



the pioneer

Established 1865

INSIDE

WORLD 8
PRESIDENT MACRON NAMES
CENTRIST ALLY BAYROU AS
FRANCE'S NEXT PM

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY DECEMBER 14, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4

www.dailypioneer.com

PUBLISHED FROM: DELHI | LUCKNOW | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | RANCHI | RAIPUR | CHANDIGARH | DEHRADUN | HYDERABAD | VIJAYWADA

Constitution Sparks Volatile Debate



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh speaks during a discussion on the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India in the Lok Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Initiating a two-day debate on Friday in the Lok Sabha on "Discussion on the Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accused Congress for always choosing "satta" (power) over the Constitution and never tolerated autonomy of institutions and tried to destroy constitutional principles and spirit. Singh was countered by Priyanka Gandhi, leading the Opposition said that it seems Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not understood that it is 'Bharat ka Samvidhan' not 'Sangh ka Vidhan'. She described the Constitution as a 'suraksha kavach' (protective shield) of justice, unity and freedom of expression and one the BJP-led Government has made every effort to break in the past 10 years.

Provoking the Opposition MPs, Rajnath Singh said Congress has sought to project the Constitution as its own contribution, while deliberately ignoring the contribution of several leaders. "The talk of protection of the Constitution does not seem appropriate coming from it (Congress). These days, I see that many Opposition leaders keep the Constitution in their pockets. Actually, this is what they have learnt from childhood, they have seen their families keep the Constitution in their pockets for generations," he said, adding "the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), on the other hand, always bows before the Constitution and has never played with the independence and autonomy of institutions." Singh's assertion drew jibes from the members of the Opposition benches during a speech that was largely heard in attention. "Congress, during its decades in power, often amended the Constitution with a malicious spirit to change it gradually, while the Narendra Modi Government has effected amendments to strengthen its fundamental values and for people's empowerment", alleged Singh, inviting objections from Congress MPs. Whenever there was a choice, the Congress chose power

over the Constitution, he claimed. It always tried to "hijack and appropriate" the framing of the Constitution, Singh said, highlighting the imposition of Emergency, dismissal of many state governments and superseding of Supreme Court judges for "standing up" to the then Indira Gandhi government to charge the party with violating constitutional principles. The BJP leader said he is surprised that those who subverted the Constitution are now speaking for its protection. "Expressions for protecting the Constitution from the Congress do not look good," he said in a jibe at the Opposition party. The two-day debate, which is likely to end with Prime Minister's Modi's speech, is being seen as a highlight of the ongoing parliamentary session amid a running battle between the ruling party and the Opposition since the Lok Sabha poll campaign, which was marked by the INDIA bloc building its campaign on the Constitution being allegedly under threat from the BJP. Singh's mention of the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, a persistent target of the BJP's attack over the years, as one of those who contributed to the making of the Constitution drew rare cheers from the Opposition benches. The BJP leader, though, later also charged Nehru with amending the Constitution to override a Supreme Court judgment for "stifling" freedom of expression.

Continued on page 2



Notice moved in RS for Allahabad High Court Judge's impeachment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Members of several Opposition parties on Friday moved a notice in the Rajya Sabha for the impeachment of Allahabad High Court Judge Shekhar Kumar Yadav over his alleged controversial remarks at a recent VHP event, sources said. The notice for moving the impeachment motion was signed by 55 opposition MPs, including Kapil Sibal, Vivek Tankha, Digvijaya Singh, John Brittas, Manoj Kumar Jha and Saket Gokhale. These MPs met the Rajya Sabha secretary general and handed over the notice for impeachment a few minutes before the start of the day's proceedings, the sources said. Some of the other prominent MPs who have signed the notice are P Chidambaram, Randeep Surjewala, Pramod Tiwari, Jairam Ramesh, Mukul Wasnik, Naseer Hussain, Raghav Chadha, Fauzia Khan, Sanjay Singh, AA Rahim, V Sivadasan and Renuka Chowdhury.

Three Indian students killed in Canada: MEA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Three Indian students have been murdered in Canada last week and the Indian High Commission in Ottawa has taken up the matter of safety of Indians with the Canadian authorities, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday. The safety, security and welfare of Indian nationals in Canada remains of utmost importance to us, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. Jaiswal said the Indian missions in that country are in touch with the local authorities for thorough investigation of the incidents. "In the last week or so we have had unfortunate tragedies. Three Indian students have been murdered. We are saddened at these terrible tragedies that have struck our nationals in Canada. We extend our deepest



MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal

condolences to the grieving families. Our High Commission and Consulates in Toronto and Vancouver are extending all possible help in the matter," he said. "Issues faced by them, especially Indian students, are raised by our high commission and Consulates with the relevant Canadian authorities on a regular basis," he said. "We have also issued an advisory for our nationals and Indian students to exercise extreme caution and remain vigilant in view of the

deteriorating security environment in Canada as a result of the growing incidence of hate crimes and criminal violence," Jaiswal added. According to official data, over 400,000 Indian students are studying in Canada. Asked about reports of instances of the Indian high commission not granting visas in Canada, Jaiswal described them as a "disinformation" campaign. "We have seen the said media report. It is yet another example of Canadian media's disinformation to malign India," he said. "Granting of Indian visas is our sovereign function and we have the legitimate right to deny visas to those who undermine our territorial integrity," he said. "The commentary that we see in the Canadian media on this matter is akin to foreign interference in India's sovereign affairs," Jaiswal added.

The system has failed us, say RG Kar docs

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The junior doctors, who led the months-long protest over the rape and murder of the resident doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, expressed disappointment with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigation into the case on Friday after two key suspects got bail from a court. The Sealdah court granted bail to RG Kar Medical College and Hospital's ex-principal Sandip Ghosh and former officer-in-charge of the Tala police station Abhijit Mondal in the rape and murder case of the on-duty doctor. They were granted bail after the CBI failed to file a charge sheet against them within the mandatory 90-day period. "We are extremely disappointed with the pace with which the CBI is handling this case," said junior doctor Aniket Mahato, a leading face of the protests that rocked the state. "The system has failed us, and the accused have been allowed to go free due to the sluggishness of the investigation. This delay in justice is a slap on the face of all those who have been



fighting for accountability," he added. The junior doctors started their demonstration after the body of their colleague was found at the RG Kar hospital on August 9. Following 50 days of cease work that paralysed the state's healthcare system, they went on hunger strike on October 5 amid the Durga Puja festival, demanding justice. The hunger strike was called off on October 24 after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee met them. Mahato said they were firm in their resolve for justice. "We are not backing down," he said. "The CBI's inaction has only fueled our frustration. We will decide our next course of action soon and continue our fight for justice," he added. The CBI took over the case on the direction of the high court following allegations of mishandling by the police.

