# Established 1865 SULI CLAY DELBADIN SUNDAY DECEMBER 22 2024: PAGES 12 73

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# No more public inspection of poll centre CCTV, webcasts, videos



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

n a move to check the potential misuse of postal ballot facility extended to voters on poll duty, electoral rules have been changed to ensure that such people cast their vote at designated facilitation centres only and do not keep the ballot papers with them for a long time.

Based on recommendations of the Election Commission (EC), the Ministry of Law and Justice has amended an election rule to prevent public inspection of certain

electronic documents such as CCTV camera and webcasting footage as well as recordings candidates to prevent their misuse.

The amendment has earned severe criticism from the Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh, who hit out at the poll body saying it was a "vindication" of the party's assertion of the "rapidly eroding integrity" of the electoral process. "Why the poll panel was afraid of transparency", Ramesh questioned.

According to Rule 93, all vote thereon in accordance

same at the facilitation centre as specified, in writing, by the returning officer.

recommended to the Union law ministry to tweak the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 to ensure that voters on poll duty cast their vote at voter facilitation centres located where they are deployed. The EC was of the view that if a postal ballot remains with a voter for a long time, the person could be highly susceptible to undue influence, threats, bribery and other unethical means by candidates or political parties. According to the Ministry of

Law, a court case was the "trigger" behind the amendment. Documents such as nomination forms, appointment of election agents, results and election account statements are mentioned in the Conduct of Election Rules, electronic documents such as CCTV camera footage, webcasting footage and video recording of candidates during the Model Code of Conduct period are not covered.

CCTV coverage, webcasting of polling stations are not carried out under Conduct of Election Rules but are the result of steps taken by the EC to ensure a level playing field," said an official.

# **Number of domestic migrants** reduced by 12 per cent: EAC-PM

In a remarkable observation which indicates increased economic opportunities across the country, the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM) has estimated the number of domestic migrants has lowered by around 12 per cent to 40.20 crore between 2011 and 2023.

"The overall number of migrants in the country, as of 2023, is 40,20,90,396. This is about 11.78 per cent lower as compared to the number of migrants enumerated as per Census 2011 [45,57,87,621]. Consequently, the migration rate which stood at 37.64% as per Census 2011 is estimated to have since reduced to 28.88% of the population," according to a working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

The paper titled '400 Million Dreams! Examining volume and directions of domestic migration in India using novel high frequency data, pointed out that West Bengal, Rajasthan and Karnataka are the States showing the maximum amount of growth in percentage share of the arriving passengers. Similarly, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh are States where the percentage share of total migrants has reduced.

"At the state level, Uttar Pradesh-Delhi; Gujarat-Telangana-Maharashtra; Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar-Delhi emerge as the primary dyads of the movement," it said. At the district level,



Murshidabad Paschim Bardhaman-Howrah: Valsad - Mumbai; Chittoor -Bengaluru Urban and Surat -Mumbai are the most popular routes for migration between districts. This has implications for urban planning as well as for planning of transportation networks. According to the report, April-June is the high month for migrant movement with November-December witnessing secondary highs. December-January September-October are the months with the highest inflows whereas May-June and January-February are the months with the highest outflows in Mumbai.

These are perhaps months where most migrant labour travel back to their places of origin. A secondary high in winter time is perhaps indicative of travel around the festival/marriage season. January, on the other hand, appears to be the month of lowest travel.

"Even prior to the pandemic related lockdowns, there were of the passenger

growth, however after the pandemic, even the high months i.e. April-May are at a distinctly lower level as compared corresponding period before the pandemic, passenger levels for May 2023 being 6.67% lower than the corresponding number for May 2012. Further, it is interesting to note that a majority [>75%] of our predicted migration flows are within 500 kms of the origin. This is in line with gravitation

"We hypothesize that this is on account of availability of improved services such as education, health. infrastructure and connectivity as well as improved economic opportunities in or near in major sources of migration and is an indicator of overall economic growth," noted the

paper authored by former

EAC-PM chairman Bibek

Debroy.

effects and theories such as

Ravenstein's Theory of Human

Migration (1834 - 1913)," it



The car that was crashed into a crowd at the Magdeburg

# Five killed in attack on German Christmas market, 200 injured

**AP** ■ MAGDEBURG (GERMANY)

Germans on Saturday mourned both the victims and their shaken sense of security after a Saudi doctor intentionally drove into a Christmas market holiday teeming with shoppers, killing at least five people, including a small child, and injuring at least 200 others.

Authorities arrested a 50 year-old man at the site of the attack in Magdeburg on Friday evening and took him into custody for questioning. He has lived in Germany for nearly two decades, practising medicine in Bernburg, about 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of Magdeburg. Officials

governor of the surrounding state of Saxony-Anhalt, Reiner Haseloff, told reporters that the death toll rose from two to five and that more than 200 people in total were injured.



# reduced GS1 on health and life insurance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Goods and Services Tax Council meeting on Saturday postponed a decision on reducing taxes on health and life insurance, while the much talked- about GoM recommendation of rate rejig in 148 items was not tabled before the Council Meanwhile, the GST Council agreed to issue a clarification on taxation of popcorn, saying that pre-packed and labelled ready-to-eat snacks will attract a 12 per cent tax while an 18 per cent GST will be levied if it is caramelised. There is no change in the tax rate of popcorn and the GST Council has only agreed that the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) will issue a circular clarifying the current taxation regime of popcorn. "Ready-to-eat popcorn", which is mixed with salt and spices, and has the essential character namkeens currently attracts a

If it is supplied as pre-packaged and labelled, a 12 per cent GST is levied. However, when popcorn is mixed with sugar (caramel popcorn), its essential character changes to that of a sugar confectionary, and would therefore be classifiable under HS 1704 90 90 and attract an 18 per cent GST, as per the clarification.

5 per cent GST if it is not pre-

packaged and labelled.

Some members of the Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising her state counterparts, felt that more deliberations were required before a final decision could be arrived at with regard to insurance taxation.

# **Delhi LG sanctions ED to prosecute Kejriwal**

papers" related to elections

shall be open to public inspection. The amendment

inserts "as specified in these

rules" after "papers". "In the Conduct of Elections Rules,

1961, in rule 93, in sub-rule

(2), in clause (a), after the

word "papers", the words "as

specified in these rules" shall

be inserted," the Ministry

section 18A has been added

'Notwithstanding anything

in this Part, a voter on

election duty shall receive

his postal ballot, record his

said in a notification. A new

states

in the rules.

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

In more trouble for former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Lieutenant Vinai Kumar Governor Saxena has sanctioned the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to prosecute him in the alleged money laundering case linked to the liquor policy scam case. This comes ust a month before A elections in Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party, however, claimed that there was no such sanction and challenged the ED to show a copy of the sanction.

On its part, AAP leaders Saurabh Bharadwaj, Priyanka Kakkar, Atishi and Manish Sisodia claimed that ED is "spreading fake news". They said that a copy of the permission should be given to them if such an order has been passed. The liquor policy scam has been among the biggest allegations made by the opposition BJP against

the AAP government. According to officials, the ED had, on December 5, sought permission to prosecute Kejriwal, writing to Delhi Chief Secretary Dharmendra in his capacity as Chief Vigilance Officer in this A case under on of Money regard. Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) charges was earlier filed against Kejriwal, but the trial had not started. After the Supreme Court made the Lt Governor's approval mandatory to prosecute individuals holding government posts in money laundering cases, the ED wrote to the Chief Secretary



asking for permission, said

Citing a November 6 Supreme Court judgment, the ED sought sanction prosecution under the Money Prevention of Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, on December 5. In its letter to the Lt Governor, the ED said it found a "huge level of corruption in framing and implementation" of the excise policy. The Supreme Court on November 6 ruled that public servants cannot prosecuted for money laundering without prior approval from government, as required under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). Earlier, prosecution sanction was not needed for chargesheets (prosecution complaints) filed by the ED against public servants. It was mandated for police.

other investigative agencies, like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and state The ED in its note to Chief

authority to prosecute former Delhi ĆM Arvind Kejriwal under section 197 (1) of CrPC (Section 218 of BNSS 2023) in a case related to liquor policy scam case.

Sanction may be required for prosecution to Kejriwal, for offence of Money Laundering under Section 4 of PMLA 2002 read with Section 197(1) of Cr. P.C. (Section 218 of BNSS, 2023) in the case of ECIR No. ECIR/HQ14/2022 dated 22.08.2022. Therefore, you are requested to grant sanction for prosecution to Sh. Arvind Kejriwal, Ex- CM, Govt, of NCT of Delhi in ECIR No. ECIR/HQ 14/2022 dated 22.08.2022, for the offence of money laundering as define under Section 3 of PMLA, 2002 and the offence is punishable under section 4 of PMLA Act, 2002," the ED said.

Meanwhile, the BJP doubled down on its charges against the AAP with Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva welcoming the sanction to prosecute Kejriwal. Secretary of Delhi, sought approval from the competent

# MCD drive to identify illegal B'deshi migrants in its schools

STAFF REPORTER MEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has issued an order directing to carry out a drive to identify and verify illegal Bangladeshi migrants in municipal schools and those registered for birth certificates. The MCD has also directed all MCD zones to remove encroachments by illegal Bangladeshi migrants. An action taken report has been sought by the MCD deputy commissioner by December 31

The directive comes days after the Delhi L-G Secretariat ordered a crackdown on illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, with the issue becoming the latest flashpoint between the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ahead of the Assembly elections in Delhi due in February.

The decision follows a meeting held on December 12 with Delhi government's Principal Secretary (Home), the Commissioner represented by the Additional Commissioner (HQ) and Deputy Commissioner (HQ). Zonal heads have been instructed to implement preventive measures address the issue of illegal Bangladeshi migrants.



Visitors at the 'All India Winter Rose Show' organised by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) in association with The Rose Society of India, at India-Africa Friendship Rose Garden, Chanakyapuri

# **Multistorey building collapses in Punjab's Mohali**



**PTI** ■ CHANDIGARH

 $R^{\text{escue operations were underway after a}}_{\text{multistorey building collapsed in the}}$ Sohana village of Punjab's Mohali district on Saturday, officials said. Locals said some people were feared trapped under the debris. The district authorities launched a rescue operation. Two excavators were pressed into

service as part of the operation. A National Disaster Response Team (NDRF) team has reached the spot. The fire brigade is also participating in the operation, the officials said. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said, "Sad news has been received that a multistorey building near Sohana in Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali) has collapsed. The entire administration and other rescue teams have been deployed at the spot. I am in constant touch with the administration. "We pray that there is no loss of life, we will also take action against the culprits. Appeal to the people to cooperate with the administration," he added in his post on X.

Senior Superintendent of Police (Mohali) Deepak Pareek, who reached the spot to take stock of the situation, said the rescue operation was underway in full swing.

# A royal takeover: Erstwhile princely estate of Bettiah Raj, is now State property

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Perhaps one of the last privy purses, the erstwhile princely estate of Bettiah Raj, one of the largest zamindari of Bihar, will now be assimilated in the property owned by the State government. According to a notification issued in the Bihar Gazette decks have been cleared for complete takeover of 15,358 acres of land belonging to the Bettiah princely State by the Bihar

administration.

Out of a total of 15,358.60 acres of land, 15,215.33 acres is in Bihar and 143.26 acres is in Uttar Pradesh. According to officials, a large chunk of land that came under the erstwhile Bettiah Raj has been encroached upon over the

The 'Vesting of Bettiah Raj Properties Act-2024's gazette notification dated December 11 followed a bill passed by the state legislature in the winter session last month. Earlier, properties of the estate were managed by the Court of Wards, Board of

Government). The last raja of Bettiah Rai Harendra Kishore Singh, died

Revenue

heirless on March 26, 1893, leaving behind two widows, Maharani Sheo Ratna Kunwar and Maharani Janki Kunwar. Maharani Sheo Kunwar Ratna succeeded to the estate of Raja Harendra Kishore Singh on his death as his senior widow died on March 24, 1896 and on her death Maharani Janki Kunwar became entitled to the possession of the estate. Since



it was reportedly found that Maharani Janki Kunwar was not able to administer the Wards.

estate, its management was taken over by the Court of

Cities in Bihar where land belonging to Bettiah Estate are located include: 9758.72 acres in West Champaran, 5320.51 acres in East Champaran, 35.58 acres in Gopalganj, 7.29 acres in Siwan, 4.81 acres in Patna, 88.41 acres in Saran. Similarly, cities in Uttar

Pradesh where land belonging to Bettiah Estate located include: Kushinagar (61.16 acres), Maharajganj (7.53 acres), Varanasi (10.13 acres), Gorakhpur (50.92 acres), Basti (6.21 acre), Allahabad

acre). "All the existing properties, to the knowledge of the court and being looked after by the court, of the Bettiah Raj, located in or outside the state of Bihar, whether movable or immovable, shall stand vested with the state government from the date on which this Act comes into force. Bettiah Raj Properties means and includes all movable and immovable properties of the erstwhile Raja of Bettiah", says the Gazette notification.

(4.54 acre), Ayodhya (1.86



# **VIEWPOINT**

# Restive Bangladesh: Grappling with a deadly identity crisis



**Romit Bagchi** 

When the persecution of Hindus in Muslim-dominated Eastern Bengal, which later became East and then Bangladesh, began, I do not know. In my limited knowledge of history, it started when the Viceroy of East India Company government Lord Curzon enforced the partition of Bengal in 1905. This wellthought-out move to rob the Hindu Bengalis of their rebellious fire by dividing the race on the communal lines rather helped ignite a full-blooded nationalist

The partition plan divided Bengal into the two provinces: one included what are now West Bengal, Odisha and Bihar and the other, Eastern Bengal and Assam. While the former was a Hindu-majority province the other had the majority of the Muslims. Aurobindo Ghosh penned robust articles in the nationalist daily Bande Mataram on the desecration of the Hindu temples and atrocities perpetrated on the Hindus in Eastern

movement.

Bengal who were up in arms against the partition plan. This continued with varying intensity till the macabre Noakhali riots closely following the Great Calcutta Killing.

What happened in Noakhali was more pro-longed than the Calcutta riots. The Noakhali pogrom forced Mahatma Candhi to camp there for Gandhi to camp there for many days on a peace mission to douse the communal inferno. About 5000 Hindus were massacred during these riots, thou-sands were forcibly converted and hundreds of women were raped. Property was ransacked; houses and shops were looted and torched; temples were des-

Punjab, the partition of Bengal was marked by absence of any major communal incidents. Things, however, resumed with a vengeance in Khulna district of East Pakistan on December 20, 1950. What followed is horrible. The fire- fanned by the vicious propaganda unleashed by the Pakistan government-spread thick and fast, engulfing district after district in East Pakistan and resulting in exodus of lakhs of Hindus to West Bengal. Citing just one instance will suffice to make clear what happened there. In February 1950, a train carrying mostly the Hindus fleeing to West Bengal was stopped while it was moving over the Meghna

river by armed gangs. The Hindus were singled out, killed with their throats slit and then thrown into

The unabated carnage happening with the full governmental patronage forced then Union Industry Minister Syama Prasad Mookerjee to quit the Nehru government, angry as he was with the latter's wishy-washy attitude towards the Pakistan government. After resigning, he then in Bangladesh continued. Perhaps the most gruesome of these is what followed the Babri Masjid demolition on December

But if we seek to explain this majoritarian paranoia vis-à-vis the Hindus objec-tively we cannot gloss over factors other than the communal divide. We must look at the complex socio-economic and political factors, which, couries of pogroms.

During the creation of Pakistan, there were 13.5 million Hindus in East Pakistan, constituting 29 per cent of its total population. But this figure does not reveal all. The Hindus owned nearly 80 per cent of its national wealth and financed 95 per cent of the educational institutions. According to Syama Prasad's biographer Tathagata Roy, they owned nearly 75 per cent of the

sway only over the countryside. Many historians, particularly those with the Marxist leaning, sought to view what happened in Noakhali and afterwards in East Pakistan from the angle of the peasant-za-mindar antagonism-the class conflict whipped up further by the feeling of superiority among the Hindus and their elitist af-

Coming to the present unrest, we may say that the identity crisis which has been haunting Bangladesh since its creation has come back again with an ominous punch. Two mighty forces-the exclusive Islamic identity and the inclusive Bengali identity-are again staring at each other.

This is Bangladesh's history. This nation keeps swinging like a pendulum between these two ends, making it restless groping in vain for a solid ideological/cultural anchorage. While the majority of the elite section of its society gravitates towards the Bengali identity-based synculture educationally unprivileged feel an irresistible pull towards fundamentalism.

But this is perhaps an oversimplification of reality which is quite messy and complex. Even during the Liberation War, while a great number of the people participated in it the number of those who stayed out was not small either. The latter viewed it as the

Indian scheme to split Pakistan and weaken the Islamic State whose creation India had never acquiesced. They feared that Índia's success would end up reducing Bangladesh to its colony. Moreover, many who fought the war as members of the Mukti Bahini (liberation force) were unhappy with the Indian authorities usurping all the credits of the victory while portraying it as a mere Indo-Pak war, belittling the enormous sacrifice the people of Bangladesh made. They affirm that India was merely an ally in Bangladesh's Lib-eration War. Not surpris-ingly, the iconic photograph of the surrender ceremony is absent in the national museum at

On the top of everything else, there is a fear conscious or unconscious in the Muslim psyche across the sub-continent: a chilling fear of dissolving in the all-absorbing, elastic genius of Indian culture stripped of their separate Islamic identity. This is more so as most of them have a Hindu ancestry.

