Later, he conquered the port of Gopakapattana (present Goa). Gundayya, the son of Talara Nevayya, may have participated in this battle, and won the port at the cost of his life.

His father may have erected a memorial stone with the inscription in the temple of Mahadev of Cacoda to commemorate the heroic fight of his son.

Rajendra Kerkar, an environmentalist of Goa, found the inscription and informed Mr. Murugeshi.



An inscription found in the Mahadeva temple at Cacoda in southern Goa.

# Changes in Navy's top deck: Dinesh K. Tripathi is new Vice-Chief of Naval Staff

**Dinakar Peri**  
NEW DELHI

Vice-Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi took over as the Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS) on Thursday. A day before, Vice-Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh took over from him the responsibility of Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOCINC), Western Naval Command, at *INS Shikra* in Mumbai.

The Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R. Hari Kumar, is set to step down on superannuation on April 30 when Vice-Admiral Tripathi will be the senior-most Naval officer. All three Services will get new Chiefs this year. In another change, Vice-Admiral V. Srinivas took over as 30th FOCINC of the Southern Naval Command in a ceremonial parade at the Naval Base in Kochi on December 31. He replaced Vice-Admiral M. A. Hampiholi, who retired after close to



Vice Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi exchanges greetings with the Navy officers on Thursday. ANI

four decades in the Navy.

An alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa, and National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Vice-Admiral Tripathi was commissioned into the Navy on July 1, 1985. A communication and electronic warfare specialist, on promotion to the rank of Vice-Admiral in June 2019, he was appointed Commandant of the Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala, Kerala, and served as Director-General of Naval Operations from July 2020 to May 2021. Later,

from June 2021 to February 2023, he served as the Chief of Personnel.

Before taking over as the FOCINC, Vice-Admiral Singh served as the VCNS at Naval Headquarters. He was commissioned in 1986 into the Executive Branch of the Navy.

Among other appointments, Vice-Admiral Kiran Deshmukh assumed charge as the Chief of Materiel (COM).

In the Army, Lt. General R.C. Tiwari assumed charge as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Command on January 1.

Lt. Gen. Navin Sachdeva took over the Command of the White Knight Corps from Lt. Gen. Sandeep Jain. Lt. Gen. Nagendra Singh assumed the command of the Chetak corps. Lt. Gen. Prit Pal Singh assumed the command of the Sudarshan Chakra Corps from Lt. Gen. Vipul Shinghal.

# ISRO to perform crucial manoeuvre tomorrow to bind Aditya-L1 into L1 orbit

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

With the Aditya-L1 spacecraft expected to reach the Lagrangian Point (L1) on Saturday, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will attempt a crucial manoeuvre to bind the spacecraft to an orbit around L1.

Aditya-L1, the first Indian space-based observatory to study the sun, was launched on September 2, 2023 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. Subsequently, ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (IS-TRAC) in Bengaluru carried out four earth-bound manoeuvres between September 3 and 15 last year.

L1 is about 1.5 million km from earth and the distance of L1 from the planet is approximately 1% of the earth-sun distance.

Around 4 p.m. on Saturday, ISRO scientists and engineers from the Mission Operations Complex of IS-TRAC will perform the crucial



**From Earth:** A satellite placed in halo orbit around L1 point has the advantage of viewing the Sun without any eclipse. S R RAGHUNATHAN

manoeuvre which will bind Aditya-L1 to an orbit around L1.

The propulsion system of the spacecraft comprises the 440 Newton Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM) engine plus eight 22 Newton thrusters and four 10 Newton thrusters which will be intermittently fired to perform the manoeuvre.

According to the agency, a satellite placed in the halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the sun without any occultation/eclipse. This will provide a greater advantage of observing the solar activities continuously.

Aditya-L1 carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere, and the outermost layers of the sun (the corona) using electromagnetic and particle detectors.

Using the special vantage point of L1, four payloads will directly view the Sun and the remaining three payloads will carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at the L1.