CCPA puts 17 direct selling firms in the dock

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notice to 17 direct selling firms including Oriflame India, and Suii Dhaaga Lifestyle, that were found in unfair trade practices, service deficiencies, and violations of the Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021. According to the CCPA, of these 13 entities are currently under investigation while reply from three of the entities is awaited. Direct selling is a method of marketing, distribution and sale of goods or services directly to consumers, away from fixed retail premises. This method relies on independent representatives of the entity, known as direct sellers, selling products directly to customers, typically through personal contact, online platforms, or home presentations. The list includes multiple firms and the action comes in response to concerns about deceptive practices in the direct selling industry. "However, some fraudulent entities misuse the direct selling model to promote illegal pyramid or money circulation schemes. These firms often make unrealistic promises of high commissions, foreign trips, entrepreneurship, high returns and a wealthy future, contingent on recruiting others, which violates consumer trust and established laws, thereby exposing consumers to fraudulent pyramid and money circulation schemes. Three major signs that a product is being used to disguise pyramid schemes include large joining fee or investment, compensation paid for recruiting and no right of return, buy-back or cooling off period offered," the CCPA said. "The government remains steadfast in its



mission to create a fair, transparent, and consumer-friendly market ecosystem," the statement said. Consumers have been advised to exercise caution by checking disclosures carefully, avoiding recruitment-based earnings, understanding return and refund policies, reading contracts thoroughly and verifying direct sellers' credentials. The Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021, were introduced to regulate direct selling entities and protect consumer interests and consumers will have to check certificate of Incorporation, PAN, GST Registration, important licenses as per the goods and services offered, Certificate of Registration of Trademark of the direct selling companies. These rules complement other existing regulatory frameworks, including the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020, and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. The Department has advised consumers to stay vigilant and report any suspected illegal activities or violations related to direct selling to the appropriate authorities.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Days after being tagged as the worst airlines in the world, Indigo on Friday apologised to the passengers stranded in Istanbul airport for hours owing to delays in flights to New Delhi and Mumbai. The airliner apologised for the inconvenience and assured that the issue would be sorted at the earliest. Passengers took to social media to recount their terrible experience. The trouble began when a flight from Istanbul to Delhi, scheduled to depart at 8.10 pm on December 12, was initially delayed to the next day at 1.30 pm. Passengers were left at the airport with little information or support from IndiGo staff. Similarly, the flight from Istanbul to Mumbai, originally set to depart at 8.15 pm on December 12, was first pushed to 11.00 pm, then delayed again to the following morning at 10 am. IndiGo operates one flight each daily from Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul with Boeing 777 aircraft. Many of them have been stranded since Thursday. While the exact details of the impacted flights could not be immediately ascertained, frustrated travellers took to social media to express their dissatisfaction, saying they

received no communication from IndiGo regarding the ongoing delays. Despite promises of lounge access as compensation, the lounge at Istanbul Airport was overcrowded and unable to accommodate all the stranded travellers, they claimed on social media. "We are aware of the delays on the IndiGo flight connections to Istanbul. We accord the highest priority towards customer convenience and our teams are available at all contact points to assist customers," IndiGo said in a statement on Friday. The airline also apologised for the "inconvenience" caused to the passengers. Some passengers also shared pictures of people stuck at the airport. In a post on X, a passenger said, "First time to India and stranded at the Istanbul Airport for the last 24 hours because the IndiGo flight keeps cancelling. No food. No clarity. No representative. No compensation. Pathetic treatment." "Lot of people stranded at the airport due to pathetic services by @IndiGo6E and @TurkishAirlines operators. Never book flights with them as they don't value passengers time. You can never be on time with @IndiGo6E," another passenger said in a post on X.

Actor Allu Arjun granted interim bail

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Friday granted a four-week interim bail to actor Allu Arjun, who was arrested earlier in the day by the city police in connection with the death of a woman during the screening of his latest movie 'Pushpa 2' here last week. The HC order came shortly after the actor was remanded to judicial custody for 14 days by a local court. He was sent to the jail at Chanchalguda here following the remand, amid tight security arrangements. The HC pronounced the order granting bail to Arjun while he was being taken to the jail. The court directed the actor to cooperate with the authorities in the investigation, while granting him interim bail. Earlier in the morning, Allu Arjun was arrested by the city police in connection with the death of a woman during the premiere of his latest movie 'Pushpa 2: The Rule'. The actor was taken into custody, amid tight security, from his residence and taken to Chikkadpally police station in a police vehicle.

SC to hear SPG petition on fate of three specialised vehicles

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Special Protection Group (SPG), which protects the Prime Minister, on Friday, moved the Supreme Court (SC) challenging an order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) which refused to allow extension of registration period of three specialised armoured vehicles by five years. The matter came before a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih, which took objection that the elite force approached the NGT for registration of its vehicle instead of moving the top court in the MC Mehta matter. The SC has been monitoring the air pollution crisis in Delhi in an ongoing Public Interest Litigation in the MC Mehta case. Appearing for the SPG, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, urged the Bench to consider the matter on an urgent basis and sought extension of registration period citing



importance of the vehicles. Tushar Mehta said these vehicles are an essential and integral part of Special Protection Group technical logistics. The Bench converted the matter in an interlocutory application and posted the matter for hearing on December 16. The NGT on March 22 had refused to grant the relief, saying such vehicles being diesel vehicles cannot be permitted to ply in the National Capital Region (NCR) on completion of 10 years. "We are conscious of the fact that these three vehicles are special purpose vehicles which are not normally available and these vehicles have run very less in the last 10 years and are needed for the specific purpose of security of the prime minister but in view of the order of the Supreme Court dated October 29, 2018, the prayer made in the M.A. Cannot be granted," the NGT had said.