Now the question is: how will this hardened contradiction be resolved? While I was thinking of this, Rabindranath Tagore's essay on the Hindu-Muslim distemper in the restive Indian sub-continent came to my mind. Asked how this deeply ingrained communal an-

**E-AUCTION** 

NOTICE

tipathy could be resolved in a syncretic synthesis, he wrote that the Time alone could hammer it out through the transformation of the Mind. As far as Bangladesh's edginess is concerned, the same seems to be the solution: evolution of the collective mind from its bigoted exclusivity into an all-in inclusivity. That time seems still faroff. And if this monumental change is to happen, India as the privileged custodian of the spiritual knowledge of the One in the All and the All in the One must play a pivotal role, shedding her self-involved obsession and waking up the humanity to supra-religious Spirituality, making it the dominant note of human life. She has been striving now to attain Shakti. The time may come when she will rise up to the call of her destiny and fulfil the mission which she alone can accomplish.

# <u>र्इं-निविदा</u>

केंचीधाम तहसील के मुख्यालय गरमपानी निर्मित सरफेस पार्किंग एवं रेस्टोरेन्ट वं संचालन हेतु ई-निविदा दिनाक 10.01.2025 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। विवरण दिनांव 26.12.2024 से वेबसाईट uktender.gov.in Chief Administrator, UHUDA के link तथ ddantl.org.in के notice board link पर

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I, No. 4086078L Rank HAV Name Arvind Singh S/o Sh. Bakhtawar Singh Unit 10 GARH RIFLE C/o 56 APO, R/o Village Pailing, P.O. Parkandi, Distt. Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand-246419. I have changed my son's name from ASWANI NEGI to ASHWIN NEGI NEGI. In future he should be known as ASHWIN NEGI for future all

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Original sale deed Mrs. Rekha Thapa wife of Amit Thapa daughter of Bhim Singh Thapa resident of village Chandmari Hariyawala Khurd, Ghanghora, District Dehradun purchased the said land from Mrs. Laxmi Devi wife of Arvind daughter of Ramswaroop resident of Ambadi tehsil Vikasnagar, District late Mam Chand Agarwal resident of ward no. 09 Indira Udyan Marg Vikasnagar, District Dehradun whose registration is recorded and mentioned in book 0-1, volume 2169 pages 221 to 246, number 34, dated 03.01.2017 in Sub-Registrar Office II Vikasnagar, District Dehradun. The said original sale deed has been lost somewhere.

Daleep Singh Negi son of Mohan Singh Negi resident of village Tungroli, tehsil Chakrata, District Dehradun. Contact No. 8126282161

### PUBLIC NOTICE

My property bearing Khata No 1002 (Fasli year 1418-1423) Khasra No 225 Kha having area measuring 80 Sq Mtr situated at Mauza Dhoran Khas, Pargana Parwadoon, District Dehradun is duly registered in the office of Sub Registrar Dehradun vide Book No 1, Vol 2902 pages 223 to 248 at Serial No 5148 dated 26.08.2009 Original sale deed of the said registry has been actually lost somewhere. Despite of sufficient efforts it has not been found yet. Anui Bhaskar S/o Anand Bhaskar R/o D-3. Pacific Golf

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

State, Sahastradhara Road,

Dehradun

is hereby informed that M/S SARSS PHARMACEUTICAL LABORATORIES PRIVATI LIMITED, Khata no 372, Khasra no49 Ga Sheeshambara, Tehsil Vikas Nagar, Dehradun Uttrakhand has been accorded Environmenta Clearance by State Level Environment Impac Assessment Authority, Gauradevi Paryavaran Bhawan, Third Floor, 46 B IT Park Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun (Constituted by Ministry of Environment, Forests and mate Change Government of India) EC No.243-09(125)/2024 Dated 29.11.2024

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formed the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. But that is a different history altogether. What is important for this piece is the fact that such State-sponsored riots targeting the Hindus in erst-while East Pakistan and

community-based consciousness forged and bolstered by the communal propaganda unleashed by the Muslim League in the 1940s, generated the fierce anti-Hindu sentiment which culminated in a se-

land and properties in the capital Dacca. The majority of the zamindars were Hindus. They dominated the economic and academic landscape in all the towns. The Muslims, mostly the farmers, held

# Shimla Byepass Road, Sevla Kalan, Dist. Dehradun - 248171 Tel No. - 0135-2640046, 2641002, Email: Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia

"APPENDIX-IV-A" (See proviso to rule 8(6)) Sale notice for sale of Immovable/Movable property E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable/ Movable Assets Under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable/Immovable properties Hypothecated / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive/Physical/Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of Bank of India, will be sold on "As is Where is", As is What is " and "Whatever there is, Without Recourse" Basis. For detailed terms and condition of sale, please refer to the link provided in (a) https://www.bankofindia.co.in/(b)https://

DATE OF INSPECTION OF THE ASSETS 23.01.2025 From 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM with concerned Branch			LAST DATE AND TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS ON OR BEFORE	DATE AND TIME OF E AUCTION  Date: 27.01.2025 from 11.00 AM onwards till 05.00 PM with unlimited extensions of 10 Minutes duratio			
			Date: 24.01.2025 to 26.01.2025 upto 05.00 PM by ONLINE				
Sz. No.	Borrower/Guarantor/		scription of Immovable/Movable Assets	Demand Notice Date	Name of Auth. Officer/ Phone No./ Email LD	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increment Value	
1.	Branch: Roorkee		nd & Building admeasuring 139.54 square meter in name of Mr. pin Kumar S/o Jagdish Prasad and Mr. Narendra Sharma S/o Jagdish asad situated at House Old No. 252 New No. 322, Mohalla		Mr. Prashant Kumar Phone No. 8085434698 E Mail I.D - Dehradun ARD@	The second second	
	Kumar S/o Jagdish Prasa	Prasad situated at				Rs. 3,81,174	
	Prasad	Guijarwala Landhaura, Roorkee, Haridwar- 247667		+ UCI+other legal expenses		Rs. 10,000/-	
				Symbolic Possession	bankofindia.co.in		
2	Branch: Roorkee Borrower: Amit		Khatta No. 179, Khasra No. 70, Lakhnota Choraha,	Rs. 30,00,080.73	0000404000	Rs. 56,78,138	
	Kumar S/o Karan Roorkee, Distt	Roorkee, Distt Harid	School, Mauza Jatheri, Pargana Manglour, Tehsil- war, Uttarakhand State Admeasuring Area: 341.50			Rs. 5,67,813	
	Singh Sq.M, Standing in the		e name of Mr. Amit Kumar	legal expenses	E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@	Rs. 10,000/-	
				Symbolic Possession	bankofindia.co.in		
3.	Branch: Haridwar Borrower: Ruma		ty is a free hold residential Flat, Flat No. 23 at Third Floor Sai rtment situated at Khasra No. 485/8, without roof rights. Tehri		Mr. Prashant Kumar Phone No.	Rs. 21,60,000	
	Sah W/o Bhaskar Singh	Visthapit Khetra Ph	nase-II, Village Ranipur, Pargana Jwalapur, Distt:	Rs. 21.52 Lakh + UCI+other	8085434698 E Mail I.D -	Rs. 2,16,000	
	sq.ft owned by Mrs		nd. Admeasuring area 693.90 sq.ft Super Area-744.70 Ruma Saha W/o Mr. Bhaskar Saha, Bounded as	legal expenses	Dehradun.ARD@	Rs. 10,000/-	
		under: East: Flat No. 21 Alok Saini, West: Road 16 ft. wide (at ground). North: Common passage and 5 ft wide open area, South House of others.		Physical Possession			
4.		Part of Plot No. 14,	Khasra No. 100 of Sh. Sheetla Maa Vihar Phase 3,	30.04.2024	Mr. K. C. Bhatt	Rs. 20,15,716	
	Vallabh Singh & -suri	illage Jiyapota, Pargana Jwalapur, Tehsil and Distt Haridwar admea - suring 106.88 Sq.mtr. In the name of Sh. Radha Vallabh Singh as per		Rs. 13,77 Lakh + UCI+other legal expenses	Phone No. 9634629180 E Mail I.D - Dehradun ARD@	Rs. 2,01,571	
	Ms. Shivani Singh Sale Deed No. 3		7, dated 09.05.2014			Rs. 10,000/-	
				Symbolic Possession	bankofindia.co.in		

Terms & conditions of E-Auction are as under:- 1. E-Auction is being held on "as is where basis" "as what is basis" and will be conducted "On Line before submitting bid EMD shall be deposited through NEFT/Fund Transfer in working hours on or before 24.01.2025 to 26.01.2025. 2. For downloading the conducted to the conducted through NEFT/Fund Transfer in working hours on or before 24.01.2025 to 26.01.2025. 2. For downloading the conducted through NEFT/Fund Transfer in working hours on or before 24.01.2025 to 26.01.2025. 2. For downloading the conducted through NEFT/Fund Transfer in working hours on or before 24.01.2025 to 26.01.2025. urther details Process Compliance and Terms & Conditions, Pleae visit https://www.bankofindia.co.in b. Website address of our e-Auction Service Provider M/s PSB Alliance e-auctionportal-psba@psballiance.com Bidder may visit: https://www.ebkray.in where "Guidelines" or bidders are available with educational videos Bidders have to complete following formalities well in Advance. Step 1: Bidders/Purchaser Registration Bidder to register on e-Auction Platform (link given above) using his mobile number and email-id. Step 2: KYC Verification Bidder to upload requisite KYC documents shall be verified by e-Auction service provider (may take 2 working days) Step 3:Transfer of EMD amount to Bidder Global EMD Wallet Online/offline of fund using NEFT/Transfer using challan generated on e-Auction Platform. Step 4: Bidding Process and Auction Result: interested Registered bidders can bid online on e-Auction Platform after completing. Step 1, 2 and 3Pease note Step 1 to Step 2 should be completed by bidder well in advance before e-Auction date. 3. To the best of knowledge and information of the |Authorised Officer, there is no encumbrance on the properties. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims/rights/dues/affecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be demand to constitute any commitment of any representation of the bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the bank. The Authorised officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/.right/dues. No claim of whatsoever nature will be entertained after submission of the online bid regarding properties put for sale. 4. Date of Inspection 23.01.2025 from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm with prior appointment with mentioned respective branches on the contact numbers given against respective branches. 5. Bids shall be submitted through online procedure only. 6. Bidders shall be deemed to have read & understood the terms & conditions of sale & be bounded by them. 7. The Bid price to be submitted shall be above the Reserve price & bidders shall improve their further offers in multiples Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only). 8. It shall be the responsibility of the interested bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the property before submission of the bid. 9. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidders that be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders. shall be refund. 10. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price including EMD already paid, immediately on acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance of the sale price on or before 15th day of sale. The EMD already paid, immediately on acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance of the sale price on or before 1sh day of sale. The auction sale is subject confirm by the Bank Default in deposit of amount by the successful bidder would entail forfeiture of the whole money, already deposited and property shall be put to re-auction and the defaulting bidder shall have no claim/right in respect of property amount. 11. Neither the Authorised Officer/ Bank nor e-Auction service provider will be held responsible for any internet. Network problem failure/any other technical lapses/failure etc. In order to ward-off such contingent situation the interested bidders are requested to ensure that they are technically well equipped with adequate power back-up etc. for successfully participating in the Auction event. 12. The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/Registration fee other charges etc and also all the statutory dues, taxes, assessment charges etc. owing to any body. 13. The Authorised Officer/ Bank is not bounded to accept the highest offer and has the absolute right & discretion to accept or reject any or all offer (s) or adjourn/postpond/cancel the e-Auction or withdraw any property or portion there of from the auction proceeding at any stage without assigning any reason there for. 14. The Sale Certificate will be issued in the name of the purchaser (s) applicant (s) any and will not issued in any other name (s). 15. The Successful bidder/purchaser would bear all taxes including TDS @ 1% of sale price payable on purchase of property (if sale price is Rs. 50 lacs/- & above) and the taxes payable to service provider for conduction online sale. Also the fees payable for execution of sale certificate such as stamp duty, registration fee, etc. shall be borne by the successful bidder. 16. The sale be subject to rules/conditions prescribed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 Further details/enquires if any on the terms and conditions of sale can be obtained from the respective branches on the contact number given. 17. This is also a mandatory notice of 30 days as per provision of the SARFAESI Act to the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagers of the above accounts informing them about holding of sale/Auction aforesaid etc Place: Dehradun

# **Landslide blocks Tawaghat-**Dharchula highway

PNS ■ PITHORAGARH

Amassive landslide struck the Tawaghat-Dharchula National Highway near the zero point in Pithoragarh district, blocking the road. A large number of vehicles remained stuck on both sides of the highway. Soon after the landslide, police and local administration swung into de-

The district administration officials said that the opera-



tion was progressing slowly due to the large amount of the rubble and inclement weather. Besides, boulders continued to fall from the hill. The people were asked to use alternative roads as it was uncertain when the NH stretch would be restored for traffic movement. The locals said they were worried about the blockage. That was the principal connecting road between Dharchula and Pithoragarh, they said.

# IN BRIEF

# 1000 objections filed on last day on reservation of civic body top posts

**DEHRADUN:** On the last day of the filing objections against the proposed reservation of the seats of the mayors of municipal corporations and chairpersons of municipalities and nagar panchayats regarding the upcoming urban local body polls, a large number of objections was filed, taking the total figure to about 1000, said the Urban Development Directorate. The maximum number of such objectionsabout 300- was received from Haridwar district which has 14 civic bodies, including two municipal corporations. The Urban Development Directorate sources said that they would try to sort out these objections and send a report to the Uttarakhand State Election Commission by December 23. Notably, the mayor-chairman post reservation notification involving all the civic bodies of the State had been issued on December 14. However, the reservation notification had been issued for Nainital district a day later and so the last date of receiving objections is December 22.

# Country liquor smuggler held in Lalkuan

**LALKUAN:** The Lalkuan police arrested one person and recovered 56 pouches of country liquor from him near Tanda forest. The accused was identified as Gopi Malik, resident of Vikash Colony, Lalkuan. The inspector in-charge of the Lalkuan police station said that the accused had been booked under relevant sections of the Excise Act, adding that they would continue carrying out operations under the direction of the senior police officers to stamp out illegal liquor smuggling.

# CII, Northern Region unveils winners of Green Practices Award for Industries

DEHRADUN: Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Northern Region announced the winners of the 3rd edition of its 'Green Practices Award for Industries'. The awards for the best green practices were presented in various categories. Under the Manufacturing Category, Rockman Industries Ltd,



Haridwar won the Platinum Award while Manu Yantralaya (P) Ltd, Jaipur took home the Gold Award, and Guru Nanak Auto Enterprises Ltd, Kapurthala secured the Silver Award. In the Service Category, Noida Power Company Limited, Greater Noida won the Platinum Award, Suzlon Global Services limited, Jaisalmer earned the Gold Award. Addressing the award ceremony, the chairman of the CII Gurugram Zone and director at Alfa Cotec Industries Ltd Anuj Nagpal stressed on economic activities contributing to environmental preservation rather than causing and aggravating environmental degradation through adopting eco-conscious strategies. The award assessments were based on several parameters, including energy conservation, water conservation, renewable energy utilisation and implementation of ISO 14000, OHSAS 18000. Over 60 del-

egates from various industries attended the programme.

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# **CM directs UTC normalise** the bus services on Delhi route

PNS DEHRADUN

**I** inconvenience caused to the passengers due to the imposition of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) policy by the government in the National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi in view of the high levels of atmospheric pollution, the Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has directed the Uttarakhand transport corporation (UTC) to keep the services to the NCR in the normal mode. Following the order of the CM the UTC has come into action mode and it is trying to increase the frequency of the BS VI model buses and inducting more new buses in the Delhi route. The additional secretary, transport, Narendra orders have been given for the

Taking cognizance of the Kumar Joshi said that the operation of additional buses. UTC has taken a series of steps in view of the ban on the BS III and BS IV buses in the NCR. He said that the UTC at present has 185 CNG powered buses which are at present operational on Delhi route.

> The UTC has 12 Volvo buses of BS VI model and now the number of the rounds of these buses have been increased on the Delhi route.

Joshi said that currently being the lean season the number of passengers has fallen to 50 per cent of the normal. He said in the case of an increase in the number of passengers on Delhi route the

Joshi added that the passengers of the buses which are unable to operate to Delhi due to GRAP guidelines are being transported to the Delhi border at Mohan Nagar and Koshambi in Uttar Pradesh. The UTC has set up coordination with the officers of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) for transporting the passengers of Uttarakhand to Delhi from the Delhi border. He said that all the officers posted in all the depots and other offices have been kept on alert mode. The UTC is trying to ensure that the people of Uttarakhand do not face any inconvenience while commuting to Delhi, he said.

# Absence of public transport declines footfalls of patients at district hospital

PNS DEHRADUN

Due to the absence of public transportation facilities in proximity to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay District Hospital, the hospital administration has observed a decline in patient attendance. Many patients have voiced concerns regarding the absence of public transport options available to reach the district hospital. Notably, the district hospital is situated farther from the city centre compared to the Government Doon Medical College (GDMC), making convenient transportation a challenge for patients trying to access the facility.

In light of this situation, a patient named Heena Dimri, who resides in the Kedarpur area of Dehradun, expressed her difficulties. She said that she has been suffering from asthma and must frequently visit the hospitals. However, the lack of direct public trans-

portation to the hospital complicates her travels, often resulting in higher costs. Dimri said that she took Vikram to reach Dharampur, and from there, she was required to hire an expensive auto-rickshaw to arrive at the district hospital. Given this situation, the hospital management and the State government should take appropriate action, she stated.