Aditya-L1 has a mission life of five years.



# New antibiotic could target drug-resistant bacterium: scientists

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Researchers have identified a new class of antibiotics with the potential to tackle a drug-resistant bacterium, *Acinetobacter baumannii*. Zosurabalpin, the antibiotic, was found to be effective against CRAB (carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii*)-induced pneumonia and sepsis in mouse models.

Writing in *Nature*, Zampaloni *et al* and Pahil *et al* reported the identification and analysis of the antibiotic zosurabalpin that can kill *Acinetobacter baumannii*, antibiotic-resistant strains of which are hard to treat in the clinic.

## Precise work

Dr. Zampaloni and colleagues identified a tethered macrocyclic peptide (MCP) that selectively kills *A. baumannii*. The compound was further optimised for efficacy and tolerability, and the fine-tuning culminated in zosurabalpin, a drug candidate.

In an article, Morgan K. Gugger and Paul J. Hergenrother, Department of Chemistry, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, wrote that copious evidence provided by Zampaloni *et al* indicates that the antibiotic kills *A. baumannii* through a previously unknown mode of action. It inhibits a key process, transport of the molecule lipopolysaccharide (LPS), by inhibiting a complex of proteins. This complex was essential for transporting LPS to the bacterial surface to create the outer-membrane structure of Gram-negative bacteria. Zosurabalpin blocks LPS transport, and the abnormal build-up of LPS in the cell kills the bacterium.

"It was effective against more than 100 CRAB clinical samples tested in the laboratory and it considerably reduced the levels of bacteria in mice with CRAB-induced pneumonia and prevented the death of mice with a CRAB-induced abnormal immune response called sepsis," the article said.

## Shielding SEBI

SC should have pushed it to do more while not reviewing policy actions

The Supreme Court of India's ruling on a batch of petitions, filed in the wake of a U.S.-based short seller's allegations of malfeasance including stock price manipulation at the Adani group of companies, has squarely tossed the ball back to the markets regulator's court. The Court has opted to subordinate petitioners' entreaties to protect larger public interest to its chariness to substitute "its own wisdom over the regulatory policies" of the Securities and Exchange Board of India. In its 46-page order, the Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud is emphatic in observing that "SEBI has prime facie conducted a comprehensive investigation" that "inspires confidence", and that "the facts of this case do not warrant a transfer of investigation from SEBI" given that "prima facie no deliberate inaction or inadequacy" was found in the regulator's conduct of its probe. Strikingly, the Bench has completely skirted the fundamental questions that the Court-appointed Expert Committee in its May 2023 report had opted to leave as a 'matter between SEBI and the Court' – the determination of possible violations pertaining to minimum public shareholding and related party transactions. The Bench has instead seized upon prayers urging the Court to direct SEBI to revoke its amendments to the Foreign Portfolio Investors Regulations and Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements – amendments that were at the heart of petitioners' submissions of regulatory failure – and roundly denied them on grounds that there was neither "any illegality", nor were the norms "capricious, arbitrary or violative of the Constitution".

The ruling has also done little to assuage investors' concerns about SEBI's approach to getting to the bottom of the allegations raised by Hindenburg Research in its January 2023 report. Without elaboration on any of the regulator's findings, the Court has blandly observed that "SEBI has completed 22 out of the 24 investigations into the Adani group" and that completion of the remaining two "are pending due to inputs being awaited from foreign regulators". The Bench has directed SEBI to complete these "expeditiously". While the Court's reluctance to review the policy actions of a 'specialised regulator' is understandable, the decision to leave the crucial question of SEBI's perceived tardiness in investigating allegations of corporate malfeasance and market manipulation by a large conglomerate back to the remit of the very same watchdog hints at a degree of judicial abstinence that may only undermine the larger public good. The Court is surely aware of past instances where it has found SEBI wanting in alacrity of enforcement, a facet flagged by the experts' panel appointed in this case as well. After all, "justice must not only be done, but it must also be seen to be done".