'Rajmarg Saathi' promises enhanced safety on National Highways

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to enhance road safety and strengthen highway patrolling, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the central road making agency will implement an upgraded and forward-looking Incident Management Services. The guidelines on the subject include updated specifications for new Route Patrolling Vehicles (RPVs) named 'Rajmarg Saathi' and outlines design, functions, technology, components and manpower specifications for the RPVs. The RPVs conduct inspection of National Highway stretches to monitor and respond to emergency situations. In the existing RPVs, the rear space is open for keeping

instruments and equipment to support in case of emergency situations. However, due to open space, the operators were not able to keep these equipment in a well organised manner, which at times led to delays in taking prompt action. In order to overcome such a situation, the rear or trunk of RPV has now been replaced by a closed cabinet with dedicated space for different equipment and inventory. The shelves have been created to provide quick & easy access to different equipment during the emergency situations and is a significant upgrade from the earlier RPVs. Additional advanced feature of this new RPV is the provision for dashboard cameras equipped with 'AI video analytics' to capture and identify cracks & potholes as well as other elements

including road distresses shall be collected on a weekly basis by NHAI and this road distress data shall be



including road distresses shall be collected on a weekly basis by NHAI and this road distress data shall be

integrated with NHAI One application for more efficient maintenance of roads. The guidelines for 'Rajmarg Saathi' RPVs include detailed specifications related to the use of vehicle, equipment and manpower. To ensure service fitness of the vehicle, the RPV shall be replaced with a new RPV, once it has exceeded run of 3,00,000 km or has been in operation for three years. Special emphasis has been laid on branding and external appearance of the RPVs to maximise its visibility as a Highway Patrol Services on the National Highways. Equipped with the advanced communication and safety tools, these vehicles will be useful in minimising traffic disruptions, improving road safety and enhancing overall road user experience along the National Highways.

Delhi CM announces Rs 1,000 monthly assistance for women

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Friday announced that the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Samman Yojana, to provide monthly assistance of Rs 1,000 to women in the city, will be rolled out in the next 10-15 days as the government is working on the registration process. It is estimated that there are 38 lakh women who will be eligible for the scheme. Under the Atishi said that before the end of the current financial year -- by March 31, 2025 -- women will receive one or two installments under this scheme. AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal had announced the launch of the scheme on Thursday and promised that the amount would be raised to Rs 2,100 if his party returns to power. During a press conference here, Atishi said the scheme is a fulfillment of the government's promise to empower women. "We have kept our promise of providing Rs 1,000 assistance to women. Despite all efforts by the opposition to obstruct this initiative, we have successful-

ly ensured its rollout," she said. The scheme aims to provide financial independence to women, ensuring they do not have to depend on family members for small personal needs, she added. Regarding eligibility, Atishi explained that permanent government employees, women who paid income tax in the last financial year and those already receiving any form of pension will not qualify for the benefits. Cleared by the Delhi Cabinet on Thursday, the scheme entails a monthly payment of Rs. 1000 as a direct benefit transfer (DBT) to the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account to eligible women beneficiaries living in the city based on certain criteria. However, certain categories of women are not eligible for this scheme which include current or former permanent government employees, whether in the Central Government, Delhi Government, or MCD, women MPs, MLAs, or Councillors, women who paid income tax in the previous assessment cycle and those who already receiving pensions under Delhi government schemes, such as

old-age pensions, widow pensions, or disability pensions. "All other women aged 18 and above will be entitled to receive Rs 10,000 as an honorarium under this scheme. The notification was issued yesterday evening, and efforts are underway to begin the registration process. We aim to start registrations within the next 7-10 days," CM Atishi said. Speaking about other measures taken by the AAP government to empower women, Atishi highlighted the improved quality of education in government schools, which are predominantly attended by girls, ensuring equal opportunities for education. She also mentioned the provision of free healthcare through Mohalla Clinics, allowing women to access treatment without financial constraints. Additionally, the government provides free bus travel to women, helping them commute easily for education, jobs, or job searches, she said. In the run for the upcoming Delhi elections, AAP is vying for a third consecutive term, having won 62 out of 70 seats in the last election.

India, Philippines strengthen maritime ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and the Philippines on Friday vowed to work jointly towards ensuring a rules-based order in critical sea lanes against the backdrop of China's growing military muscle-flexing in the South China Sea. The ways to bolster bilateral naval ties figured prominently at the inaugural India-Philippines Maritime Dialogue held in Manila. There have been growing global concerns over China's sweeping claims of sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. Several countries in the region including Vietnam, the Philippines and Brunei, have counterclaims. "During the dialogue, the two sides exchanged perspectives on prevailing maritime challenges

and discussed ways to enhance maritime cooperation in furthering a conducive environment for mutual growth and global well-being," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. MEA said the two sides laid emphasis on "adherence to a rules-based order, especially the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and explored cooperation initiatives in the maritime domain to uphold the same." India and many other democratic countries have been pressing for peaceful settlement of the disputes and for adherence to international law, especially the UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) in the South China Sea. In the talks, India and the Philippines agreed to share best practices and partner in maritime capacity building initiatives in areas such as maritime industry, marine scientific research and ocean economy,

the MEA said in a statement. The two sides also explored ways to expand cooperation among the navies and coast guards of the two countries. The defence ties between the two countries have been on a significant upswing in the last few years. In April, India delivered the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines, in reflection of the growing military ties. The supplies came over two years after India inked a USD 375 million deal with the Southeast Asian nation to supply the weapon systems. The Indian delegation at the maritime dialogue was led by Muanpui Saiawi, joint secretary, disarmament and international security affairs in the MEA. The Filipino team was headed by Marshall Louis Alferaz, assistant secretary at the maritime and ocean affairs office in the foreign ministry.



Delhi CM addressing a press conference at Delhi Secretariat. Ranjan Dimri

Govt school students now have equal opportunities: Atishi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi chief minister Atishi on Friday said children in the national capital are now being given equal opportunities and those studying in government schools can now aim higher. The chief minister said this following an interaction with 30 students from the city's government schools who went to Paris to study an advanced French course. Atishi along with AAP leader Manish Sisodia met the students who had attended the French language course at Alliance Francaise in Paris from November five to 15. "Have you ever thought that a child from a poor family would have the opportunity to study abroad? This is not just a dream but a realization of hopes that were previously suppressed due to financial

constraints," Atishi wrote in a social media post about the initiative. She further emphasised that every child in Delhi is now being given equal opportunities. "We have shown that even children from government schools can aim high. Every child in Delhi is now being given equal opportunities. This is Delhi's education revolution, and it will continue." The program focused on students from classes nine to 12, many of whom are first-generation school-goers, according to an official statement. Organised by the French Embassy in India, the program stems from a partnership between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government and Alliance Francaise to enhance French language education in Delhi's schools, it said.