This is my first visit to the district hospital. However, I faced challenges reaching the facility due to the absence of public transport options. Therefore, I have decided that in the future, I will seek treatment at GDMC, as it is centrally located in the city and more accessible for patients," stated another patient, Ravi Kumar. Numerous other patients and their companions have voiced similar concerns regarding the insufficient public transport facilities at the district hospital. Regarding this, medical superintendent of the hospital Dr VS Chauhan said that that the hospital administration has acknowledged the concerns and challenges patients face in reaching the facility due to insufficient transportation options. He noted that as a result, patient visits have decreased compared to those at GDMC. Previously, the hospital administration brought this matter to the state government's attention. The absence of public transportation may be indirectly associated with the school located in the vicinity of the hospital. This lack of transportation options may be attributed to mitigating traffic and ensuring students' safety. However, to address the concerns of patients and increase visitation, the state administration must consider this issue and take appropriate

### DM issued direction for smooth function of traffic at ISBT PNS DEHRADUN

To manage traffic more effectively in the ISBT hotspot area, district magistrate Savin Bansal has issued important directives to the officials concerned. This decision follows a tour of the city conducted on a two-wheeler by the DM and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ajay Singh on Saturday aimed at improving basic facilities and addressing traffic management shortcomings. During a meeting of the Road Safety Committee, the DM emphasised that the committee has been granted significant powers by the court for improvements. He stated that road enhancement projects should utilise these powers as outlined in the Disaster Management Act of 2005. Bansal remarked. He noted that, despite the presence of two gates for vehicle movement in the ISBT area, buses were operating through only one gate. It has now been decided that vehicles heading to Rishikesh, Haridwar, Kotdwar



two for entry and exit, while vehicles bound for Saharanpur and Delhi will enter through gate two and exit through gate one. Additionally, he further highlighted that traffic was being negatively impacted by passenger boarding and deboarding outside the ISBT area. Therefore, this practice will now be restricted to designated zones. Vehicles that fail to comply with this regulation will be seized and taken to the Rangers ground and repeat offenders may face license suspension, he added. Bansal further explained that at the juncand the Garhwal and Kumaon tion point under the ISBT flyregions will use gate number over, traffic coming from flow.

Niranjanpur Mandi towards Kargi Chowk and Turner Road was causing congestion. To alleviate this issue, vehicles from Niranjanpur Mandi will now be diverted towards Kargi Chowk via the flyover at Junction Island, aiming to reduce traffic pressure on the service road and junction. Further, the lack of proper parking for commercial vehicles around the ISBT bus stand was creating obstacles. Considering this, he instructed officials concerned to arrange proper parking in available spaces under the flyover to ensure smooth traffic

### Silver jubilee programme of 105 regular, 88 TGC held at IMA PNS ■ DEHRADUN

 $T^{
m he105}$  Regular and 88 Technical Graduate Course celebrated the silver jubilee of their commissioning at Indian Military Academy (IMA) Dehradun on Saturday. A total of 557 Gentlemen Cadets (GC) of the batch had passed out from the portals of the IMA on December 11, 1999 to become officers in the Indian Army. The silver jubilee ceremony commenced with paying respect and homage to the martyrs at the IMA war memorial followed by a group photograph in front of the Chetwode building. The officers came from all corners of ticipated in the ceremony, men-

days spent in IMA under the best of instructors and 'ustads' who inculcated the qualities of leadership in them. As part of the run-up to the event, on Dec 11, officers posted at different stations across the country carried out a "wreath laying ceremony" along with the next of kin of the brave-hearts at 20 different stations. Main wreath laying ceremony was conducted at the National war memorial at New Delhi. The PRO Defence Dehradun, Lieutenant Colonel Manish Shrivastava, who was also commissioned along with the course and parthe country and recalled the tioned that "32 officers of the

course have laid down their lives in the service of the nation and fighting the enemies of the nation in various operations. The course members also engaged in the activities such as a 10,000 km all India motor cycle expedition, a mountaineering expedition at Mount Kangyatse II and I in Leh to mark the occasion. The silver jubilee events culminated with felicitation of the next of kin and renewed determination to serve the nation till one's last breath in any and every field that is true to the teachings at the IMA Dehradun.

# Dhasmana demands resignation of Union Home minister Shah

PNS ■ DEHRADUN  $D_{\rm tion\ of\ the\ Union}^{\rm emanding\ resigna-}$ Home minister Amit Shah for his alleged derogatory comments made on BR Ambedkar, the vice president of Uttarakhand Congress Suryakant Dhasmana sat on a fast in front of the statue of Ambedkar at Clock Tower on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, Dhasmana country will not tolerate the



said that the people of the Ambedkar. He said that the Shah had made a derogatory insult of Baba Saheb comment on Ambedkar in Lok Sabha. Dhasmana said that the incident will go down as a black chapter in the history of the country. He said that it is unfortunate that no senior leader of BJP and RSS has condemned the comment which shows that they are supporting

Shah. The Congress leader demanded that the home minister should seek apology for comment failing which the Prime Minister should remove him from his cabinet.

### Exchange of ideas is part of ancient Indian culture & tradition: CM Dhami PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that the State government is working with dedication for encouraging cultural values and wholesome development of the State. He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, India today is working to conserve and promote its rich culture and tradition. The CM was addressing the inaugural session of the lec-

ture series

Gang Dhara: Ever flowing stream of ideas' at D o o n University on Saturday He said that the flow of i de a s prompts us to move forward in life and the exchange of ideas has always remained part of our traditions. The CM said that in-

depth dis-

cussion on

Date: 21.12.2024

migration, education, culture, environment and carrying capacity of Himalayas will be held in the two day lecture series. He said that the State government will soon set up a centre for Hindu studies at Doon University where indepth study and research will be done on Hindu civilization, philosophy, history and values.Dhami said that the State government has adopted the



model of harmonization of economy and ecology for development. The CM averred that Uttarakhand is the only State of the country where apart from GDP efforts are being made to quantify the GEP. He said that the State government has acted

against illegal encroachments and has implement stringent laws against religious conversions, riots and cheating in examination, The lecture series is the brainchild of former CM Trivendra Singh Rawat. Swami Avdheshanand Giri of Juna Akhara, MLA Vinod Chamoli, VC of Doon University Surekha Dangwal and others were present on the

**Authorised Officer** 

Recovery Center, PNB House, BHEL, Sector-IV Haridwar- 249403. Email: cs8238@pnb.co.in

### पंजाब नैशनल बैंक 🖳 punjab national bank

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules,

2002, issued demand notice/s on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective Borrowers/Guarantors /Mortgagors to repay the amount as mentioned against each account within 60 days from the date of notice(s)/ date of receipt of the said notice(s). The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the dates mentioned against each account. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Punjab National Bank for the amounts and interest thereon. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the

S. O.	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor	Details of Security/Property	Date of Demand Notice	Date of possession notice affixed	Amount Outstanding				
(A.D.)	Sahni, 769, Mahaveer Enclave, Ganeshpur, Near railway Station Roorkee, Haridwar, Uttrakhand- 247667 and Smt. Sushma Sahni W/o Sh. Raju Sahni S/o Late Sh. Jai Chand Sahni, 769, Mahaveer Enclave,	Residential House land measuring in East- 35 feet, In West- 35 feet, In North- 60 feet and in South- 60 feet, Total area Measuring 2100 sq. feet i.e. 195.167 sq. mtr Situated at Mahaveer Enclave, Ganeshpur, Roorkee Distt- Haridwar registered vide Sale Deed registered in Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 2823 at pages 381-418, Serial No. 8560 on dated 03.07.2013 in the name of Sh. Raju Sahni S/o Late Sh. Jai Chand Sahni & Smt. Sushma Sahni W/o Sh. Raju Sahni which is bounded as under: East: Rasta 22 feet wide, West: Plot of Shamim, North: House of Ashok Kumar, South: Rasta 22 feet wide.		And a contract of the contract of	Rs. 18,74,113.50 + further interest & other Charges /Expenses				

Place: Haridwar



# **Disputed interest Disputed TDS or TCS** DISPUTES COVERED

All disputes (subject to some exclusion), in relation to the following: Tax
 Penalty
 Interest
 Fee
 TDS or TCS

# **ELIGIBILITY**

- Appeal/writ filed on or before 22.07.2024 and such appeal/writ is pending as on 22.07.2024
- Taxpayer who has filed objections before Dispute Resolution Panel (DRP) and DRP has not issued any directions on or before 22.07.2024
- Taxpayer in whose case DRP has issued direction but Assessing Officer has not completed assessment on or before 22.07.2024
- Taxpayer who has filed an application for revision u/s 264 of the Act and such application is pending as on 22.07.2024

# KEY DATES —

File your declaration under the scheme on or before 31.12.2024 to pay lesser amount for settlement of appeal. On filing declaration on or after 01.01.2025, the settlement amount becomes higher.

For more information on the scheme, see the FAQs issued by the department by visiting www.incometax.gov.in





**Income Tax Department** Central Board of Direct Taxes





# PM Modi's Kuwait visit first by Indian PM in 43 years, aims to strengthen ties and promote peace in West Asia

As he embarked on a two-day visit to Kuwait, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India and the Gulf nation have shared interest in peace, security and stability in West Asia.

Modi's visit to Kuwait, the first by an Indian prime minister in 43 years, comes two weeks after the collapse of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria and amid signs of a possible ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The last Indian prime minister to visit Kuwait was Indira Gandhi in 1981.

In a departure statement, Modi said his talks with the top Kuwaiti leadership would be an opportunity to chalk out a roadmap for a futuristic partnership between India and Kuwait.

"We deeply value the historical connection with Kuwait that has been nurtured over generations. We are not just strong trade and energy partners but also



have shared interest in peace, stability prosperity in the West Asia region," he said.

The prime minister is visiting Kuwait at the invitation of Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-"I am confident that visit will further strengthen and reinforce the special ties and bonds of

friendship between the people of India and Kuwait," Modi said.

The prime minister said he was looking forward to his meetings with the Emir, the Crown Prince and the prime minister of Kuwait.

engagements "It would be an opportunity Kuwait include a visit to an to chalk out a roadmap for a futuristic partnership for the Indian labour camp, an interaction with the Indian benefit of our people and the

community and gracing the opening ceremony of the Gulf Cup football tournament.

"I express my gratitude to the leadership of Kuwait for the special gesture of inviting me to the inauguration ceremony of the Arabian Gulf Cup, a premier sporting event in the Gulf region," the prime minister said. "I look forward to being a part of this celebration of athletic excellence and regional unity,"

On Friday, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said India and Kuwait are expected to focus on shoring up ties in a range of key areas including defence and trade during the prime minister's visit to the Gulf nation. Discussions are underway with Kuwait on a bilateral investment treaty and a defence cooperation pact, according to officials.

At a media briefing, Arun Kumar Chatterjee, Secretary (Overseas Indian Affairs) in the MEA, said a few bilateral documents are expected to be firmed up during the prime

"The historic visit by the prime minister is expected to open a new chapter in India-Kuwait bilateral relations," he

"It will not only consolidate the partnership in existing spheres but also unveil new avenues cooperation, reinforce our shared values and build a stronger and more dynamic partnership for the future," he added.

India is among the top trading partners of Kuwait. The Indian community is the largest expatriate community in Kuwait.

The Gulf nation is among India's top trading partners, with bilateral trade valued at USD 10.47 billion in 2023-24. Kuwait is India's sixth largest crude supplier, meeting 3 per cent of the country's energy

Indian exports to Kuwait reached USD 2 billion for the first time in 2023-24 while investments by the Kuwait Investment Authority in India exceeded USD 10 billion

# Former SC judge Madan B Lokur appointed as chairperson of UN Internal Justice Council



 $F^{ormer\,Supreme\,Court\,judge}_{Madan\ B\ Lokur\ has\ been}$ appointed as chairperson of the United Nations Internal Justice Council for a term ending on November 12, 2028. In a communication to Justice Lokur, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the retired top court judge would head the council which also comprises other distinguished iurists.

'I have the pleasure to appoint you, with immediate effect, as a member of the Internal Justice Council, in the capacity of chairperson, for a term ending on 12 November 2028, the communication dated December 19 said. "The other members of the Council (in alphabetical order) are: Ms. Carmen Artigas (Uruguay), distinguished external jurist nominated by staff; Ms. Rosalie Balkin (Australia), distinguished external jurist nominated by management; Mr. Stefan Brezina (Austria), staff representative; and Mr. Jay Pozenel (United States of America), management representative," it added. The General Assembly of UN

established the Internal Justice Council (IJC) as part of the new internal justice system in order to help independence professionalism accountability administration system of the United Nations. The IJC is composed of five members consisting of a staff representative, a management representative and two distinguished external jurists, one nominated by the staff and one by management, and chaired by a distinguished jurist chosen by consensus by the four other members. The IJC members are appointed by the Secretary General. Born in 1953, Justice Lokur was appointed a judge of the

# India, Russia to boost joint efforts against radicalisation, terror financing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW

India and Russia have decided to step up joint efforts in dealing with challenges of radicalisation and terror financing. Ways to deepen cooperation in tackling threats of terrorism were discussed at a meeting of the India-Russia joint working group (JWG) on counterterrorism cooperation.

At a separate meeting on issues relating to the United Nations, Russia reiterated its support for India as a permanent member of a UN Security Council. The meeting took place in Moscow on December 19 and 20, Ministry of Affairs(MEA)said here on Saturday. "In the 13th JWG on counter-terrorism, both sides shared their experiences in countering

terrorism including crossborder terrorism, extremism agreed to enhance cooperation to address problems of radicalisation as well as terror financing," e MEA said. "They discussed current terrorist threats at the global and regional level and combating the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes," it said in a statement. The MEA said both reaffirmed commitment to strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation bilateral as well as multilateral platforms. India and Russia also held the sixth round of consultations on UN related issues in Moscow. "In the consultations on UNrelated issues, both sides exchanged views on regional and global developments and issues pertaining to the UNSC (UN Security Council),

including its reform," the MEA

said. "Russia reiterated its support for India as a permanent member of a reformed UN Security Council," it said. Tanmaya Lal, Secretary (West) in the MEA, led the Indian delegation at the JWG on Counter Terrorism (CT) cooperation and consultations on UN related issues. The Russian side was headed by Sergey Vershinin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. Representatives of respective departments and agencies from both sides also participated in the meetings. On December 19, Lal also held meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin and discussed current international and regional issues, especially the

# DefSat conference to explore synergies between defence modernisation and India's space ambitions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

"I eagerly look forward to

meeting the Indian diaspora

immensely contributed to

strengthening of bonds of

friendship between the two

nations," he added.

Kuwait who have

Ctrategists and business lead-Sers from the defence and space sectors will converge here next month to share experiences and deliberate on new opportunities in the area that has emerged as a critical link in securing the country's bor-The third DefSat Conference

and Expo, scheduled to be

held at the Manekshaw Centre here from January 8-10, is expected to provide a platform to explore the synergies between defence modernisation and India's expanding space ambitions. The theme of the three-day national conference 'Integrated Space Capabilities Multi-Domain Operations' and will highlight the strategic role of



disruptive space technologies in modern warfare across land, maritime, aerospace, cyberspace and homeland security domains.

"DefSat 2025 will spotlight military technologies, from quantum key distribution and nonkinetic space warfare to AI/ML-powered solutions, all designed to keep us at the forefront of future-ready

defence operations," Lt Gen PJS Pannu (retired), senior advisor, SIA-India, said. With highlights like IndSpace

Wargame 3.0, the conference unite defence practitioners, industry leaders and international experts to simulate realworld security challenges, showcasing the complexities operations and underscoring

the evolving space domain, Pannu said. Hosted by Satcom Industry Association-India India), the event is supported by the Department of Defence Production. Ministry of Defence, Defence Research and Development Organisation, NewSpace

Astronautical

India,

India's readiness to navigate

Aeronautical Society of India and the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) as a knowledge partner. The conference will feature a dedicated session Harnessing

India Ltd,

Technologies Comprehensive Homeland Security with senior officers from the Central Armed Police Forces, state police forces and paramilitary forces

# Successful completion of training for Air **Force Special Forces** 'Garud' operatives

Supreme Court on June 4,



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

 ${
m M}$ aroon Beret ceremonial parade to mark the successful completion of training of Air Force Special Forces operatives of 'Garud' force was held on Saturday at Garud Regimental Training Centre, Chandinagar, IAF said here.

Operations (Transport & Helicopter) reviewed the parade as the Chief Guest of the event. The Chief Guest congratulated the 'Garuds' on their successful passing

While addressing the young commandos, he emphasised the significance of rigorous training and honing Špecial Forces skills to keep pace with the fast changing security scenario. He presented Maroon Beret, Garud Proficiency Badge and Special Forces Tabs to the successful 'Garud' trainees and gave away trophies to the awardees. The Maroon Beret Ceremonial Parade is a

moment of pride and achievement for the 'Garuds' marking the befitting culmination of an extremely demanding and schedule transformation into 'Young Special Forces Operators joining the elite Garud' force and adding strength to the operational capability of

# SC upholds divorce of estranged couple, citing irreconcilable differences and 20-year separation

Marriage is a relationship built on mutual trust, companionship and shared experiences," the Supreme Court has said as it upheld a Madras High Court decision granting divorce to an estranged software engineer couple.

A Bench of justices Vikram

Nath and PB Varale said the length of separation and the evident animosity between husband and wife make it clear that there is no possibility of the marriage being revived. "Marriage is a relationship

built on mutual trust companionship, and shared experiences. When these experiences. essential elements are missing for an extended period, the marital bond becomes a mere legal formality devoid of any substance," the bench said.

It added that the court has consistently held prolonged separation, coupled with inability to reconcile, is a relevant factor in deciding matrimonial disputes.

"In the present case, the length of separation and the evident animosity between the parties make it clear that there is no possibility of the marriage



being revived," it said. The bench said that both husband and wife have been living separately for two decades now and this fact reinforces further conclusion that the marriage is no longer viable.

It said that the top court has held that prolonged separation creates a presumption of the marriage having irretrievably broken down.

"In this case, the parties have not shared a marital life since 2004, and all attempts at reconciliation have failed," it

The top court dismissed the appeal of women who had challenged the June 8, 2018 decision of the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court granting a decree of divorce on

The bench said the husband provided sufficient evidence to show that the appellant (wife) was engaged in a pattern of behaviour that caused him immense mental and emotional distress.

the ground of cruelty.