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## Terror in Iran

Iran should not walk into the web of provocations set by its rivals

**T**he twin blasts in the southeastern Iranian city of Kerman at a memorial for Qassem Soleimani, the Quds Force commander whom the U.S. assassinated in Baghdad in January 2020, expose the security vulnerabilities of the Iranian regime at a time when conflicts are spreading in West Asia. At least 84 were killed in the worst terror attack in the Islamic Republic's history. Soleimani, the brain behind the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps' (IRGC) overseas operations, had enjoyed cult status when alive, and became a symbol of an embattled regime's resilience over the past four years. While Iran's leaders called it a terrorist attack but stopped short of blaming anyone, mid-rung officials said the responsibility for the attack "lies with the U.S. and the Zionist entity". However, on Thursday, the Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility. For the IS, Soleimani was a sworn enemy as he had mobilised Shia militias to fight the IS in Syria and Iraq. These groups played a role in the urban battles in Iraq during 2018-19 that saw the destruction of the physical structures of the IS Caliphate. The group lost its proto state but survived as a terrorist entity in parts of Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

For Iran, the attack has come at a precarious moment when tensions are rising in West Asia. The Kerman memorial event was bombed a day after a senior Hamas leader was killed in Beirut in a drone strike, for which Lebanese officials have blamed Israel. Hezbollah, which has been engaging Israeli troops in a limited way since October 7, has vowed retaliation. On December 25, an Israeli strike in Syria killed Seyyed Razi Mousavi, a senior IRGC adviser. Israel, whose ongoing attack on Gaza has already killed at least 22,000 people, seems ready to take more risks even at the cost of regional escalation, while in the Red Sea, Iran-backed Houthi rebels of Yemen have been repeatedly attacking commercial vessels since late November. Pro-Iran Shia militias have targeted U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria since October 7, and on Thursday, a U.S. strike in Iraq killed a Shia militia commander. The Israel-Hamas war is no longer about just Israel and Hamas. It has put the whole region in a ring of fire. As chaos spreads the IS seems to have found an opportunity to strike its old enemy which is under pressure. The attack should serve as a warning to Iran and its rivals. If chaos and instability spread it would be a boon for jihadists. This calls for a de-escalation of the current regional crisis. Iran, on the other side, should not walk into the web of provocations set by its rivals. It should show restraint and focus on strengthening internal security.

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## 'India's heavy digital footprint makes it attractive to cybercrooks'

Mini Tejaswi  
BENGALURU

With a population of over 1.4 billion and a rapidly expanding economy, India's digital footprint has made it an alluring target for cybercriminals seeking to exploit vulnerabilities, warned a group of cybersecurity providers.

Data breaches would skyrocket in 2024, there would be continued acceleration in ransomware activities in addition to a surge in identity-based attacks resulting from increasing cloud adoption, and deepfakes would also pose a looming threat to the country's cybersecurity this year, they cautioned.



**Chinks in armour:** Huge population and fast-expanding economy makes India vulnerable to such incidents. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Rohan Vaidya, regional director, India and SAARC, CyberArk said, "In 2024, we expect a sharp uptick in data breaches as the digital landscape expands, primarily because of the scale and diversity of attacks, which have impacted al-

most every sector."

As organisations migrate their data, applications, and workloads to the cloud, the attack surface widens, providing a broader canvas for threat actors to exploit.

McAfee Corp., a player

in online protection, forecast that in 2024 the global excitement around the Olympic Games will become a breeding ground for scams. Cyber-scammers will exploit consumer enthusiasm around the event, targeting fans who are eager to buy tickets, book travel, access hot content, and participate in giveaways.

"As AI continues to lower the barrier to cybercrime and ushers in a new era of AI-powered cyber-threats, scams will become more sophisticated and more difficult to distinguish from legitimate messages and sites," said Steve Grobman, Chief Technology Officer, McAfee.