Tarun Yadav to represent AAP in Najafgarh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday announced that social worker Tarun Yadav would be contesting from the Najafgarh constituency in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections. Yadav and his wife Meena Yadav - who has served as an indepen-

dent councillor for two terms - joined AAP on Wednesday. The Najafgarh seat was previously held by Kailash Gahlot, a former Delhi minister, who quit AAP and joined the BJP last month. The party had said that Yadav has been actively involved in social and political activities in the Najafgarh area for many years, always stepping forward to

help those in need. With the announcement of Yadav's candidacy, AAP has now revealed its candidates for 32 out of the 70 seats. The party initially announced 11 candidates in its first list and 20 in the second. The Arvind Kejriwal-led party is aiming for a third consecutive term, having won 62 of the 70 seats in the last election.

Center clears Nestle over sugar in baby products

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has cleared Nestle of any wrongdoing regarding the added sugar content in its baby products. Responding to a query in Lok Sabha on Friday, Union Health Minister JP Nadda said that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) had conducted inspections at Nestle's manufacturing sites following media reports from a Swiss NGO about added sugar in a wheat-based infant product. The inspections, carried out in April, confirmed that the sugar levels per serving complied with the Food Safety

and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020, which align with global standards set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the World Health Organization (WHO). "Added sugar per serving was found to be in compliance with the provisions under Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020 in baby products of Nestle," said Nadda. The limits specified for sugars in infant food products in the Regulations is at par with the global standards, namely Codex Alimentarius Commission, which takes into account the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO)

while setting food standards. On the basis of the media report, suo motu cognisance was taken by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) about a report by the Swiss NGO regarding added sugar in wheat-based baby products, said the Minister. Inspections were conducted on April 29 and 30 at manufacturing sites engaged in production of the infant food product in the country. Based on scrutiny of the product, added sugar per serving was found to be in compliance with the provisions under Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020, Nadda added.

SC to hear SPG petition on fate of three...

From page 1

The SC in its October 29, 2018 order had banned diesel vehicles older than 10 years from plying on the roads of Delhi-NCR. The Special Protection Group (SPG) was raised in 1985 with the intention to provide proximate security cover to the PM, former PMs and their immediate family members.

Surajkund fair tickets now available on Metro stations, app

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Tickets for the annual Surajkund Mela will be available for purchase through the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Momentum Delhi Sarthi 2.0 app, starting this year. "In addition to the app, tickets will also be sold at Metro stations and at five physical counters located at the Mela venue," the Delhi metro said in a statement.



This arrangement follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the DMRC and Haryana

Tourism Corporation. The MoU was signed on Friday at Metro Bhawan in the presence of Managing Director of DMRC Dr. Vikas Kumar and Managing Director of Haryana Tourism Corporation Dr. Sunil Kumar. "Under the MoU, DMRC will facilitate the sale of tickets through multiple platforms, including the official DMRC website, Metro stations, and counters at the Surajkund Mela venue.



Lieutenant General Sadhna S Nair, DGMS (Army) and Senior Colonel Commandant of the Army Medical Corps AMC, visited Army Hospital Research and Referral on 13 December 2024. She interacted with the patient and complimented Lt General Shankar Narayan commandant and team AHRR for being the nation's pride in providing quality patient care.

Delhi police apprehend accused after 14 years

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Crime Branch has apprehended three members of a family who had been on the run for 14 years after allegedly burning a woman alive. According to the police on Friday, in 2010, Roshan Aara was set ablaze in her home in north-east Delhi's Gokul Puri allegedly by Mustafa, Masooma, and Zarrar Khan. Special Commissioner of Police (crime branch) Devesh Chandra

Srivastva said, "Following the gruesome crime, an FIR was registered at Gokul Puri Police Station." The three accused, natives of West Bengal's Asansol, belong to the same family and went absconding shortly after the murder, the officer said, adding that they remained elusive, assuming fake identities and moving across states to evade arrest. It was not immediately known why the trio committed the crime.

Constitution Sparks Volatile Debate

From page 1

Singh lauded the role of the Supreme Court as the "custodian" and "interpreter" of the Constitution, citing its judgments that negated the then Congress regime's bid to topple opposition-ruled state governments. "Today, there is talk of protecting the Constitution. This is the duty of all of us. But we also need to understand who has respected the Constitution and who has disrespected it," he said, slamming the Congress for its idea of "committed judiciary, committed bureaucracy and committed institutions", a reference particularly to Indira Gandhi's rule in the 1970s. Priyanka in her 32-minute maiden speech, countered the BJP and said had it not been for the Lok Sabha poll results, the ruling party would have started changing the

Constitution. The Congress leader even took on Union Minister Rajnath Singh, saying those in the ruling party mostly talk about the past but should tell the country what they are doing now. "What is your responsibility? Or does all the responsibility lie with Jawaharlal Nehru ji?" she asked in a swipe at the BJP over its repeated criticism of India's first PM. "Our Constitution laid the foundation of economic justice, distributing land to farmers, the poor and the needy... Whose name is often used by them (BJP) to save themselves, he (Jawaharlal Nehru) created many PSUs and institutions such as HAL, BHEL, SAIL, GAIL, ONGC, NTPC, Railways, IIT, IIM," she said. "His name can be erased from the books, but his role in the Independence struggle and nation building can never be

erased from this country," the Congress general secretary said about her great grandfather. Addressing criticism of the Emergency, she said the BJP should learn from it and apologise for its mistakes. "My colleague in the ruling party recounted the past, this happened... What happened in 1975. You also learn from it, you also apologise for your mistakes," she said. "You talk of political justice, you cause governments to fall on the strength of money... I will give another example, that of Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh. Was the Constitution not applicable to these states," she said. Priyanka Gandhi also challenged the BJP to hold elections by using the ballot paper, saying it will expose the reality. In a stinging critique of the PM, the Congress leader

said, "There used to be a story that the king used to go among the people in disguise to listen to criticism. Today's king is also very fond of changing his disguise... But he neither has the courage to go among the public nor to listen to criticism." Slamming the BJP over its alleged divisive politics, she said seeds of suspicion and hatred are being sown where the Constitution gave a protective shield of unity. "The 'suraksha kavach' of unity is being broken. The prime minister touches his forehead to the Constitution but when there are cries for justice from Sambhal, Hathras and Manipur, there is not a wrinkle on his forehead," said Priyanka, adding that "it seems Prime Minister Modi hasn't understood that 'Bharat ka Samvidhan' is not 'Sangh ka Vidhan'.