"This included filing false and baseless criminal complaints against the respondent and his family, which not only strained



their relationship but also caused significant damage to his reputation and peace of

mind," it said. Justice Nath, who penned the verdict on behalf of the bench said, "In matrimonial disputes, this Court has emphasized the need to prioritize welfare and dignity of both parties. Forcing a marriage to continue when it has become a source of unhappiness and conflict undermines the very purpose of the institution of marriage." The bench further said in the present case, the interests of both the parties are best served "In view of the above, this

court upholds the judgment of the high Court granting a decree of divorce to the respondent. The appellant's submissions are rejected as lacking in merit, both on procedural and substantive grounds," it said.

The bench reiterated that cruelty, long separation, and irretrievable breakdown of marriage, as established in this case, and thus, provide sufficient justification for dissolving the marriage.

It said that while granting the decree of divorce, the court deemed it appropriate to award permanent alimony to the appellant wife and the parties' daughter.

"Although the appellant wife has not specifically claimed any monetary relief or maintenance during these proceedings, it is trite and equitable to grant such relief, considering the financial status of the parties, their professional backgrounds, and the larger interest of justice," the bench added.

The bench noted that both

by allowing both parties to husband and wife are software daughter for these purposes. move on with their lives engineers and were earning. This is in line with the marriage more than two decades ago.

"It is reasonable to infer that their respective incomes must have increased substantially over the years. However, considering the dynamics of their separation and the financial burdens the appellant may have borne during the protracted litigation, this Court finds it necessary to award her a lumpsum permanent alimony of Rs 50 lakh to secure her financial independence and ensure that she can lead her life with

dignity," it said. The bench said further, this court recognizes responsibility of both parents toward the well-being, education, and prospects of their child. and future

Although the daughter may be of an age where she is approaching independence, the financial support provided through this judgment will be instrumental in meeting her educational needs as well as expenses related to her future marriage. A sum of Rs. 50 lakh is, therefore, awarded to the

interests of children suffering under distress of such matrimonia prolonged disputes between the parents," it said. Both parents share the duty of

ensuring the daughter's wellbeing and future security, and this financial provision will contribute to fulfilling that duty, it said.

"For the reasons stated above, this court directs the respondent husband to pay a sum of Rs. 50 lakh to the appellant (wife) as permanent alimony and an additional Rs. 50 lakh to their daughter for her education and future expenses, such as her marriage. These payments shall be made within four months from the date of this judgment," it ruled. The parties had entered into the marriage on June 30, 2002 and a daughter was born out of the wedlock on July 9, 2003. The discord between the parties arose just after the birth of the child, when the wife refused to return from her parental home, where she had gone for the delivery of the child.

# India's forest cover reaches 25.17% of total geographical area, adds 1,445 square kilometre since 2021

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

Not only India's total forest and tree cover has increased by 1,445 sq km since 2021, reaching 25.17 per cent of the total geographical area in 2023, but it also achieved an additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes compared to 2005 levels, as per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 released on Saturday.

In terms of the total area Madhya Pradesh leads with the largest forest and tree cover (85,724 sq km) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (67,083 sq km) and Maharashtra (65,383 sq



(65,882 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,812 sq

The report also noted that as part of its climate plans or Determined Contributions (NDCs) to meet the Paris Agreement goals, the country has committed to creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

The country's total forest cover increased to 7,15,343 sq km in 2023, reaching 21.76 per cent of its geographical area, the report stated, adding that the tree cover increased by 1,289 sq km and now constitutes 3.41 per cent of

the country's geographical

Together, the forest and cover amount to 8,27,357 sq km or 25.17 per cent of India's geographical area. This marks an overall increase of 1,445 sq km from 2021, with forest cover alone rising by 156 sq km. According to the Forest Survey of India (FSI), forest cover refers to all land that has a tree canopy density of more than 10 per cent and spans over an area of one hectare or more, regardless of the type of ownership or legal status.

This includes natural forests well as man-made plantations, orchards and tree patches in urban and to have 31.71 billion tonnes

rural areas that meet the size and canopy density criteria. Tree cover is defined as patches of trees and isolated trees outside the Reserved Forest Area (RFA) that are less than one hectare. Union Environment

Minister Bhupender Yadav said the most positive finding of the report is that India has already created an additional carbon sink of billion tonnes compared to 2005 levels.

India's carbon stock in 2023 is estimated at 7,285.5 million tonnes, which is an increase of 81.5 million tonnes compared to 2021. The fast-growing South Asian country is estimated

of carbon stock in forest and tree cover by 2030.

FSI Director General Anoop Singh said bamboo cover has also been estimated and included in the tree cover. India's total bamboobearing area is now estimated at 1,54,670 sq km, an increase of 5,227 sq km compared to 2021.

When considering forest cover as a percentage of the geographical Lakshadweep ranks first (91.33 per cent), followed by

Mizoram (85.34 per cent) and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (81.62 per cent). The FSI also analysed forest cover changes in the Western Ghats and Eastern States Area (WGESA) over

During this period, very dense forests increased by 3,465.12 sq km while moderately dense forests and open forests decreased by 1,043.23 sq km and 2,480.11 sq km respectively. In the hill districts of the country, the forest cover is 2,83,713.20 sq km, which makes up 40 per cent of the total geographical area of these districts. The latest assessment shows an increase of 234.14 sq km in forest cover in hill districts. However, the ISFR report showed a decrease of 327.30

sq km in forest cover in the

northeastern region.

the past decade and found

an overall loss of 58.22 sq

km in forest cover.

# Mohan **Bhagwat** advocates education as a facilitator

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat has said the education system should act as a facilitator and not a barrier to learning and asserted it was essential to remain rooted in "our basic foundational values" while adapting to

changing times.
The RSS chief, who was speaking after inaugurating LokSeva E School in Baner here on Friday, emphasised that education is not a business but a "vrat" (pledge) to create fine human beings.

"The education system should

act as a facilitator, not a barrier, to learning. It must serve as a tool to empower students rather functioning solely regulator. The re regulation in education should on streamlining processes and ensuring smooth functioning, rather than enforcing rigid dos and don'ts' that can stifle the experimental spirit among students," he said.

National Hailing the Education Policy (NEP), the RSS chief said it may have been introduced recently, but discussions to have such a kind of system have been underway for many years, adding that several schools have been imparting "value-based" education for long.

The new education system will be implemented completely, and it will lead the country to the desired dream, he said. "We need to change ourselves

according to the times, but while doing so, we must ensure that we are rooted in our basic foundational values. While sticking to those eternal foundational values, we need to lead ahead and face the future. We need to juxtapose the modern and ancient, for which all must contribute," he

Education should not remain restricted to a framework but must be holistic that the entire society must Bhagwat added.

# Punjab municipal polls conclude amid allegations of fake voting



Visually-impaired people show their fingers marked with indelible ink after casting votes during elections in Punjab for five municipal corporations and 44 municipal councils and nagar panchayats, in Amritsar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ounting of votes for the Celections to five municipal corporations and municipal councils and nagar panchayats in Punjab is underway, officials said on

Polling began at 7 am and continued till 4 pm amid tight security arrangements. Till 3 pm, the average turnout was 55 per cent.

municipal five corporations that went to the polls are Amritsar, Jalandhar, Patiala and Ludhiana,

More than 3,300 candidates are in the fray and a total of 3,809 polling booths have been set up for the civic polls. A total of 37.32 lakh voters, including 17.75 lakh females, were eligible to cast their vote in the elections conducted electronic voting machines (EVMs).

Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) alleged

casting of fake votes at the behest of the Aam Aadmi Party at many places in Patiala, a charge denied by the ruling

There were also reports of scuffles and heated exchanges between AAP and BJP supporters in Patiala.

Among political leaders who exercised their franchise were BJP's Tarun Chugh, Congress MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Ludhiana MLA Ashok Prashar and Jalandhar Cantt MLA Pargat Singh. BJP leader Jai Inder Kaur

alleged that some outsiders were roaming around in Patiala, demanding police action against them. BJP candidate from Ward No.

34 in Patiala, Sushil Nayyar, threatened to self-immolate after alleging that fake votes were being cast at a polling

Patiala Senior Superintendent of Police Nanak Singh reached the spot, Kaur and BJP supporters were seen arguing with the officer, claiming that some people

were being allowed to enter polling booths without proper verification and they were casting fake votes. Nobody was stopping them.

And who is responsible for it," asked a BJP supporter. "Videography of polling is taking place," the SSP

taking responded.

Earlier, Kaur, daughter of former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, alleged that AAP MLAs Chetan Singh Iauramajra and Gurlal Ghanaur were outsiders to Ward No. 40 yet they were present in the area.

The party also lodged a complaint against Jauramajra and Gurlal with the state election commission, seeking registration of an FIR against the duo for violating model code of conduct.

The BJP also claimed some miscreants targeted its party nominee from Ward No. 40 at AAP's behest. Even SAD claimed that its

booth in Ward No. 15 in Patiala was vandalised.

registration of an FIR against Mani Warring, brother of AAP MLA Garry Warring, and AAP supporters for alleged bogus voting in Ward No. 9 at Amloh in Fatehgarh Sahib.

The civic polls will be a litmus test for AAP, which would like its winning momentum to continue after securing victories in three of the four Assembly bypolls November.

The elections are also important as they will reveal the popularity of the ruling party among the urban voters. In the run-up to the elections, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann held roadshows and for campaigned candidates.

It will also be the first test for Aman Arora after he was appointed AAP's Punjab unit chief. Arora took part in poll campaign and made several promises to the voters.

The stakes are also high for Congress, which has majority in Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Patiala municipal corporations.



Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini pays last respect to the mortal remains of former Haryana chief minister Om Prakash

# Former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala cremated with State honours

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $F_{\text{Minister}}^{\text{ormer}} \xrightarrow{\text{Haryana}} \xrightarrow{\text{Chief}} \\ \text{Prakash}$ Chautala was cremated on Saturday with full state honours in Teja Khera village in his native Sirsa district. Chautala, who was a five-time chief minister, died in Gurugram on Friday. He was

President Vice Jagdeep Dhankhar, Union Minister Manohar Khattar, Chief Minister Harvana Nayab Singh Saini, Shiromani Akali Dal leader Sukhbir Singh Badal reached Teja Khera to attend the last rites of

the departed leader. Many Haryana ministers, state Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan, former Union minister Venod Sharma, SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia, BJP's Manpreet Badal and Manjinder Singh Sirsa and several other leaders also reached Teja Khera to pay their last respects.

Political leaders cutting across parties laid floral wreaths to pay their last respects to the departed leader.

Earlier, Chautala's mortal remains were Saturday kept at the family's Teja Khera farmhouse here for people to pay their last respects to the departed Indian National Lok Dal chief. His body was wrapped in the Indian Tricolour and decked with

garlands. An INLD spokesperson said Chautala was rushed to a hospital after his health

worsened on Friday.
Om Prakash Chautala's younger son Abhay Singh Chautala, an INLD leader, elder son Ajay Singh Chautala, who heads the JJP party, and other family members, including former deputy chief minister Dushyant Chautala, ex-CM Chautala's brother Ranjit Chautala, were present in Teja Khera.

The funeral pyre was lit amid chants of Vedic hymns by Congress leaders Randeep

Singh Surjewala and Kumari Selja had reached the Chautala farmhouse in the morning to pay their last respects to the five-time chief

Three streams of Ganga unified to enhance bathing facilities for Mahakumbh

Common gathered in the village in large numbers to attend the cremation.

The Haryana government declared a three-day state mourning on Friday. It has also declared Saturday a public holiday in all its offices as a mark of respect.

Shortly after laying a wreath Dhankhar, who was seated next to Chautala's younger son Abhay Chautala and SAD leader Sukhbir Badal, said, "Yesterday I got the news (of the demise). Five days back, I spoke to Chaudhary sahib and he was inquiring about my health. He was more concerned about me".

"Whenever I got the chance, I got his blessings," he said. The vice president added that farmers' issues and development of villages was farmers'

Chautala's priority. He made it clear the country's development, peace and progress is linked to the development of farmers and villages, Dhankar said.

Such an outspoken and a bold person, Chautala was dedicated to the rural system, he added.

# Protests erupt in UP over Amit Shah's remarks on DR BR Ambedkar

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE** 

PAmbedkar has intensified in Uttar Pradesh, with the Samajwadi Party (SP) staging statewide protests and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Chief Mayawati announcing a nationwide demonstration on December 24 to protest Union Home Minister Amit Shah's controversial remarks about the architect of the Indian Constitution. SP workers clashed with the police at

Sambhal, Kasganj, Rampur, and Saharanpur, among other parts of western Uttar Pradesh. The protests reflected the SP's sharp criticism of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing it of being "anti-Dalit."

In their memorandum to authorities, SP leaders said, "Babasaheb is a God for the majority of society. If the Constitution had not been created by him, Amit Shah

various locations, attempting would not have been the Home to block traffic at key Minister today." They further to denounce Shah's remarks. Mayawati also highlighted the intersections. Reports of unrest criticized Shah's remarks, She announced plans for a growing anger across calling them und emocratic and unconstitutional. "The BJP must apologize for the Home Minister's comments," the SP stated. "Dr. Ambedkar is revered as God by backward communities, Dalits, and the underprivileged. His image is present in every village, where r mm as a justice and empowerment."

Meanwhile, BSP Chief Mayawati took to social media nationwide December 24, calling the comments deeply hurtful to the sentiments of millions who revere Ambedkar. "Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, is a God-like figure to Dalits, the deprived, and the neglected. Amit Shah's disrespectful remarks have caused immense pain to the people," Mayawati wrote. She demanded that Shah retract his statement and

remarks. "If the demand to take back his words is not met, the BSP will organize a peaceful nationwide dharna on December 24 at all district headquarters to express its dissent," she declared. She reaffirmed her party's reaffirmed her party's commitment to Ambedkar's emphasizing his lifelong struggle for the rights and self-respect of Dalits and marginalized communities.

# ED ECIR against M3M quashed, allegations lacked substance: Allahabad HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

a significant legal development, the Allahabad High Court has quashed the Enforcement Information Report (ECIR) and the two subsumed FIRs, and the two subsumed FIRS, being the predicate offense, filed against M3M India, marking a substantial victory for the real estate company. This ruling, delivered on Friday (December 20, 2024), effectively puts an end to the legal proceedings initiated against the company, affirming the court's view that the allegations lacked legal grounds and

substance. It is noteworthy that in the month of September 2024, the High Court had granted a stay on the PMLA proceedings against the group before the appellate authority. Moreover, in another highly positive development, the Trial Court has reserved orders on an application for stay of the trial proceedings and a favorable

outcome is anticipated. The two FIRs in question were registered in the year 2023, filed under sections of the Indian Penal Code (now known as Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita), claimed that the

transactions between M3M India, Indiabulls Housing and other stakeholders had caused financial harm and involved undervaluation of property assets. Based on these FIRs, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) initiated an ECIR, adding to the legal challenges faced by M3M India.

The High Court, after extensive hearings, observed that the allegations raised in the FIRs were primarily commercial disputes, better suited for resolution through civil or arbitral proceedings than criminal investigations. The court highlighted that the petitioners, including M3M India, had been subjected to criminal proceedings despite the existence of ongoing arbitration related to the

contested transactions. The Judges also noted that the FIRs failed to establish prima facie evidence of criminal intent, instead revealing contractual disagreements that did not warrant the invocation of criminal law. Furthermore, the court acknowledged the unexplained delay in filing the complaints, further undermining the legitimacy

# Home Minister Amit Shah urges police reform and speedy justice in Northeast



Home Minister Amit Shah with Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jyotiraditya Scindia and Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha at the 'Bankers Conclave' organised as part of the North Eastern Council, in Agartala. PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the time has come for a change in approach of the police force with the end of insurgency in the northeast, in order to ensure that people get speedy

justice. Shah, addressing the 72nd plenary of the North Eastern Council (NEC) here, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought peace in the region by inking 20 peace accords in 10 years, leading to the surrender of 9,000 armed

militants. The police fought insurgency in the northeast for the past four decades. As insurgency has now ended, we need to change the approach of the force to ensure people get justice within three years of lodging FIRs," he said.

The home minister also said connectivity is no longer a problem in the region, as the Centre has spent Rs 81,000 crore for rail connectivity and Rs 41,000 crore for road network in the northeastern states.

that PM Modi Asserting expedited development activities in the northeast, Shah said Union ministers "spent 700 nights" in states of the region since the BJP-led NDA assumed power at the Centre.

"After the exchange of enclaves (land boundary agreements) with Bangladesh, the whole world will open for the northeast. This will change the investment ecosystem in the region," he said.

The senior BJP leader also laid

emphasis on the upliftment of people in rural areas by promoting vegetable promoting vegetable cultivation, production of milk, eggs and meat.
"Only a hike in the GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) is not enough for everall development. There is a

overall development. There is a need to attain self-sufficiency in vegetables, milk, eggs and meat," he said.

Besides, the central government has been focusing on organic cultivation in the region, said Shah.

"The Centre has already constituted the National Organic Corporation Ltd to boost the sector. I urge all the CMs (in the northeast) to sign agreements with NOCL for packaging, marketing and exporting of organic products," he said. The home minister, however,

said more efforts were needed to tackle narcotics smuggling in the region. Earlier in the day, Shah inaugurated the 72nd plenary session of the North Eastern Council (NEC) at Prajna

Bhavan here. Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, along with governors, chief ministers of all the eight northeastern states, and senior officials, were also present at the event. BISWAJEET BANERJEE LUCKNOW

In a landmark initiative, the Uttar Pradesh Irrigation Department has unified three divergent streams of the Ganga to ensure an uninterrupted and enhanced water flow at the Sangam—the sacred confluence of the Yamuna, Ganga, and the mythical Saraswati rivers. This effort aims to provide an improved spiritual and logistical experience for millions devotees anticipated to participate in Mahakumbh-2025, scheduled in Prayagraj from January 13 to February 26. 'This initiative resonates with

the mythological narrative of Bhagirath, who brought the Ganga to Earth through his austere penance, symbolizing the salvation of his ancestors. Similarly, this project secures a steady and pure flow of Ganga waters at Sangam, where over 400 million pilgrims are expected to take a holy dip," stated Vijay Anand, Nodal Officer for Mahakumbh.