Notice moved in RS for Allahabad High Court Judge's impeachment

From page 1

The notice for the motion was moved under the Judges' (Inquiry) Act, 1968, and Article 218 of the Constitution, seeking initiation of proceedings for impeachment of Justice Yadav. The notice mentioned that the speech/lecture delivered by Justice Yadav during an event organised by the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) prima facie showed that he "engaged in hate speech and incitement to communal disharmony in violation of the Constitution of India". The notice also mentioned that the judge prima facie showed that he targeted minorities and displayed bias and prejudice against them. It went on to state that Justice

Yadav entered into public debate or expressed his views in public on political matters relating to a uniform civil code, in violation of the Restatement of Values of Judicial Life, 1997. The notice mentioned that the public remarks of the judge were inflammatory and prejudiced and directly targeted minority communities. It also stated that Justice Yadav in his lecture asserted that "the country would function according to the wishes of the majority in India". "Justice Yadav's actions contravene the directive principles enshrined under Article 51A(e) of the Constitution of India, which mandate promoting harmony and renouncing practices derogatory to the dignity of individuals," the MPs said in

their notice for impeachment. "The statements, which have been widely documented and reported, encouraged animosity and division among different religious and communal groups, contravening the secular ethos of the Constitution of India," they added. "We request the Hon'ble Chairman to admit this motion and forward it to the Hon'ble President of India in accordance with the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, and constitute an inquiry committee to investigate the charges of hate speech, communal disharmony, and violations of judicial ethics," according to the notice. The Opposition MPs also demanded that the chairman initiate appropriate

proceedings to remove Justice Yadav from office if the allegations were proven. At a Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) function on December eight, Justice Yadav said the main aim of a uniform civil code was to promote social harmony, gender equality and secularism. A day later, videos of the judge speaking on provocative issues, including the law working according to the majority, were circulated widely on social media, prompting strong reactions from several quarters, including opposition leaders. The Supreme Court on Tuesday took note of news reports over the purported controversial statements of Justice Yadav function and also sought details from Allahabad High Court on the issue.

'Rajmargy Saathi' promises...

From page 1

In order to provide a distinct and professional look, the uniform of the PV Personnel has also been redesigned to include brilliant blue colour along with a jacket with reflective stripes and authority logos for easy identification. Route Patrolling Operations play a critical role in maintaining safety, providing incident management and ensuring smooth flow of traffic on National Highways. The NHAI is committed to enhancing road safety standards as well as providing a seamless and pleasant travel experience to all National Highway users across the country.

IndiGo Airlines apologises 'On-Time, Every Time'

From page 1

Another passenger took to X on Friday at 3:50 AM (IST) to express his frustration about the delay, writing, "Hey @IndiGo6E, your handling of flight 6E0018 from Istanbul to Mumbai on Dec 12 has been a disaster. Scheduled to depart at 8:15 PM, it was delayed to 11 PM on the same day. Fine, we waited. Then it was shockingly pushed to 10 AM the next day. What's going on?" He added, "To make matters worse, NO ONE from Indigo was present at the gate to explain the situation. The news came from Turkish Airlines crew, and there was no formal announcement, just complete chaos. We were told

we'd get lounge access at Istanbul airport as compensation. But the lounge was far too small to accommodate the huge number of stranded passengers. Many of us were left standing for hours without proper facilities. Seriously, @IndiGo6E?" IndiGo responded to his complaint, stating, "we sincerely apologise for the inconvenience and will connect with you." Earlier this month, IndiGo was ranked among the "world's worst airlines" in the 2024 AirHelp Score report, securing 103rd place out of 109 with a score of 4.80. This low rating is attributed to poor customer satisfaction and the airline's handling of flight disruption claims.

Actor Allu Arjun granted interim bail

From page 1

A 35-year-old woman died and her eight-year-old son has been hospitalised in the incident which took place on December 4 night when a large number of fans thronged the Sandhya theatre here to have a glimpse of the actor. The city police have registered a case against Allu Arjun, his security team, and the theatre management under sections 105 and 118(1) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at the Chikkadpally police station based on the complaint lodged by the deceased woman's family. Allu Arjun, on December 11, approached the Telangana High Court seeking to quash the FIR registered against him in connection with the

death of a woman. After the formal arrest, Allu Arjun was taken to state-run Gandhi Hospital for medical tests. Allu Arjun last week announced Rs 25 lakh to the family of the deceased and also assured the grieving family that they are not alone in this painful situation and he will meet the family personally. Earlier, the police arrested three persons, one of the owners of the theatre, its senior manager and lower sections incharge (at the theatre), in connection with the case registered over the death of the woman due to asphyxiation as crowds jostled at the theatre during the premiere show of Allu Arjun's movie. According to the police, a huge crowd had gathered at the theatre to watch the

movie and have a glimpse of the movie's lead actors coming to the theatre. However, there was no intimation from the side of the theatre management or actors team that they would be visiting the theatre. "The theatre management did not make any additional provisions regarding security to manage the crowd nor was there any separate entry or exit for the actors team though the theatre management had information about their arrival," a police release had said. Around 9.30 pm on December 4, Allu Arjun came to the theatre with his personal security and people gathered there tried to enter the theatre with him. "His (Allu Arjun) personal

security team started pushing the public, which further aggravated the situation as there was already a huge gathering at the theatre. Taking advantage of this situation along with the actor and his security team, a large number of people entered inside the lower balcony area. "In this, one Revathi and her son felt suffocated due to a large public influx and immediately the police personnel who were on duty pulled them out of the public from the lower balcony and performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on her son and immediately shifted them to a hospital, where the doctor informed that she was dead," it said. The boy is now undergoing treatment in a Super Speciality Hospital.

CGPA puts 17 direct...

From page 1

According to the Department of Consumer Affairs, the government has notified the Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021, establishing a comprehensive framework to regulate direct selling entities and protect consumer interests. These rules aim to promote transparency, accountability, and ethical practices within the direct selling industry, enabling consumers to make informed decisions. Additionally, the rules complement other regulatory frameworks, including the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020 and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 further strengthening consumer protection mechanisms.

Bomb threats targets 30 Delhi schools

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

At least 30 schools in the national capital received bomb threats over e-mail in the early hours of Friday, the second such incident this week, triggering a multi-agency search of their premises. According to police, nothing suspicious was found in any of the schools after the searches. Delhi Public School (DPS) in East of Kailash, DPS Vasant Kunj, Frank Anthony Public School, Salwan School, Modern School Barakhamba Road, North Delhi Public School in Shalimar Bagh and Bal Bharati Public School and Cambridge School, were among some of the institutions that received the threat. This has prompted the authorities to send students back home. The schools have also sent messages to guardians asking them not to send their children to classes today.