Over time, the Ganga had deviated into three distinct

streams between Shastri Bridge and Sangam Nose, diminishing its sanctity and complicating preparations for Mahakumbh. bifurcation reduced expanse of the fairgrounds and disrupted pilgrimage

arrangements.
In response, the Irrigation Department has restored the river's original flow into a unified, cohesive stream, thereby expanding the bathing area and simplifying logistical arrangements. undertaking was complex but essential," remarked Anand. "It ensures an uninterrupted

spiritual experience for pilgrims, enhancing their connection to the sacred waters.

'With the successful unification, an additional 22 hectares of bathing space has been created," stated Manish Srivastava, a technical advisor to the project. "This expansion allows thousands of devotees to bathe simultaneously, mitigating congestion and seamless

ensuring a experience for all." The department utilized three large dredging machines

following an extensive survey. However, stabilizing the equipment against the swift Ganga currents and elevated water levels posed significant challenges. The powerful flow often destabilized the dredgers, bending discharge pipes and operations.

employed Engineers innovative solutions such as large anchors, pontoon bridges, and reinforced ropes to secure the machinery. Despite setbacks, including a damaged support pin and another dredger being displaced by the current, the persisted team determination.

"Restoring the river's original course was an arduous task, but the team's relentless efforts overcame every obstacle, added Srivastava.

Continuous dredging, carried out in three shifts, ultimately succeeded in merging the three streams into one cohesive flow. To prepare the expanded area, over five lakh metric tonnes of sand were strategically placed, ensuring the fairground is well-leveled and accessible to the public.

# ınday pioneer DEHRADUN I SUNDAY I DECEMBER 22 2024

# Meditation transcends all borders, leaders on 1st World Meditation Day at UN

**AP** UNITED NATIONS

Meditation transcends all religions and borders and is also a powerful instrument of diplomacy in the current global landscape marked by escalating conflicts and deep-seated mistrust, top spiritual and UN leaders said on the first World Meditation commemorated here.

The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations organised a special event 'Meditation for Global Peace and Harmony' to mark the first World Meditation Day at the global body's headquarters on Friday.

"Today meditation is not a luxury, as it was thought, but it is a necessity," spiritual leader Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said in his keynote address at the packed event attended

Ambassadors, officials, staff, civil society members as well as members of the Indian-

'Meditation is something can do anywhere, everywhere, by everyone. In this sense, international Meditation Day plays a very important role and opens the door to those who have some reservations," he said. He added that for many people, the moment they hear the word meditation, they may feel that the practice either has to be from some religion or it is not taught in their religion.

underscored that meditation "transcends all religions, all geographical boundaries and age groups so it is very, very useful in many, many ways.

President of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly Philemon Yang said in his remarks that meditation "transcends borders, faiths, traditions and time, offering each of us the opportunity to pause, to listen and to connect with our inner

Yang said that the world today needs peace more than ever before. "The tensions in the world require that we embrace peace and anything that brings peace.... Let us build on the practice we have shared to bring about a safer, more just and equitable future for everyone, everywhere?

Earlier this month, the 193-UN member General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution declaring December 21 as World Meditation Day. India was a member of the

core group of countries that the unanimous adoption of the resolution titled 'World Meditation Day' in the UNGA. Andorra, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Nepal and Sri Lanka were the other members of the core group. Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support Atul Khare said at the event that

at the UN, civilian and

tirelessly on the world's most pressing challenges with colleagues operating under high pressure, including in high-risk environments, often far away from their family and country of origin. "This can and does take a toll on their mental health. Our uniform personnel are often tasked with protecting civilians against physical violence, and are often themselves exposed to

uniform personnel work

Khare said While the physical safety of peacekeepers of is of utmost importance, it is equally critical that their mental health is also taken care of, he said. In this context, Khare said

atrocities, war crimes and

crimes against humanity,"

that a special app called 'MindCompanion' launched by the UN in October this year. The app is aimed at

increasing awareness and

understanding of mental health issues and its selfassessment feature will help users gauge their mental well-being regularly.

"I take this opportunity on this Meditation Day to encourage everyone reaffirm our commitment to overall mental health and to use the tools available, such as meditation, to seek inner transformation and peace. Let us embrace this practice to create a more peaceful world, starting with the world within ourselves," Khare said. Permanent India's

Representative to the UN Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish said that the ancient wisdom of meditation offers a beacon of hope amid growing stress and anxiety at the individual level and conflicts and tensions at the global level.

"In our current global landscape, marked by conflicts and escalating

meditation emerges not merely as a personal practice but as a powerful instrument of diplomacy. Meditation helps us to cultivate empathy, deep selfcapacity to awareness, understand complex situations with greater clarity. "These are skills that are critical to navigating an increasingly interconnected

global and complex glob environment," Harish said. Harish noted that December 21 marks the Winter Solstice, which in Indian tradition is the beginning of Uttarayana – an auspicious time of the year, especially for inner reflection and meditation. It also falls exactly six months after the International Day of Yoga commemorated on June 21, which is the Summer

In 2014, India took the lead at the UN in declaring June 21 as the International Day

Solstice.

Representative of Nepal to the UN Ambassador Lok Bahadur Thapa said that the world is at a pivotal and crossroads dreams collective and aspirations" for a better, just, equitable, prosperous and sustained world are thwarted by multiple, intersecting and recurring global challenges. "Geopolitical competition, economic instability, social divisions and environmental degradation among others have threatened peace, security and stability," Thapa said. He added that

importance of meditation cannot be overstated. It influences various aspects of human life, society and the global community at large. 'It transcends cultural, geographical, societal and religious boundaries, embodying truly humanistic values and reflecting the

highest ideals of humanity,"

d'affaires at the Chargé Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka Sugeeshwara Gunaratna noted that the UNGA resolution was cosponsored by over 70 from countries geographical regions and different cultural and religious backgrounds. "This speaks volumes on the universal applicability and acceptance of the different techniques and practices which meditation."

"It is our collective wish that in a world that seeks peace and harmony among the tragedy meditative practices could provide the essential ingredient creating peaceful individuals, which is the fulcrum to building a sustainable and peaceful world," Gunaratna said. The event also included a

special meditation session led by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

# Rocket fired from Yemen strikes Tel Aviv,16 hurt |

The Israeli military says a rocket fired from Yemen hit an area of Tel Aviv overnight, leaving 16 people slightly injured by shattered glass from nearby windows. A further 14 people sustained minor injuries as they rushed to shelters when air raid sirens sounded before the projectile hit just before 4 am Saturday, the military

The attack comes less than two days after a series of Israeli airstrikes on Yemen's Houthi rebel-held capital, Sanaa, and port city of Hodeida killed at

least nine people. The Israeli strikes were in response to a Houthi attack in which a longrange missile hit an Israeli school building. The Houthis also claimed a drone strike targeting an unspecified military target in central Israel on

Thursday. The Israeli military says the Iran-backed Houthis have launched more than 200 missiles and drones during the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. The Houthis have also been

attacking shipping in the Red

Sea and Gulf of Aden — attacks

is a ceasefire in Gaza

The Israeli strikes Thursday caused "considerable damage to the Houthi-controlled Red Sea ports "that will lead to the immediate and significant reduction in port capacity, United Nations spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

The port at Hodeida has been key for food shipments into Yemen in its decade-long civil

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said both sides' attacks risk further escalation in the region and undermine UN they say won't stop until there mediation efforts.

# Ukrainian drones strike deep into Russia

Ukraine brought the war into the heart of Russia Saturday morning with drone attacks that local authorities said damaged residential buildings in the city of Kazan

in the Tatarstan region, over hit an industrial facility and 600 miles (1,000 kilometers) one was shot down over a from the front line. The press river, the statement said. A service Tatarstan's governor, Rustam Minnikhanov, said that eight drones attacked the city. Six hit residential buildings, one

video posted on local Telegram news channel Astra, verified by The Associated Press, shows a drone flying into the upper floors of a

high-rise building. Local authorities said there were no casualties. Flights were halted at Kazan's airport and all mass gatherings cancelled on Saturday and

Sunday. The attacks, which Ukraine

didn't acknowledge keeping with its security policy, comes after a Ukrainian attack Friday on a town in Russia's Kursk border region using U.S.-supplied missiles killed six people, including a child.





# Pak Military courts sentence 25 civilians for May 9 riots

PTI ISLAMABAD

 $P^{akistan's\ military\ courts}_{sentenced\ 25\ civilians\ to}$ prison terms ranging from two to 10 years for attacking military installations during riots which erupted following the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan in May last year, the Army announced on Saturday.

On May 9, 2023, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters allegedly attacked several military installations, including the army headquarters in Rawalpindi and the ISI building in Faisalabad, to vent their anger against the arrest of tion case.

Hundreds of suspects were arrested in the countrywide swoop and at least 103 were handed over to the military authorities for trial due to their involvement in attacks on military installations.

In a detailed statement, the military said that the nation on May 9 witnessed tragic incidents of "politically provoked violence and arson at multiple places, marking a dark chapter in the history of Pakistan" when building on a sustained narrative of hate and lies, politically orchestrated attacks were

carried out on the Army installations and monuments of Shuhada (martyrs).

"These blatant acts of violence not only shocked the nation but also underscored the necessity of checking this unacceptable attempt of political terrorism to impose own perverted will through violence and coercion," it stated. According to the statement,

Field General Court Martial sentenced 25 individuals in the first phase, following a thorough review of evidence and the completion of proper legal procedures. It said that the convicts were

awarded prison terms ranging ing the military facilities. Fourteen individuals received

10-year sentences of rigorous imprisonment, while the others were given shorter The Army said that promulga-

tion of the sentences of the remaining accused is also being done and will be announced shortly as and when the due process is complete.

The Army termed the development "an important milestone in the dispensation of justice to the nation" and a stark reminder to all those who are exploited by the vested interests

and fall prey to their political propaganda and intoxicating lies, to never take law in their own hands ever in the future. It also said that many accused are also being tried in various Anti-Terrorist Courts and their cases are being pursued as per the law.

Showing its intent to punish the 'mastermind", it stated that "justice would truly be fully served once the mastermine and planners of 9th May Tragedy are punished as per the Constitution and laws of the

It said that Pakistan will vigorously pursue dispensation of justice to ensure the establishevil of violence-driven disruptive and destructive politics based on hate, divisiveness and baseless propaganda.

All convicts punished by the army retain the right to appeal and other legal resources, as guaranteed by the law and the Constitution.

The convictions, announced following the Supreme Court's directive conditionally allowing them, primarily relate to attacks on several key military sites including the Jinnah House, General Headquarters (GHQ), and Pakistan Air Force Base

# **Attention GST Taxpayers!**

Please file your Annual Return in FORM GSTR -9\* and FORM GSTR-9C# for F.Y. 2023-2024





# \*Taxpayers required to file FORM GSTR-9

All GST taxpayers having Aggregate Annual Turnover above ₹ 2 Crore (during F.Y. 2023-2024) except the follow-

>> Input Service Distributor >> Casual Taxable Person

>> TDS Deductor >> TCS Collector >> Non-Resident Taxable Person

# **Govt funding bill clears Congress and heads to President** Biden, averting shutdown

AP WASHINGTON

 $F_{\rm down\ deadline,\ the\ Senate}^{\rm acing\ a\ government\ shut-}$ rushed through final passage early Saturday of a bipartisan plan that would temporarily fund federal operations and disaster aid, dropping Presidentelect Donald Trump's demands for a debt limit increase into the new year.

House Speaker Mike Johnson had insisted Congress would "meet our obligations" and not allow federal operations to shutter ahead of the Christmas holiday season. But the day's outcome was uncertain after Trump doubled down on his insistence that a debt ceiling increase be included in any deal — if not, he said in an early morning post, let the closures

"start now. The House approved Johnson's new bill overwhelmingly, 366-34. The Senate worked into the night to pass it, 85-11, just past the deadline. At midnight, the White House said it had ceased shutdown preparations.

'This is a good outcome for the country," Johnson said after the House vote, adding he had spoken with Trump and the president-elect "was certainly happy about this outcome, as well. President Joe Biden, who has played a less public role in the process throughout a turbulent week, was expected to sign the measure into law Saturday.

"There will be no government shutdown," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said. The final product was the third attempt from Johnson, the beleaguered House speaker, to achieve one of the basic requirements of the federal government

 keeping it open. And it raised stark questions about whether Johnson will be able to keep his job, in the face of angry GOP colleagues, and work alongside Trump and billionaire ally Elon Musk, who called the legislative plays from afar. Trump's last-minute demand

was almost an impossible ask,

and Johnson had almost no

choice but to work around his pressure for a debt ceiling increase. The speaker knew there wouldn't be enough support within the GOP majority to pass any funding package since many Republican deficit hawks prefer to slash federal government and certainly wouldn't allow more debt.

Instead, the Republicans, who will have full control of the White House, House and Senate next year, with big plans for tax cuts and other priorities, are showing they must routinely rely on Democrats for the votes needed to keep up with the routine operations of governing.

"So is this a Republican bill or a Democrat bill?" scoffed Musk on social media ahead of the

The drastically slimmed-down 118-page package would fund the government at current levels through March 14 and add \$100 billion in disaster aid and \$10 billion in agricultural assis

# **\*Taxpayers required to file FORM GSTR-9C**

A self-certified reconciliation statement in FORM GSTR-9C needs to be filed along with Annual Return in FORM GSTR-9 by the taxpayers whose Aggregate Annual Turnover is above ₹ 5 Crore (during F.Y. 2023-2024)

Late Filing of FORM GSTR-9 and FORM GSTR-9C will attract late fee

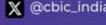
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# FIFA's new super-sized tournament sparks revolt

**AP** MANCHESTER

One of the most striking moments of soccer in 2024 was when Rodri hobbled onto a stage in Paris on crutches to receive the prestigious Ballon d'Or for best male player of the year. The Manchester City and Spain midfielder had been one of the most outspoken against increasingly congested soccer calendar, warning that the lack of downtime was detrimental to players' performance and health. Then, just a month before the Oct. 28 award ceremony, he tore his ACL during a seemingly routine run in a Premier League game

against Arsenal.
Though such injuries have occurred throughout the history of the sport and aren't necessarily linked to overplaying, Rodri's seasonending injury became a visual representation of the physical toll of modern soccer at a time when the busy match schedule is facing legal challenges and the possibility of strike

Top footballers are now routinely playing more than 60 games per season for club and country, while the game is getting faster and more intense. Injuries are on the rise. Already pushed to their limits, some players say FIFA's newly expanded Club World Cup, to be held in the United States payt year is the United States next year, is the last straw.

Players say they are "at breaking point, that they are at the limit, that it's actually too much," Alexander Bielefeld, from global players' union FIFPRO, told The Associated Press. FIFA's new addition to the

calendar The new Club World Cup is a supersized version of what used to be a short tournament with only seven teams. The new edition

includes 32 teams from around the world and will be held every four years, starting next summer in the United States from June 14 to July 13. As its name suggests, it's envisioned to be club version of the World Cup for

national teams.
That means top players will have a monthlong up quickly.

"It's something that worries us because we are the guys



tournament on top of their domestic league season three out of every four years. With more games also added to the Champions League in Europe this season as well as the next World Cup in 2026, the soccer calendar is filling

who suffer," Rodri said in September, just days before he was injured. He said players may have no choice but to refuse to play if the trend continues.

FIFPRO says a significant number of players routinely play 60-70 matches a season. The union's recommended Last season Julian Alvarez played 75 games for former club Manchester City and Argentina in 10 different competitions spanning the Premier League, Champions League, Copa America and Olympics.

season Manchester United

run of 20 consecutive games. Injuries are a concern

The Men's European Football Injury Index, an annual report by global insurance broker Howden, found there were 4,123 injuries in the top divisions of England, Spain, Germany, Italy and France last season. Italy and France last season. It said the number of injuries had risen year-on-year since the index was first published in 2021 and that "it would be fair to expect a continuation of this upwards trajectory."
Tony Strudwick, medical director for West Bromwich Albion and former head of performance for Manchester United, said injuries are on

advancements in sports science and medicine. That to me looks like there's a mismatch between what the players can physically tolerate and what they've been exposed to," he told The AP. "During the last eight incidents seasons,

rise

despite

hamstring injuries, particular, have increased." Strudwick said the risk of too many games was ultimately injury and burnout. But he

played 70 times, including a run of 20 consecutive games. Injuries are a concern said players are unlikely to raise the issue with their clubs or national teams.

"Players are very reluctant to say they don't want to play and they're very, very tired. It takes a relatively brave person to do that," he said.

Manchester City played 61 games in the 2022-23 campaign when it won a trophy treble of the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup.

and FA Cup.
This season that number could rise to 71 because of an expanded group stage and potential playoff in the Champions League and the Club World Cup.
A heavy workload is also an issue in women's soccer, FIFPRO said earlier this week, though it noted that while some top players have a packed schedule, others don't get to play enough. If successful, the Club World Cup could rival the Premier

Cup could rival the Premier League and Champions League as one of the most lucrative and watched tournaments in club soccer. lucrative and It has been backed by clubs and next year's event is set to feature many of the biggest names in the sport, including

Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius

Coming at the end of many leagues' regular season, FIFA said the dates would be "harmoniously aligned with the international match calendar" to ensure calendar" to ensure sufficient rest for players ahead of the start of

domestic campaigns. The governing body has also set up a player welfare task force to be led by former Arsenal manager Arsene

FIFPRO, which says it represents more than 66,000 players around the world, is not convinced. In October,

its European division teamed up with domestic leagues and filed a legal complaint in Europe against how FIFA adds new and bigger men's competitions bigger men's competitions

to the calendar.
FIFA hit back, noting that
European clubs often fill
their summer breaks with exhibition matches around the world. It accused some European leagues of acting with "hypocrisy, and without consideration to everyone

# 1st Women ODI: In-form India hold all aces against WI | Ashwin's wife pens heartfelt

PTI VADODARA

India will be eager to exploit their recent form and a historical advantage to subdue the West Indies in the three-match Women ODI series, beginning here with the first contest on

India notched up their first home T20I series win in over five years with a 2-1 victory over the Caribbeans in Mumbai earlier this week. Dating back to 2017, India also hold a significant 4-1 head-to-head lead over the Windies in ODIs.

windles in ODIs.

The lone worry for India will be the fitness of regular skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who missed the last two T20Is with a knee niggle.

Sprift Mandhana led India Smriti Mandhana led India

in Harmanpreet's absence and she made a strong impression too in the T20Is, striking three fifties in a row. The graceful left-hander

will be keen to continue in the same vein in the onedayers as well. Her form in the last 10 ODIs is outstanding, scoring 599 runs at an average of 60 while striking at 98.

Jemimah Rodrigues has shown signs of returning to her run-making ways, and Richa Ghosh showed her ability to rip apart a bowling unit with a breezy fifty in the

seasoned players.

The addition of Tejal match.

But India's batting has more depth to it beyond these two Hasabnis and Harleen Deol will add some more meat to the middle-order.

> India's bowling unit has a fine blend of youth and experience and they could be a handy force in the newly-constructed Kotambi Stadium here, which is hosting its first international

The likes of Deepti Sharma, who has taken 15 wickets in her last 10 matches, Renuka Singh and Saima Thakor can rattle the West Indies on an unfamiliar pitch.

India will also have the option of fielding the impressive young pacer Titas Sadhu here.

West Indies' biggest hopes

Travis Head's ability to judge the short ball quite

early is behind the Australian

batter's phenomenal success

in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar series, feels former

India cricketer Ravi Shastri,

while adding on a lighter note

that the visitors would like to

have a balm for the

Head, after being dismissed

for 11 in his first innings of

the series, has gone on to score 89, 140 and 152 in his

next three outings. He played

a pivotal role in the pink ball

Test that Australia won by 10

wickets to level the five-match

"I think he (Head) is very

smart. From what I saw of

him three years ago, he has

Especially with the way he

plays the short ball. He's

prepared to leave it. He has

learned to leave it well at

times," Shastri said on the

immensely.

PTI MELBOURNE

'Headache'.

series 1-1.

improved

to counter a strong Indian bowling unit will be skipper Hayley Matthews and veterans Deandra Dottin and Shemaine Campbelle.

Matthews' seven matches this season have produced 308 runs at an average of 45. But the visiting bowlers will have to raise their game several notches to stop a several notches to stop a strong Indian batting line-

strong Indian batting line-up.

Squads (from): India:
Harmanpreet Kaur (C),
Smriti Mandhana (VC),
Pratika Rawal, Jemimah
Rodrigues, Harleen Deol,
Richa Ghosh (WK), Uma
Chetry (WK), Tejal
Hasabnis, Deepti Sharma,
Minnu Mani, Priya Mishra,
Tanuja Kanwer, Titas Sadhu,
Saima Thakor, Renuka Singh
Thakur. Thakur.

West Indies: Hayley Matthews (c), Shemaine Campbelle (vc), Aaliyah Alleyne, Shamilia Connell, Nerissa Crafton, Deandra Dottin, Afy Fletcher, Shabika Gajnabi, Chinelle Henry, Zaida James, Qiana Joseph, Mandy Mangru, Ashmini Munisar, Karishma Ramharack, Rashada Williams.

# tribute after his sudden retirement

India's ace spinner Ravichandran Ashwin's wife Prithi Narayanan has penned a heartfelt tribute for her husband following his recent retirement from the game, saying "it is time to set the burden of being you down" and embrace life beyond the game.

Ashwin made a surprise announcement retirement after the drawn third Test at Brisbane. The veteran cricketer picked up just one wicket during the tour, including the 10-wicket loss at Adelaide.

The 38-year-old retired with a stellar record of 537 Test wickets at an average of 24, in runs, including six centuries. He also claimed 156 wickets in ODIs and 72 in T20Is.

Describing her tribute as a "Love letter from a fan girl", Prithi wrote on instagram: "Dear Ashwin, from not knowing how to put a kit bag together to following you to



rooting for you, watching you and learning from you, it has been an absolute pleasure. The world you introduced me to gave me the privilege to watch and enjoy a sport that I love from close quarters.

"It also showed me how much passion, hardwork and discipline is needed to keep your head above water. And sometimes even that is not enough. I remember us talking about why you, R Ashwin, had to do all of this and a lot more to even stay relevant in the scheme of Ashwin, who debuted in 2011

stadiums all over the world, against the West Indies,

earned a reputation for his relentless pursuit of excellence. His near-equal tally of 269 wickets against right-handers and 268 against left-handers highlights his versatility.

"How awards, the best of stats, the POMs, the accolades, the records didn't matter if you didn't sharpen your skill sets constantly and did not put in the work. Sometimes, nothing is enough," Prithi continued. "As you end your wonderful international run, I only want

to tell you that it's all good. It is all going to be good. It is time to set the burden of being you down. Live life on your terms, make space for those extra calories, make time for your family, make time to do absolutely nothing, share memes all day, create a new bowling variation, bug our kids out of their minds. Just do it all.'

Prithi, who has been a constant companion on Ashwin's cricketing journey, reflected on his meticulous approach to his craft.

# Bundesliga sees quickfire scoring record | Head's in the form of his life, hard to contain him, says Shastri as Bayern puts five past dismal Leipzig

Bayern Munich crushed Leipzig 5-1 and they long-standing Bundesliga record quickfire goals

Two teams had never scored in the opening two minutes of a Bundesliga match until Jamal Musiala gave Bayern the lead after 28 seconds and Benjamin Šeško equalised barely 60 seconds later on Friday. The pace slowed after that frenetic start but not for long. Konrad Laimer put Bayern ahead against his old club in the 25th. Michael Olise found space on the right side and Laimer gave Péter Gulácsi no chance with a crisp volley

Nine minutes later, Joshua Kimmich lashed home from almost 30 meters to make it

Leroy Sané added the fourth with 15 minutes remaining

7 oung Australian opener

Y Sam Konstas cannot

wait to take on the Indian

bowlers in the Boxing Day

Test and says he already has

a "few plans" for Jasprit

Bumarh and Co if he gets

the nod in the fourth game

of the Border-Gavaskar

**PTI** ■ MELBOURNE

series here.



and Alphonso Davies got his first league goal of the season to complete the rout three minutes later.

Harry Kane returned and looked rusty after missing two games with a hamstring injury but played 87 minutes a match that helped Bayern get back on track after a rocky run.

After winning eight games in a row from late October to late November, the Bavarian giant lost two and drew one of its next five, including a 2-1 defeat to Mainz last week, its first loss in the Bundesliga.

Friday's result bumped its lead over titleholder Bayer Leverkusen to seven points.

I've got a few plans against Indian bowlers, claims Sam Konstas

ICC Review.

The former India coach added that Head's ability to judge the delivery's line and length quickly gives him time to play the right stroke.

"It's not a big shot all the time off a short delivery angled at his armpits or something. He's prepared to either ride it or go for the big shots.

And if it is middle, middle and off, then he hits it in front of square as well," Shastri said. The Indian legend further said when on song, Head is difficult to stop. "He picks up length very well. That's one of his great strengths. And he has a flashing blade for the offside. So he's a hard man to contain. And he's in the form of his life.

On a lighter note, Shastri said India are looking for a balm for a 'headache' called Travis. "Because his new surname is Travis Head'ache'," Shastri said."They are looking for balms in India. For foot problems, ankle problems



(and) even a headache they are looking for a balm. He is ideal for that.

While Jasprit Bumrah has troubled virtually every Australian batter, Head has been an exception, playing the Indian quick with elan. Even as other Australian batters have struggled against

Bumrah, who has 21 wickets at an average of 10.9 in the series, Head has scored 83 runs off 91 balls. "We all knew he was

dangerous, but that first shot he played off Jasprit Bumrah, that cover drive, off the front foot. It was in many ways a little bit on the up, off a good

delivery, decent delivery. It told me that this is a player in prime, prime form," said Shastri.

cricketer-turnedcommentator said Head's batting prowess gave an insight into his uncluttered mind.

"He went on to show exactly that (clear mind). And the thing with him is there's no, his mindset is very clear. There's no clouded mindset. He's very clear about the situation. This is my strength.

"I am going to play in that fashion. Yes, I will watch the state of the game. I might shift from fourth gear to third gear. But I will always be in third and fourth gear once I get my eye on," Shastri added.

### MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH PUNJAB TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY DABWALI ROAD, BATHINDA (PUNJAB)-151001 (Estb. by Punjab Government vide Punjab Act No 5 of 2015 & under section 2(f)& 12 B of the UGC Act)

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Faculty of Sciences: - Physics, Mathematics, Computer Applications, Food Science & Technology Last date of submission of online admission form - is 07.01.2025 (Tuesday)

Ph.D. Entrance Test 14.01.2025 (Tuesday)

Applicable only for test exempted category as per UGC/MRSPTU norms Email: deanrnd@mrsptu.ac.in For more details, visit: www.mrsptu.ac NA/12/27027/2023/40070 Dated CHD :- 12/17/2024

> Amount Completion Date & time for submission of tender & opening of tender Upto 15:00 hrs on

Teenage sensation Konstas was handed a maiden callup as Australia dropped bowlers," he added. Nathan rookie opener McSweeney for the final two Tests against India. Konstas' inclusion follows a series of disappointing

first three Tests, especially McSweeney. "I've got a few plans

against those (Indian) bowlers. Feeling like I'm moving really nice and get that hopefully I opportunity," Konstas told Fox Cricket.

"I'm just going to react to the ball and show a bit of intent and put a bit of pressure back on the

If Konstas, who turned 19 on October 2, is selected in the playing XI for the Boxing Day Test, he would become Australia's youngest

Australian top-order in the Pat Cummins, who was 18 years and 193 days old when he made his debut against Africa

Johannesburg in 2011. "It will be a huge honour debuting. A dream come true. I think it's a sellout already (at the MCG)," he

"I'm very excited (to take on India). I want to be challenged."

Konstas was in the nets when Australian chairman of selectors George Bailey called him to break the news of his inclusion for the final two Tests.

"I was so thrilled. Called my performances from the Test debutant since captain parents straight away...

telling her not to cry. Dad was super proud.

Mum was in tears so I was

"It's been an amazing journey. All the ups and down - very grateful for their sacrifices. They've been great support to me."
Konstas said McSweeney,

the player he replaced in the squad, had congratulated him after hearing the news of his inclusion.

"Nathan McSweeney is a very good player in all three formats he actually congratulated me morning so we're very close mates. I wish him all the

McSweeney has admitted to

being dropped for the last two Tests of the BGT Tests but vowed to work hard to reclaim his spot in the national team. Konstas cannot recollect

feeling "devastated" after

when he started playing cricket but admitted his father had played a huge role in his success in the sport.
"I think from memory (I

started playing) maybe four or five years old. Dad would always train me with my older brother Billy and Johnny my twin.

"He's retired now my dad. I think I've hurt his shoulder!" said Konstas.

S Tender Notice No. Instrumentation and condition 14.01.2025 Opening INSTRUMENTATION monitoring of One span of Br. No 1,67,95,939.29 2,34,000/ MB DATE 20.12.2024 52 DN (11x61.0m) on MB-GZB of tender after 15:00 hrs on same day 1137 UP & DN (10x61.0m) on BE-MB section over MB division Note: Above tender is available on website, IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in, where complete details of Tender can be seen 8

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# ınday pioneer

# 

"Jashn-e-Rekhta", celebrated the beauty of Urdu with soulful music, heartfelt poetry and moments that deeply connected with everyone, says SAKSHI PRIYA

n the delicate dance of words and melodies, there exists a beauty that can only be captured by the language of the soul, Urdu. The language has flourished in the hearts of poets, lovers and dreamers for centuries, finding its voice in the lyrical verses of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Mirza Ghalib, Allama Iqbal and countless others. As one steps into the world of *Jashn-e-Rekhta*, a living celebration of this beloved language, it is as though you are immersed in a space where poetry is not merely recited, but experienced, felt in every beat of your

# "Dil-e-nadaan tujhe hua kya hai? Aur koi bhi, tujhe na samajh paaya"

These lines by *Mirza Ghalib* echoed throughout the festival, capturing the essence of *Jashn-e-Rekhta* 2024 in a way no words could. Each verse, each melody, became a reminder of the timeless beauty and emotion embedded in Urdu poetry, and how it continues to hind poetry, and how it continues to bind hearts together across generations.

The opening evening saw the mesmerising Sufi performance by the ever-graceful Padma Shri Kailash Kher and his Kailasa band, setting the mood for an emotional journey through music and words. But the magic of Jashn-e-Rekhta didn't stop there.

Rekhta didn't stop there.

The second day of the festival paid tribute to the legendary poet Sahir Ludhianvi. Performances by the Qutbi Brothers and the stirring Dastangoi session by Himanshu Bajpayee and Pragya Sharma were particularly notable. Their narratives made the audience reminisce about the reminisce about the audience timelessness of Urdu poetry, while the theatrical production Jaun Elia ka Jinn brought forth the intensity and passion that marked the poet's life. Javed Akhtar's book launch of Kyon: Jaun Elia's Unpublished Poetry and Sanjiv Saraf's Wayward Verses led to a deeper understanding of how Urdu continues to shape the contemporary cultural landscape. As the final act, *Papon's* soul-

crisp,

evening at the Embassy of Finland set the perfect stage for the global premiere of All I Want for Christmas, a travel documentary produced by Travelxp and helmed by the nationally acclaimed, awardwinning filmmaker

winning filmmak Kamakhya Narayan Singh.

With its runtime of 42 minutes, the documentary masterfully captures the alluring spirit of Christmas while importing a moving

while imparting a moving message of hope and resilience to its audience.

As the holiday season approaches, bringing with it

the warmth of togetherness and the joy of celebrations,

All I Want for Christmas

unfolds as a story that goes beyond festivities, offering a

poignant glimpse into the human spirit. This magical narrative was born out of the

idea that travel, much like

happiness, connection, and

the celebration of life itself.

When global events stir emotions and challenge our

perspectives, it becomes

essential to remind ourselves

of the joy and wonder that

still exist in the world. With

this thought in mind, the

warming journey of a

and

Lapland, the land of Santa

Claus and snow-covered

The documentary chronicles

the story of Anastasia, a young Ukrainian refugee, and her mother, who embarks on this journey to rekindle the happiness that

seemed lost amidst the

chaos of displacement. Their trip to Finland's Lapland, a

breathtaking winter wonderland, turns out to be

more than just a holiday. It

becomes a journey

settling on the

ideas

symbolises

brainstormed

before

heart

daughter

Finland's

festivals,

makers

mother travelling

dreams.

countless

filmmaker



stirring performance brought the festival

The final day of Jashn-e-Rekhta added a modern touch to the festivities with Nisschal Zaveri's "Chaand, Urdu aur Awaaz Unplugged," a performance blending classical Ghazals with contemporary musical expressions. This performance bridged the timeless charm of Urdu poetry with modern acoustic of Urdu poetry with modern acoustic instrumentation, providing experience that resonated with every listener's heart. *Nisschal*, with his incredible talent and reverence for the art, captured the essence of what makes Urdu poetry so deeply moving, a delicate between tradition and innovation, an invitation to dive into the depths of emotion, where every word is a universe unto itself. The event concluded with a moving tribute- Main Koi Aisa Geet Gaoon, a celebration of the songs that have touched Bollywood's heart,





presented by Javed Akhtar.

One of the most delightful aspects of Jashn-e-Rekhta was the Rekhta Pavilion. From the Rekhta Food Festival - Aiwanwhich showcased subcontinent's culinary delights, to the Rekhta Bazaar and Books Bazaar, which made Urdu's literary treasures accessible

to all, every corner invited exploration. At its heart was the Dial-e-Poet, where visitors could listen to the timeless voices of legends like Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Rahat Indori, creating a deeply personal connection to their immortal words. Around these spaces, people of all ages gathered in spontaneous circles, reciting

shayari, sharing verses and singing ghazals. The soft glow of the lights created an atmosphere of unity, where the shared love of Urdu poetry connected everyone and the timeless carried emotions melodies that resonated deeply in the heart. Jashn-e-Rekhta celebrates the timeless

charm of Urdu, bringing its poetry, music, and legacy to life. It reminds us that Urdu isn't just inked on pages but lives in every song, verses and conversation, a celebration of life where poetry becomes a vibrant, living

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



# Global Premiere of Hope and Joy

All I Want for Christmas, the travel documentary has the magic of Christmas with resilience of human spirit, writes ABHI SINGHAL



healing and resilience. From adventures through pristine snow-laden landscapes to the daring experience of swimming in the icy waters of Kemi, every moment captured in the film speaks to the enduring strength of the human spirit. The ultimate highlight, of course, is the magical moment when Anastasia meets Santa Claus himself, bringing to life the dreams countless children.