The latest threats come close on the heels of at least 44 schools receiving similar e-mails on December 9. Police had declared those threats as hoaxes. The Special Cell of the Delhi Police has registered a case of criminal intimidation and conspiracy but it is yet to get any lead on the culprits. Acting on the information, the fire department, police and bomb-detection teams, along with dog squads, rushed to the schools and conducted thorough checking. Reacting to the development, former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal pointed out that it was the second such instance within a week and wondered how these bomb threats would affect the children. "This is the second time in this week that Delhi schools have received bomb threats, which is extremely serious and worrying. If this continues, how badly will it affect the children? What will happen to their studies?" he said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Ravi Singh said that they conducted checking followed by security protocol but nothing suspicious was found and it is suspected to be a hoax.

"Investigations so far have established that the e-mail was sent from abroad but further probe is on. Around 30 schools, including three in our district, have received such e-mails," Singh said.

DCP South West Surendra Chaudhary said, "In our South West district, mail was received in four schools at around 12:54 am and it was about the presence of explosives in the schools. Our teams went and checked and followed proper SOP and we did not find anything suspicious there. We also informed the school authorities and also told the parents not to panic."

Cambridge School principal Madhavi Goswami said she was checking the school's e-mail when she came across the threat. "I informed the police and they worked proactively. We were assured by the Delhi Police about the investigation. We informed the parents that classes would be held online on Friday," she said.

Karamveer, a security guard at the South Delhi Public School, said he received a message at 7:20 am, following which the school authorities asked the parents to return home with their children.

"The school administration



Police personnel exit from Cambridge School at Shri Niwas Puri during investigation after it received bomb threat over email, in New Delhi. PTI

decided that all the students should be asked to return. Only a few children were already inside the campus and they too were sent back," he said.

These latest threats come days after at least 44 schools receiving similar e-mails on December 9. Police had also declared those threats as hoaxes.

A Delhi Fire Services official said, "We received calls (regarding the threat e-mails) from the Bhatnagar International School in Paschim Vihar at 4:21 am, Cambridge School in Srinivaspuri at 6:23 am and DPS Amar Colony in East of Kailash at 6:35 am."

"(Calls were also received) from the South Delhi Public School in Defence Colony at 7:57 am, Delhi Police Public School in Safdarjung at 8:02 am

and Venkateshwar Global School in Rohini at 8:30 am," he added.

A police source said the e-mails were received at 12:54 am, with the sender mentioning "parent-teachers' meeting" and "sports day" activities in the schools. The sender also mentioned that the "schools will face bomb blasts" on Friday and Saturday, the source said.

According to the source, the content of the e-mail reads: "This e-mail is to inform you that there are many explosives in your school premises and I am sure that you all do not check your students' bags frequently when they enter the school premises."

"A secret dark web group is involved in this activity and many red rooms also. The bombs are powerful enough to destroy the buildings and harm

people. And from today till December 14, means tomorrow, on both days, there is an expected parent-teacher meeting to be happened. And through our dark sources, it is also confirmed that one of the schools involved in all the e-mails is currently conducting marching for their sports day, in which students gather in a field, making a huge crowd, which is a clear advantage, while the building will be left alone with only a few staffs and no one to look around."

The e-mail further said that the explosions could take place on Friday and Saturday. "Reply back to this e-mail for our demands, otherwise the bombs will be detonated," it added.

In May, more than 250 schools, hospitals and other installations had received similar e-mail threats, which are yet to be solved.

BJP submits 5,000 pages of "illegal" voter names to CEC, demands action

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP on Friday met the Chief Election Commissioner and submitted a detailed letter with 5,000 pages of evidence objecting to lakhs of illegal Rohingya, Bangladeshi, duplicate voters and non-existent address voters along with thousands of dead voters.

A Delhi BJP delegation led by its President Virendra Sachdeva on Friday met the CEC and other two Election Commissioners to lodge a protest against illusion of lakhs of illegal infiltrator Rohingyas and Bangladeshi origin demanded that Election Commission of India look into their complaint on legal merits on priority to ensure a true and transparent election for Delhi Assembly.

Delhi BJP President told ECI through the three Commissioners present that it's surprising that new voter registration of lakhs of voters happens everytime between the period of conclusion of Lok Sabha elections and start of assembly elections in Delhi which is abnormally higher

than in the yearly voter summary revision exercise.

"On the strength of an August 2024 circular of ECI the BJP BLAs and other workers have been going across all 70 assembly constituencies and have found the existence of lacs of Bangladeshi or Rohingya origin infiltrators registered as voters in Delhi apart from duplicate voters, non-existent address voters. Every constituency in Delhi has a huge number of dead or permanently shifted voters in Delhi," he said.

He requested the ECI to run a campaign against enrolment of illegal voters as well as against illegal voting. Sachdeva urged ECI to run a radio and print media campaign dissuading and warning the bogus voters with imprisonment.

Addressing the media, he asserted that they will not let infiltrators and bogus voters to vote. New Delhi BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj in her legal submission kept before the ECI a list of strong 18 evidences showing how Rohingya and Bangladeshi origin infiltrators stand registered and cited pages

from voter lists of several assembly constituencies across the city where even on same page a single person with same family details and address stands repeatedly registered as voter with different EPIC. She cited at least six cases with evidence from different assemblies where voters of a particular community stand registered on non-existent addresses and cases where the same family of voters of one community stand registered in more than one assembly constituencies.

"It's sad that BLO's are not performing their sacred duty of deleting dead voters & voters objected to even after verification of evidence," she said. Swaraj also submitted video evidence of bogus voter registration.

Union Minister Harsh Malhotra drew the attention of the ECI to the false narrative being created by the Government of Delhi that BJP is objecting to voters of Indian origin in voter list while the truth is that BJP is objecting to infiltrators and bogus address voters.

LG Urges graduates to champion inclusivity, innovation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena on Friday urged the students of Dr. BR Ambedkar University (AUD) on Wednesday to strive towards inclusivity, innovation, and impactful intervention in society during the 13th convocation ceremony.

In a tweet on X, Saxena shared, "Presided over the 13th Convocation of Dr. BR Ambedkar University in the presence of former CJI, Justice (Retd) Dipak Misra." He congratulated the young minds on completing their degrees and urged them to strive towards inclusivity, innovation, and impactful intervention in society.

Delhi LG urged the Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD) to foster among the students and maintain the quality of education and research. He also emphasised on setting 'gold standards' for the institution. "It was heartening to note that the number of students in AUD has nearly doubled in the last five years. Exhorted the management and the faculty to foster equality among students and maintain the quality of education and research while expanding the access to education and set 'Gold Standards' for our institutions of higher learning," he said in a tweet.

Further, he congratulated the Vice Chancellor, the faculty members, and the parents of graduating students for their relentless efforts and sacrifices in shaping the future of these bright young students.

BJP accuses Delhi government of withholding 14 CAG reports



Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta and others MLAs addresses a press conference. Ranjan Dimri

The BJP MLAs on Friday accused the AAP government of withholding over 14 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports and demanded an immediate session of the outgoing Delhi Assembly to table them.

Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta, addressing a joint press conference, alleged that the AAP government had sent 10 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports to the Lieutenant Governor only after the BJP leaders moved court. However, four reports remain pending, he claimed.

The Delhi government has still not sent four reports of the CAG to the Lieutenant Governor (LG) to keep it away from public domain, he said. Gupta further alleged that the government had given written assurance to

the Delhi High Court that the session held between November 29 to December 4 was not the final of the outgoing 7th Delhi Assembly.

The Assembly will complete its five year tenure in February 2025 and the polls for the 70 member Assembly are likely to be announced soon.

"The AAP government led by Arvind Kejriwal is the only government in the country that has tried to resist tabling the reports in the Assembly," the leader of opposition said. He said that the AAP government gave written assurance to the court that the session held earlier in December was not the last and demanded the House is convened immediately with the reports tabled in the Assembly.

On Thursday, the AAP government informed the Delhi High Court that Chief Minister Atishi, who holds the finance portfolio,

has sent the CAG reports on liquor duty, pollution and finance to the LG for placement in the assembly.

However, the Delhi government's counsel clarified that he did not have formal written instructions on it and sought time to place on record the developments in the matter.

The counsel confirmed that 10 files were received by the LG office on the night of December 11 for tabling in the legislative assembly.

He pointed out that since 2017-18, CAG reports for seven financial years (up to 2021-22) had been pending with Delhi Finance Minister Atishi. Despite being notified, the Delhi government has failed to present them in the Assembly. Gupta said the Principal Account Officer had formally reminded Minister Atishi Marlena in a letter dated October 17, 2024, that

under Article 151 of the Constitution, Section 411 of the Government of NCT of Delhi Act, 1991, and Regulation 210 of the Audit and Accounts Regulations, 2007, the CAG reports must be mandatorily presented in the Delhi Assembly. Yet, the government has continued to withhold these reports.

The petition was filed by the BJP MLAs including Gupta, Mohan Singh Bisht, Om Prakash Sharma, Ajay Kumar Mahawar, Abhay Verma, Anil Kumar Bajpai and Jitendra Mahajan. It was contended by them that the government was acting in breach of its statutory duty by failing to "promptly" lay crucial CAG reports on various issues such as pollution and liquor before the assembly.

The CAG reports from 2017-2018 to 2021-2022 pertained to various subjects related to Delhi government and its functioning.

Police detain two illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, identify 1,000 others

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police have apprehended two illegal Bangladeshi immigrants and identified over 1,000 others in the southeast district.

According to the police on Friday, the accused have been identified as 22 year old Abdul Ahad and 32 year old Muhammad Azizul. Deputy Commissioner of Police (southeast) Ravi Kumar Singh said, "We have identified more than 1,000 people during our drive and apprehended two men from Kalindi Kunj and Hazrat Nizamuddin area."

The city police launched a drive for the identification of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants residing in Delhi on Wednesday, a day after the LG Secretariat ordered a crackdown on such persons.

The police said that they are staying in the national capital without any valid documentation. "Both the accused were apprehended by the Hazrat Nizamuddin Police Station team on December 10 and 12, respectively," the DCP said.

During interrogation, Ahad,

hailing from Bangladesh's Sylhet, revealed that he entered in Delhi on December 6, with the help of a Bangladeshi agent in search of work. Azizul, a resident of Dhaka, admitted to crossing the Benapole border in 2004 through West Bengal and had been living in India ever since, the police said.

"Both were presented before the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for deportation proceedings. Beside that we have also identified 1,000 people during our drive which will continue," he said.

Sharing more details about the southeast district, the officer said that the district police have verified 916 individuals and detained eight illegal immigrants, including six Bangladeshis in past. On Thursday, the Delhi Police collected documents of 32 people in Seemapuri area of east Delhi. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam said that in a decisive step to curb the rising number of illegal Bangladeshi intruders in the capital, Delhi Police conducted a comprehensive

operation in the E-44 Jhuggis of New Seemapuri on Thursday.

During the operation, the documents of 32 individuals were collected for further verification, he had said, adding the locals were warned against using fake identity cards and were assured that this drive was strictly focused on identifying unauthorised intruders.

Teams from the different police stations of 15 districts in the national capital are visiting slums and Delhi's Kalindi Kunj, Shaheen Bagh, Hazrat Nizamuddin and Jamia Nagar to check voter IDs and Aadhaar cards to identify suspected Bangladeshi immigrants.

The Delhi LG Secretariat directed the chief secretary and police chief on Tuesday to launch a two-month special drive to identify and take strict action against illegal Bangladeshi immigrants residing in the city.

The officer also said that besides sending data to FRRO, police will also personally verify the genuineness of the Aadhaar cards.

NGT halts construction in Greater Noida and Noida over environmental violations

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed that building projects in Greater Noida and Noida, not having the requisite clearances, will not be allowed to proceed with the construction activities.

The green body was hearing a plea regarding the alleged unauthorised and illegal construction of houses, shops and other commercial and residential complexes in Greater Noida and Noida, which violated environmental norms.

The plea also alleged that some realtors were illegally extracting the topsoil, besides operating unauthorised borewells.

In an order dated December 9, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said, "Authorities concerned have filed their replies which reveal that some of the project proponents (realtors) are continuing with the construction without obtaining Consent to Establish (CTE), Consent to Operate (CTO) and Environmental Clearance (EC)."

"Since it has been submitted that large-scale illegal construction without following environmental norms is in progress, therefore, we direct that till the next date of hearing, concerned authorities of the state and pollution control board will ensure that a project requiring EC/CTE/CTO but not having these clearances are not permitted to proceed with the construction illegally till it complies with all the requisite environmental norms and clearances," said the bench also comprising judicial member Justice Sudhir Agarwal and expert member A Senthil Vel.