Director Kamakhya Narayan Singh, reflecting on his unique experience, shared with *The Pioneer* the challenges of filming in Finland's harsh winters with temperatures plunging to -18°C and only 2-3 hours of daylight. Despite these obstacles, Kamakhya's determination to bring this story to life remained unwavering.

unwavering.
Adding another layer of complexity was the fact that the documentary was originally shot in Russian, a first in a different language for the filmmaker. Yet, the ethereal beauty of Finland's snowy landscapes the joyful snowy landscapes, the joyful presence of Santa, and the thrill of sledding through its magical terrains make All Want for Christmas a visual treat that promises to leave

viewers enchanted.
Collaboratively organised by the embassies of Finland, Ukraine, and Norway, along with SIFFCY and the Smile Foundation, the premiere evening was not ojust a celebration of cinematic artistry but also a reminder of the universal message of hope and joy that Christmas brings to all. Whether it's the sparkling snowflakes or the heartwarming story of love and resilience, All I Want for Christmas will fill your heart with holiday cheer and would inspire you to believe in the magic of the season.

# րկլ ընդկումին անանական անականում անական անական անական անանական անանական անանական անական անական անական անական ա

The new season of Mismatched showcases long-distance relationships but struggles to break free from repetitive storytelling, writes ABHI SINGHAL

laying the coffee angle yet again in the opening of Season 3, the new season of Mismatched, currently airing on the OTT platform Netflix has yet managed to keep the audience gripped but to some extent only.

The series continues the journey of Rishi played by *Rohit Saraf* and Dimple acted by *Prajakta Koli* as they walk through the complexities of a long-distance relationship, new professional challenges, and personal growth. The season takes you into themos growth. The season takes you into themes such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and personal loss, reflecting the evolving digital landscape and its impact on relationships, basically keeping up with tech from the first season.

The makers have tried to keep season 3 distinguished from the other seasons but have failed to do so because of the same story and absence of the needed spark and twist.

The story feels to be unnecessarily stressed by revolving around the fights and then patch up repeatedly which is to be honest too boring. The series yet again revolves around the boring ups and downs of the relationships shown mainly of *Taaruk Raina* and *Ahsaas Channa*, *Prajakta Kohli* and *Rohit Saraf*.

The web series is a steal deal for Rannvijay Singha and Vidya Malvade as Sid sir and Zeenat. The evolving relationship of the two with ups and downs at the age touching around 40 has been conceptualised in a great way. Rannvijay has acted out brilliantly from opening a new college to planning an adoption and growing with his love interest. Zeenat's character has shown ample amount of support to Rannvijay's character and the series throughout.

The part that would excite you a bit would be the whole point of creating Betterverse and the story that revolves around that professional world of all the characters of the web series. The series shines in songs and background scores that make it a bit emotional. Ishq Hai song sung by Anurag Saikia, Romy, Amarabha Banerjee, Varun Jain, Madhubanti Bagchi; composed and produced By Anurag Saikia, Oblong Sioni and written By Raj Shekhar is soothing to the and has been collectively loved by the aundience.

To conclude, the review "Mismatched" Season 3 explores contemporary themes relevant to young adults, but opinions differ on its execution and character progression. There







could have been addition of twists and turns apart from passig away of Dimple's father to give it an emotional angle.

you are a mismatched fan you may appreciate the continuation of the story, while others might find it lacking in depth and

Rating: 3/5

# a Common the pioneer of the pioneer

"Have yourself a merry little Christmas. Let your heart be light"

— Judy Garland

# LIGHTING UP THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT



### AT BEEYOUNG BREWGARDEN





BeeYoung Brewgarden ushered in the festive season with its Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony which drew an enthusiastic crowd who gathered to celebrate the magic of Christmas in the brewpub's signature European-style ambiance.

The evening's highlight was the countdown to the illumination of a stunning Christmas tree adorned with twinkling lights and elegant decorations, marking the official start of the holiday season at BeeYoung Brewgarden. There was a selection of bite-sized festive treats, signature holiday cocktails, and BeeYoung's renowned craft brews delighted the attendees, enhancing the celebratory atmosphere. The evening concluded with a heartfelt toast to the spirit of togetherness.

# From timeless carols to dazzling tree lighting ceremonies, the Christmas magic unfolds, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

hen a cold breeze begins to blow, the lights around you feel like home and the wind feels cosy, the spirit of Christmas starts to weave its magic. It's a time when families gather around crackling fires, the scent of freshly baked cookies fills the air and the sound of carollers stirs nostalgia. Though rooted as a Christian festival, Christmas is celebrated with immense joy by people of all faiths. This occasion, observed annually on December 25, marks the birth of Jesus Christ, but it transcends religious boundaries, becoming a cultural celebration of devotion and joy. Christmas is not merely a day, but a season of reflection, hope and togetherness. Through the years, Christmas has been known by various names in English. The Anglo-Saxons referred to it as "midwinter". Preparation for this grand occasion begins with Advent, the First Sunday of which marks the start of spiritual anticipation and reflection. For Christians, Advent is a time of introspection, leading to Christ's birth, which symbolises divine love and redemption. This culminates in the twelve days of Christmastide, a period rich with historical customs that concludes on Twelfth Night, adding layers of ritualistic meaning to the At the heart of Christmas are the carols

At the heart of Christmas are the carols of melodic songs that embody joy,



nostalgia, and spiritual reflection. These timeless tunes, sung in homes, churches and streets, unite communities in celebration. Over time, these melodies became synonymous with Christmas, expressing devotion and cheer. From sacred hymns like "O Holy Night" and "Silent Night" to lively tunes such as "Deck the Halls" and "Jingle Bells," carols range from reverent celebrations of Christ's birth to jubilant expressions of festive cheer.

Christmas is also about the excitement of children, their eager anticipation and the magic of Santa Claus. Every Christmas Eve, children hang their stockings with wishes, hoping that Santa will fulfil them. Santa Claus, with his jolly face, white beard, and red suit, stands as a global symbol of Christmas

magic. This beloved figure, transcending cultures, embodies joy and the spirit of giving. His story traces back to Saint Nicholas, a 4th-century Christian bishop known for his acts of kindness and secret gift-giving. Over time, his legend evolved into the modern image of a merry, bearded man delivering gifts on Christmas Eve, riding a sleigh pulled by reindeer. Santa's presence in Christmas celebrations is symbolic of the spirit of giving, teaching children the joy of kindness and the magic of believing in something greater than themselves. Christmas decorations are more than just festive embellishments; they are heartfelt expressions of love and joy. From the glimmer of tinsel to the soft glow of fairy lights, these adornments transform homes and public spaces into magical places. The traditional colours of Christmas: pine green, snow white, and vibrant red symbolise life, purity and warmth.

and warmth.
When it comes to the Christmas table, one can't forget the classic Christmas cake. Rich with dried fruits, nuts, and spices, it represents the flavours of the season, often soaked in brandy or rum and matured for weeks before being served. Alongside this, candies which are especially the iconic candy canes add sweetness to the season. Many homes also offer platters of colourful, homemade candies, each bringing its festive joy to the celebrations.

Wishing you all merrier than before, A

AT CROWNE PLAZA MAYUR VIHAR

rowne Plaza Mayur Vihar showcased *Charkha: The Loom Tree*, a breathtaking 10-foot Christmas installation made entirely of Khadi, crafted in partnership with Vikara, a Khadi India initiative. This innovative display celebrated the essence of sustainability, self-reliance, and empowerment.

It was created by women artisans trained in traditional weaving, the tree featured natural dyes and zerowaste decorations made from upcycled fabrics and pearls. The installation paid homage to Gandhian principles and the Swadeshi Movement, blending artistry with ecological responsibility. Through its vibrant colours and handcrafted ornaments, *Charkha*: *The Loom Tree* served as a powerful reminder of the interconnectedness of conscious actions and a greener







## AT SHANGRI-LA EROS NEW DELHI

hangri-la Eros New Delhi recently unveiled its *Enchanted Wonders* celebration, marked by the lighting of a beautiful and breathtaking 10-foot-tall Christmas tree. The Christmas tree symbolises the spirit of the season taking the centre stage at the entrance of the hotel. With a sophisticated green and gold palette, the tree exudes elegance, serving as the centrepiece of the festivities. Guests were invited to revel in its artistic charm and experience the magic of the holidays in a truly luxurious setting. The tree lighting ceremony at *Shangri-la Eros New Delhi* was kick started with a series of festive experiences, promising a memorable holiday season for all with Christmas carols,

chocolates and Santa Claus making it a complete vibe.





VE FLAVO

This Christmas, MKT at The Chanakya invites you to savour the season with festive flavours and a cosy, cheerful atmosphere that makes you feel right at home, writes TEAM AGENDA

hristmas is the season of joy, warmth and indulgence and what better way to celebrate than with a feast that brings festive vibes to life? At MKT, The Chanakya, New Delhi, the magic of Christmas unfolds the moment you step inside. The space is beautifully adorned with sparkling lights, a majestic Christmas tree and a cosy ambiance that feels like stepping into a winter wonderland. Add to that their exclusive Christmas Menu for 2024, crafted with care and creativity, and you're in for a treat that truly feels like Christmas on a plate.

For vegetarians, the Vegetarians Delight Shepards Pie is pure comfort. A

delightful combination of plant-based meat, a medley of seasonal vegetables, meat, a medley of seasonal vegetables, and velvety potato, it's like wrapping yourself in a warm blanket on a chilly winter day. The garden-fresh salad on the side adds a refreshing crunch, making it a well-rounded dish. Another standout is the *Wild Mushroom Wellington*. Encased in flaky filo pastry, the shimeii mushrooms are earthy and the shimeji mushrooms are earthy and rich, while the mushroom jus and wilted kale bring depth and balance. It's the kind of dish that feels festive and hearty, perfect for the season.

For those craving non-vegetarian options, the menu pulls out all the stops. The Ballotine de Poulet, with tender chicken and a creamy mousse,

is elevated by the sweet-tart cranberry sauce. The Confit Duck Leg with Pomegranate Jus feels indulgent and festive, while the Lamb Ossobuco and Lobster Thermidor add a luxurious touch to the Christmas spread. Each dish is presented with elegance, making every bite feel like a celebration. celebration.

The dessert menu is where the magic really comes alive. The *Buche de Noel*, a mini yule log filled with chocolate truffle, is not just a treat for the taste buds but also a nod to the traditional Christman spirit. As you dies into it Christmas spirit. As you slice into it, the rich, velvety truffle filling and the soft, chocolatey sponge make you pause and soak in the moment. Paired with

playful chocolate mushrooms and fresh playful chocolate mushrooms and fresh berries, it feels like a whimsical Christmas story on a plate. If there's one dessert that can instantly make you feel like a kid on Christmas morning, this is it. Other desserts, like the *Sticky Date Pudding* with whiskey-laced brown butter toffee sauce and the *Old Fashioned Apple Crumble Pie*, deliver classic holiday flavours with a creative twist

The drinks menu is equally festive and brimming with seasonal charm. The Winter Wonderland, with its blend of gin, German liqueur, pineapple, oregano, and fresh strawberries, feels bright and refreshing. The *Christmas Cheer*, a mix of whiskey, pineapple,

cinnamon, and a touch of citrus Tabasco sauce, is warm and inviting, like sitting by a crackling fire. And then there's the *Lavender Snowflake*, with lavender vodka, thyme syrup, and a soft lavender foam, offering a calming and fragrant finish.
Dining at MKT feels like celebrating

Christmas in every sense. From the warm lights to the cheerful music and the thoughtfully crafted menu, it's a place where the festive spirit comes alive. Whether you're sharing stories over a hearty pie or raising a toast with a lavender foam-topped cocktail, every moment feels wrapped in holiday cheer. It truly makes Christmas taste and feel magical.







**Timings:** 12:00 pm to 1:00 am **Cost for two:** ₹3,000 + taxes



collaboration with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iran Culture Ĥouse, and the CD Foundation, Eros Hotel New Delhi played host to the Iranian Food Festival. This week-long culinary celebration brought the flavours and traditions of Iranian cuisine to the heart of the capital, creating a unique experience that highlighted the exchange of culture between India and Iran.

The festival showcased an authentic menu crafted by master Iranian chefs, presenting a journey of Iran's rich culinary heritage. Signature dishes such as *Ash Reshteh* which is a hearty noodle soup with chickpeas and beans, *Gheimeh* - a lamb stew infused with split chickpeas and cinnamon, and Berry Pulao saffron rice with tart berries graced the menu. Chef Diwas Wadhera, Executive Chef of Eros Hotel, described Iranian cuisine as "young, subtle, and simple compared to Indian cuisine, which is often complex and rich with multiple

# PLATES THAT TELEPORT TO 1

The Iranian Food Festival at the Eros Hotel New Delhi had authentic flavours of Iran with celebrating the culture of the two countries, writes **TEAM AGENDA** 



The menu's diverse offerings also included vegetarian favourites like Kuku Sabzi which is a medley of fresh greens and *Mirza Ghasemi* - a brinjal-based dish. Explaining brinjal's prominence in Iranian cuisine, *Chef Wadhera* remarked, "Brinjal is a favourite ingredient." They use it as a garnish, main ingredient, and even as an accompaniment."

A highlight of the festival was the *Indo-Iranian Cultural Show* which featured mesmerising performances celebrating the shared cultural ties between the two nations. This event culminated in a grand gala dinner, where representatives from the Iranian Embassy and Iran Culture elicitated participants of the Iranian Food Competition.

A food competition also brought together top chefs from both countries to showcase their culinary talents. Judged by an esteemed panel, including Mr Kazem Samandari, Chef Mostafa Samandari, Chef Mostafa Taheripour Isfahani, and Chef Diwas Wadhera, the competition crowned Chef Neda Tavakoli. Indian chefs also shone, with Hem Chandra Arya securing the first runner-up position and Chef Bharat Khemani the second runner-up.

The festival's ambiance transported diners straight to Iran at the Blooms Restaurant. Chef Wadhera added, "Despite language barriers, collaborating with Iranian chefs was seamless. Together, we breathed new life into traditional recipes, blending authenticity with a contemporary flair." He further added that *saffron* (kesar) played an important role in this cuisine and was not missed. Also, the Iranian rice, which you will taste in the pulao, uses pomegranate and plum

The *Iranian Food Festival* was a celebration of cultural heritage and culinary artistry between the two



By **TEAM AGENDA** 

have begun serving their winter menu that truly celebrates the season. With celebrating the warmth, comfort, and indulgence, the menu features a delectable selection of foods and beverages that will tantalise the senses and warm your soul. Café Delhi Heights is a cosy hideaway vibe from the moment you walk into the cafe. Apart from the offering of the menu, the winter meal at the cafe is a culinary wonder with dessert dishes for the winter lovers.

The Chocolate Bomb, in variants of hot chocolate and Marshmallow Chocolate Ball, with a mouth watering display of molten chocolate in that cosy environment.

You have a Red Velvet Baby Croissant, with a delicate layer of pastry or Dollop of Cream Cheese or Chocolate filled looking appealing to the eyes giving a Christmas Winter feel with its red colour.

The addition to the above is the Four Cheese Fondue, a sumptuous treat served with a variety of exquisite dips. For those looking for a more savoury choice, the *Bagel Sandwich*, which comes with either crumbled chicken or exotic vegetables, is a soothing and fulfilling nibble to try at the Café Delhi Heights.

The Moong Daal Crumble Tart is appealing where tart meets tradition, with a beautiful combination of flavours and textures. From comforting classics to decadent desserts, every bite promises to make your chilly days cosier and more delight. The hallmark of the winter menu would have to be the Chocolate Fondue, plated aesthetically by the Café Delhi Heights. The Chocolate Fondue comes to you with a chocolate dipping sauce to be taken with strawberries, marshmallows and muffins.

FACTSHEET

Availability of Winter Menu: 1st December to 10th January

Visit your nearest Café Delhi Heights outlet

# Savour the Spirit of Christmas!

EXPLORE FLAVORS AND DISHES WITH DIVYA BHATIA THAT PROMISE TO MAKE THIS CHRISTMAS AN UNFORGETTABLE CELEBRATION

### YULE LOG

CHEF ASHISH SINGH, COO & Culinary Director at Café Delhi Heights

### **Ingredients Sponge Cake:** 4 large eggs (separated); 1/2

cup (100g) granulated sugar; 1/3 cup (40g) flour; 1/4 cup (30g) cocoa; 1/4 tsp salt; 1/2 tsp vanilla extract Filling: 1 cup (240ml) heavy

whipping cream; 2 tbsp powdered sugar; 1 tsp vanilla extract

Chocolate Ganache: 1 cup (170g) dark chocolate; 1/2 cup (120ml) heavy cream **Instructions:** Preheat oven

to 350°F (175°C); line a 10x15-inch pan parchment. Beat yolks with sugar until



fold in flour, cocoa, and salt. Whisk egg whites to stiff peaks; fold into batter. Spread batter evenly in pan; bake 10-12 mins. Cool on a

sugar-dusted towel, peeling parchment. Roll cake with towel; cool completely.

Prepare filling: Whip cream, powdered sugar, and vanilla until stiff. Unroll the cake, spread filling evenly, and re-

Make ganache: Heat cream until steaming; pour over chocolate. Stir until smooth and let cool slightly before spreading over the cake.

**Decorate** with powdered sugar, berries, and meringue mushrooms for a festive finish. Refrigerate before

### FESTIVE CIRCUS & HERB ROASED TURKEY

AVRAJ SINGH MARWA, Corporate Executive Chef - Sarova Hotels

Ingredients: 1 whole turkey (about 6-7 kg); 100g unsalted butter, softened; 2

oranges, 2 lemons, zested and juiced; 4 cloves garlic, minced; 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, 2 tbsp fresh thyme,2 tbsp fresh sage, chopped; Salt and pepper to taste Stuffing: 1 large onion, 2 celery stalks, chopped; 2 apples, peeled, cored, and chopped; 200g breadcrumbs; 100g dried cranberries; 100g chopped walnuts; 1 egg, beaten; 100ml chicken stock; 1 tsp dried sage; 1 tsp dried thyme; Salt and pepper to taste

**Gravy:** Pan drippings from the turkey; 2 tbsp plain flour, 500ml chicken stock; Salt and pepper to taste **Method:** Prepare the Turkey: Preheat oven to 180°C (356°F) In a bowl, mix the softened butter with the orange and

lemon zest, minced garlic, and chopped herbs. Season

with salt and pepper. Carefully loosen the skin of the

turkey breast and rub the citrus-herb butter mixture under the skin and all over the turkey. Make the Stuffing: Combine onion, celery,

apples, breadcrumbs, cranberries, and walnuts. Mix in egg, stock, sage, thyme, salt, and

pepper. Stuff turkey cavity. Roast the Turkey: Place turkey on a rack in a pan.

Pour citrus juice over. Roast it in the preheated oven for 3.5-4 hours or until the internal temperature reaches 75°C (165°F) and baste occasionally with the pan iuices. Rest 20 minutes after cooking. Make the Gravy: Pour the pan drippings into a

saucepan, skim off excess fat, and whisk in the flour. Cook over medium heat for 2-3 minutes, then add the chicken stock, whisking continuously. Season with salt and pepper. **Serve:** Carve the turkey and serve with the stuffing and gravy.

# GINGERBREAD COOKIE SANDWITCH

**CHEF ADITI DIXIT, CYK Hospitalities** 

Ingredients for cookies: Flour - 250gms, Brown Sugar - 180gms, Salted Butter - 150gms (soft) Honey - 20gms, Clove powder - 3gms, Cinnamon powder - 10gms, Nutmeg powder - 5gms, Ginger powder - 12gms, Baking soda - 5gms

,Egg - 1 (whole), Vanilla Essence - 8ml Ingredients for fillings: Whipping cream -100gms, Powdered sugar - 50gms, Orange zest - 10gms, Clove powder - 2gms, Cinnamon powder - 5gms, Salt - 3gms,

Ginger powder - 5gms Instructions: Preheat oven: 160°C.

Cream butter and sugar until smooth, then whisk in honey, egg, and vanilla.

Sift dry ingredients (flour, spices, baking soda) and fold into the mixture. Chill dough for 15 minutes. Portion dough onto a baking tray (yields ~16-17 cookies). Bake for 11-12 minutes until tops crack and lightly brown. Cool completely. Whip cream with sugar to stiff peaks. Fold in spices and zest. Sandwich two cookies with cream, dust with icing sugar, and serve.



Celebration of Pet Love



ntil one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened." Anatole France's profound words perfectly capture the essence of *Pet Fed* 2024, India's largest pet festival. The event their owners, a connection built on trust, affection and unconditional love. Held at the NSIC Grounds in Okhla, New Delhi, the festival offered a spectacular experience for animal lovers, filling the air with joy and excitement. It wasn't just a gathering; it was a celebration of pets, especially dogs, who truly shone as the stars of the

Pet Fed 2024, an annual highlight for pet lovers, buzzed with energy from start to finish. The venue was transformed into a world of fun, excitement and admiration for animals. Pets strutted around in custom outfits, many of them dressed as if for a Christmas getaway, complete with Santa hats and reindeer antlers. It was a sight to behold as dogs like Bella, Leo, Goofy, Sheeru and *Noddy* pranced by, each one adding its own personality to the event. The joy and love shared between the pets and their owners was evident, making it impossible not to smile.

Inside the venue, the atmosphere was lively, filled

with laughter as people chatted, took photos and enjoyed the moment with their pets. The hall was a runway of fashionable dogs, each outfit designed to showcase the personalities of the pets and their owners. It felt like a holiday celebration where pets were treated with the level and where pets were treated with the love and attention they deserve.

However, Pet Fed 2024 was about celebrating the deep bond between pets and their families. The festival featured masterclasses on pet health, nutrition and grooming, offering valuable advice for pet parents. These sessions helped owners ensure the best care for their furry companions. The event also included dedicated play areas and agility rings for dogs and cats to exercise and show off their skills. The agility ring, in particular, was a hit, with pets darting through obstacles and jumping with excitement, providing a thrilling

Pet Fed 2024 celebrated the unconditional love between pets and their owners, creating unforgettable memories and promoting adoption, writes SAKSHI PRIYA



experience for both pets and their parents.

association with the Cat Club of India,

feline

also

strong

designed specifically for cats. This

segment celebrated all cat breeds

and included fun activities and

competitions. Cats and their

owners participated in games, with participants vying for

trophies and certificates. It

was a joyous experience

for everyone involved,

showcasing the fun side

emphasis on pet adoption. Adoption

camps were set up to

encourage families to

adopt rather than

shop, in line with the

#AdoptDontShop

companionship. ine festival placed

Catapalooza, an event organised in

One of the standout segments of the festival was





mantra. The festival partnered with NGOs to find loving homes for animals in needs and it was heartwarming to see so many pets finding their forever homes. Several adoption stories unfolded during the event, highlighting the festival's commitment to making a difference in the lives of animals.

For those seeking some friendly competition, *Pet Fed* offered contests and engaging activities. The Official Pet Fed Premier League Award Ceremony was a crowd favourite, while other events like Temptation Alley and Bug Buster had everyone cheering for their furry friends. Day 2 of the festival included even more thrilling events, such as Trick Roulette, Kibble Craze and the Security Dog Show. But the true



highlight of the day was India's Biggest Pet Fashion Show, where pets and their owners walked the ramp in coordinated outfits, creating a spectacle that was unforgettable.

Âs I walked through the venue, I was captivated by the wide range of activities designed to keep 100 stalls, offered pet parents the chance to shop for the latest products, accessories and food. From high-end pet clothing to innovative toys, there was something for every pet and every budget. The food and beverage stalls ensured that pet parents could relax and enjoy the event while their furry companions stayed by their side.

One of the most touching elements of Pet Fed 2024 was its inclusivity. Indie pets, often overlooked, were given special attention with free entry for their parents. This gesture was a beautiful reminder of how important it is to support the adoption of all pets, regardless of breed. It was a sentiment that resonated deeply with attendees, showing that the festival wasn't just about fun, but also about creating a compassionate world for animals.

Akshay Gupta, the Founder of Pet Fed, shared his excitement about the event, saying, "Wrapping up the 10th edition in Delhi has been an incredible experience. The love and support from Delhiites, along with the growing awareness about pet adoption, have been truly heartwarming. This event has shown us the deep bond that exists between pets and their parents, and it's a privilege to create a platform that celebrates this connection.

Pet Fed 2024 was a heartwarming celebration of the unconditional love our pets give us every day. It reminded us that animals, like art, have the power to inspire, bring joy and change our lives in ways we never imagined. The event created beautiful memories, showcasing the enduring bond between pets and their families. Most importantly, it carried a meaningful message,

#AdoptDontShop, encouraging everyone to give a second chance to animals in need, reminding us that

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

love is the best gift we can offer.







sunday, magazine the pioneer de la contraction d



















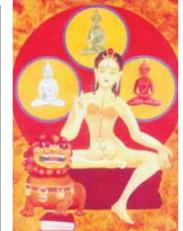




### ARIES Nbsdi!32.Bqsjm!2:

This week presents a significant opportunity for financial housekeeping. It's an ideal time to settle any outstanding debts or loans. You may also find yourself in a position to assist a friend or family member in need, possibly for a celebratory event. Your capacity to offer support isn't limited to financial means; emotional support could be just as valuable. Engaging in charitable activities could enrich your sense of well-being, enhancing your overall outlook on life. Midweek, be cautious of getting caught up in impractical dreams and avoid overindulging in lavish desires. Your tendency to fluctuate between various pleasures could lead to dissatisfaction. Staying grounded and setting clear objectives will be crucial to maintaining your contentment. Embrace a realistic approach to your aspirations.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Plum Lucky day Tuesday



### LEO Kvmz!34.Bvh!33!

You naturally exude a commanding presence and have high expectations, often seeking to steer things according to your preferences. Your environment is typically filled with dynamism and activity, traits that can sometimes lead to friction if not managed carefully. It's possible that your intensity might lead to misunderstandings or disagreements with peers, potentially causing them to keep their distance or openly disagree with you. These situations could escalate into disputes or clashes of opinion. Channeling your robust energy into constructive projects could be beneficial. You are blessed with robust health and significant authority, which positions you at the forefront of competition. It's important to foster a cooperative atmosphere, as this can enhance your already considerable

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Gold Lucky day Thursday



### **SAGITTARIUS** Opw!33.Efd!32

This week might bring some health challenges requiring medical attention. Despite the physical discomfort, this period offers a valuable opportunity to deepen spiritual connections. Embracing spiritual practices can provide solace and strengthen your beliefs, aiding in emotional and physical recovery. The support of a loved one will be a crucial comfort, reinforcing your bonds and encouraging shared moments of introspection and faith. Family ties will grow stronger as you find comfort in shared spiritual interests and practices. Engaging with spiritual texts and devotional activities will be particularly comforting, helping you navigate through this period with grace. As the week progresses, a sense of peace and normalcy will begin to return, concluding with you regaining your usual

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Monday



### TAURUS Bqsjm!31.Nbz!31

This week, you may find yourself in a position of subtle influence where your ability to guide and manage will shine through in professional settings. Your knack for understanding and addressing the needs of those around you marks you as a natural leader. However, be aware that not everyone may appreciate your unique approach. Some may feel overshadowed or disagree with your methods, potentially leading to challenges. There could be scenarios where the efforts you've invested in particular projects or opportunities might not yield the expected rewards, possibly due to the covert actions of competitors or disagreements within the team. As the week progresses, the weight of responsibilities might leave you feeling exhausted. It's essential to consider distributing tasks among your team, as sharing responsibilities could enhance efficiency and reduce stress.

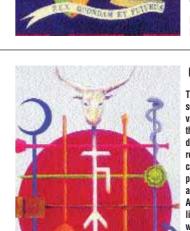
Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Amber Lucky day Sunday



### VIRGO Bvh!34.Tfq!33

This week heralds a period of flourishing prosperity for you, marked by both financial gains and emotional contentment. Resources seem to be flowing in, providing a sense of security and success in navigating a materially focused environment. You'll find joy in indulging in pleasures and fulfilling personal desires, contributing to a satisfying home life. As the week progresses, your focus may shift towards achieving emotional objectives. This could be a time of receiving positive news or deepening connections, possibly through romantic destures or meaningful exchanges with a partner. However, a phase of uncertainty may soon follow. challenging your sense of stability and connection. You might find yourself grappling with a coldness or detachment in vour interactions. As the week wraps up, vou'll be motivated to restore balance and adapt to evolving perspectives.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Lilac Lucky day Saturday



### CAPRICORN Efd!33.Kbo!2:

This week, you might find yourself feeling unusually sentimental and emotional. Challenges may arise across various aspects of your life, causing some frustration due to things not aligning with your desires. You may face emotional disturbances along with concerns over health issues that require your attention. It's advisable to manage your finances carefully, focusing on budget control to navigate through this period smoothly. Midweek calls for a strategic and organized approach to manage all spheres of your life effectively. Adopting a balanced diet and maintaining a disciplined lifestyle are recommended to support your well-being. As the week progresses, expect a positive shift in your professional life. You may experience an increase in financial nains from multiple sources, leading to greater contentment, joy, and overall well-being.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Teal Lucky day Fridav



### GEMINI Nbz!32.Kvof!31

Recently, individuals may have experienced positive outcomes from their endeavors. However, the coming days call for increased vigilance as challenging interactions are likely to arise, particularly in professional settings. Expect to encounter opposition from a colleague who may seem to have an upper hand, potentially leading to a turbulent environment marked by criticism and competitive tensions. Mid-week could introduce an influence from a challenging individual, promoting a negative atmosphere and potentially pushing ethical boundaries. Despite these obstacles, your resolve remains strong. By the week's end, your perseverance and commitment to integrity will shine through, earning you recognition and elevating your standing among peers. This period will bring its own trials, but your steadfastness will lead to commendable achievements

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Cream Lucky day Wednesday



### LIBRA Tfq!34.Pdu!33

This upcoming week promises an abundance of luxury, romance, and harmony in your life. Positioned to enjoy the finer things, your efforts and virtues elevate you, making recognition and personal fulfillment highly accessible. Your hard work and perseverance, coupled with blessings. have led you to this prosperous phase. Known for your fairness and generosity, you naturally attract admiration and leadership roles both at home and in professional spheres. People often seek vour counsel, drawn by vour caring nature and wise decisions. However, as the week progresses, remain vigilant. There may be indicators nointing towards notential financial setbacks or health concerns. It's wise to approach such possibilities with caution, as taking preventative measures can often mitigate larger issues.

Lucky number 1 | Lucky colour Tangerine Lucky day Wednesday



### AQUARIUS Kbo!31.Gfc!29

At the start of the week, you'll find yourself faced with significant choices that require a firm and fair annroach. Emotions must be set aside as your decisions could have profound impacts on your life or that of someone close. A power struggle may emerge in your professional sphere. It's best to steer clear of confrontations and adopt a more vielding attitude. Midweek, you might experience some setbacks or criticism from a superior, which could leave you feeling disheartened. This is a nivotal moment to engage in reflective practices such as meditation or exploring spiritual avenues to rebuild your confidence and maintain mental equilibrium, Recognizing your goals or ambitions is crucial during this period. As the week concludes, the atmosphere will shift positively.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour White Lucky day Sunday



### CANCER Kvof!32.Kvmz!33

This week starts with a flurry of activity, demanding your full engagement and refined skills. The early days bring an opportunity at work that requires immediate action. This may require adjusting your usual methods and clear communication to succeed. As the week progresses, you financial dealings increase, including acts of generosity and assistance to those in need. During these days, you may find your feelings intensifying, prompting a thoughtful reassessment of your financial obligations and relationships. As the week closes, you may enter into a significant agreement or partnership. This period also holds potential for deepening emotional connections. Whether strengthening existing bonds or forming new ones, you'll find a sense of fulfillment in these relationships. For those unattached, the chance to meet someone special presents itself, potentially leading to heartfelt exchanges and thoughtful gestures. Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Rose Lucky day Saturday



### SCORPIO Pdu!34.Opw!32

It's a busy period for many, with increasing demands at work and in academic pursuits, particularly affecting those who are naturally dedicated and intense in their approach. This rising pressure necessitates a period of rest to maintain balance and energy is crucial, especially as neglecting this can lead to emotional and mental imbalances, potentially causing irritability be beneficial. Tensions may also arise in professional settings possibly leading to disagreements with those in authority. Managing emotions and dedicating time for self-care is essential during this period. It's important to find a balance between work and relaxation to navigate this busy time effectively

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Jade Lucky day Sunday



## PISCES Gfc!2:.Nbsdi!31

This week highlights your dynamic energy and considerable potential. However, without defined objectives, your energy may scatter. Establish clear goals and apply your inherent creativity effectively. Attend to family obligations with care; they need your expenses, so proactive care is advisable. The middle of the week may bring certain challenges, possibly affecting your emotional and financial stability. However, your inner strength and determination will prove invaluable. As the week progresses, new prospects will arise, but you could miss them if too focused on yourself. Engage in deep discussions and meaningful explorations to boost your emotional health. Relationship dynamics will improve, enhancing personal harmony. Stay open to diverse avenues for achieving success, as prosperity could

ucky number 11 | Lucky colour Gray

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# HELIFEGUID Seerat Kaur

Marwaha

The positions of planets are intentional; they align with individual karma from past actions

# ife is rarely a bed of roses. Each of us carries unique

struggles, often tied to complex karmic accounts from multiple lifetimes. We are born not just to live but to address these past debts and fulfill long-held desires. Our natal charts act as guides, revealing the trials we are destined to face and the lessons we are meant to learn on this As an astrologer, I can examine a natal

chart and, without personal details, identify difficulties in health, career, or relationships. This involves analyzing the placement of planets, each influencing specific aspects of life. The positions of planets are intentional; they align with individual karma from past actions. Life events we cannot control, such as our parents, siblings, birthplace, health, and spouse that are all predestined and can be seen in the natal chart. Even incidents beyond our control arise from this design. So what is in our control you may ask? While life's unexpected challenges may be out of our hands, how we react to these circumstances is in our control. A person's behavior often reflects the influence of a poorly placed planet. This unfavorable position is not random; it results from conscious actions in past lives. Even though the soul is reborn, its core nature and mentality remain



Transforming Life's Karmic Challenges

unchanged. For instance, a man with a weak Venus, which governs marriage and signifies the wife, is likely to face challenges in these areas. This weakness may indicate past mistreatment of women, leading to difficulties in

forming or maintaining harmonious relationships. It is also likely that he still struggles with treating women properly. While free will can weaken planets through negative actions, it also offers the chance to correct them.

Strengthening a weak planet involves positive actions in the affected area. For the man with a weak Venus, the remedy is to treat women with kindness, respect, and care, especially his wife. By acting with integrity and compassion,

he can gradually undo negative karma and restore balance in his life. Even if you're not familiar with chart reading, the best way to improve your chart and life is simple: identify the problem area and make better choices. The more positive actions you take, the more you clear negative karma from your past.

The greater the planetary weakness, the more effort and time it takes to correct. A simple analogy is weight loss: someone who is 50 kilograms overweight needs more time and hard work to reach their goal than someone who is only 5 kilograms overweight. Similarly, the more poorly placed a planet, the more effort is needed to rectify its influence. The good news is that, no matter how weak a planet is, with dedication and consistent positive actions, it can improve, and the individual's life can be transformed. This understanding brings us to a vital concept: no action goes unnoticed. Every choice we make—good or bad sets in motion consequences we will face. Therefore, it is essential to be mindful of our actions, as they shape not only our present but also our future. Through awareness and conscious living, we can change the trajectory of

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