The tribunal also directed the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board to prevent illegal plotting in the area falling in the floodplain zones.

During the proceedings, the petitioner's counsel, Akash Vashishtha argued that a large part of Greater Noida had illegal townships, villas and apartments.

"We have placed extensive material on record to demonstrate how huge constructions are coming up every day.

Delhi HC rejects widow's plea for Red Fort possession

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday rejected the plea of the widow of the great grandson of Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar-II seeking possession of the Red Fort on account of being the legal heir.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela dismissed the appeal by Sultana Begum against the December 2021 decision of a HC single judge, noting the challenge was filed after a delay of over two-and-a-half years, which could not be condoned.

Begum said she could not file the appeal owing to her bad health condition and passing of her daughter. "We find the said explanation inadequate, considering that the delay is of more than two-and-a-half years. The petition was also dismissed (by the single judge) for being inordinately delayed by several decades.

Super 30 of law entrance bags 5 out of top 10 in AILET and CLAT

ABHI SINGHAL ■ NEW DELHI

When your students bag three out of top 10 slots in what's unarguably India's most elite law entrance test - All India Legal Entrance Test or AILET - it speaks volumes about your passion, diligence and genius. Yet Nishant Prakash, the unassuming corporate lawyer turned teacher, will simply grin on being congratulated, showing extraordinary humility.

The AILET results on Thursday saw a burst of messages and phone calls. Just days ago, Prakash had another round of celebrations with a strike rate of over 90% by his students in the

Common Law Admission Test (CLAT), for admissions to over 20 law universities across India. Out of 60 students that he provided training to 54 ended up with a seat either in CLAT or AILET. Two of his students featured in top 10 in CLAT as well. Hailing from the small town of Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Nishant had similar aspirations like those growing up with him. "I ended up being at the National Law University at Raipur, and immensely benefited from mentorship of legal luminaries like Ram Jethmalani and KK Venugopal. After this, I was fortunate to work with Luthra & Luthra Law Offices at New

Delhi with specialising in Intellectual Property Rights, Insurance and Trade Law," says Prakash.

However, despite a thriving law career, a decade ago, the passion of teaching took him to rather an unconventional path - of teaching.

"Hailing from Bihar, such dramatic shift to my career was frowned upon, for it meant compromising with fat pay checks and wading into uncertain territories. With a mild fear, I moved on, for I realised chasing passion should take primacy at some point in life," said Prakash.

In 2014, he set up Nishant

Prakash Law Classes and in just 10 years, he has established a reputation covered by law aspirants nationwide, transcending the highly commercialized coaching industry to become a leader in education reform, with significant impact on legal education.

Nishant takes great pride in success of his students, and lists out the "toppers" with extraordinary passion: in AILET Chaitanya Ghosh ranked all India no 2, Dhruva Kamath at no 6, Vidisha Singh at no 10; in CLAT Aditya Gautam Ankhad ranked no 4, Daiwik Agarwal no 7.

His noteworthy achievements extend beyond coaching as Niti

Aayog appointed him to advise on the pivotal initiative of "Transforming Legal Education in India," positioning him as a key contributor to national legal education reform. Further solidifying his role in education reform, he is part of a high-level committee implementing the National Education Policy 2020, in the state of Assam reflecting his broader impact on the national education framework.

Also, recognised as the "Super 30" of law entrance training, Nishant's commitment to education underscores his effectiveness in guiding students to secure admissions in top law schools.

Indian forces going to all patrolling points in Depsang: Jaishankar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Friday that security forces would be going to all patrolling points in Depsang in Ladakh and also to the eastward limit which are historically been India's patrolling limit. He said in Lok Sabha that the last of the disengagement agreement with China was related to Depsang and Demchok. "I want to convey that it was mentioned in my (previous) statement (in Parliament) that the understanding envisaged that Indian security forces would be going to all patrolling points in Depsang, and would be going to the eastward limit which are historically been our patrolling limit in that part," he said during Question Hour. The minister said in the same statement, he has made it clear that India had dis-

engagement agreements with China in the past too. "Those disengagement agreements also had certain provisions where both sides on a temporary basis had agreed to put certain restraint on themselves. So I think the position is very clear in that statement. I would urge the honourable member to read that statement again," he said replying to a supplementary question on India-China boundary agreement. Replying to a question on a picture of Nepal currency that allegedly showed a part of Indian territory as its own, Jaishankar said India's position regarding the border is very clear. He said if any of India's neighbours thinks that by doing something they want to change India's position, they should be very clear that it is not going to happen. "I think the entire House is clear on that with me," he said.



On Myanmar, the minister said because of the very disturbed conditions in Myanmar, India had to review the Free Movement Regime (FMR), which allows people residing close to the India-Myanmar border to venture 16 km into each other's territory without any documents. He, however, said the government is sensitive to the requirements of the border communities and is working something on that. Jaishankar said part of the challenge along Myanmar border is that there is very little government authority on the other side of the border and whatever is required to do, India itself has to do on its own. "But today definitely there is much greater presence there to secure our border, to monitor people across the border," he said. On a question on India's neighbourhood first policy,

Jaishankar said before Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Nepal, there was no visit by any Prime Minister to Nepal for 17 years but that did not mean that nobody in India cared for Nepal. Similarly in case of Sri Lanka, before Modi visited the country, for 30 years, there was no bilateral visit, he said. The minister said with regards to Maldives under the current government, the Addu Link Road and Reclamation Project, which was funded by India, was inaugurated and he himself was present. "By the way, the President of Maldives was present at the oath taking ceremony of this new government," he said. Jaishankar said if an opposition member desires to somehow show the foreign policy of this government in bad light for political purposes, that is the member's privilege. "That is not my nature to make foreign policy partisan.

But I would like to remind the member through you that the very Maldives which he was talking about was, Indian companies were driven out from there from an important project in 2012. "In same Sri Lanka, Hambantota was built by China in 2008. The same Bangladesh was giving support to terrorists till 2014. The same Myanmar was hosting Indian insurgent groups," he said. The minister said for carrying out development projects, both India and the country concerned need to cooperate. "If we look today at the number of projects, the volumes of trade, the exchanges which are taking place, I think the answer is very clear. Now, our neighbours also have their politics. They have ups and downs in their countries. There are some implications on us. Relations are important. We are mature. We don't get into point score," he said.

UP court summons Rahul Gandhi over remarks against Savarkar



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A local court here on Friday summoned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on January 10, 2025, to face trial for allegedly promoting enmity and disturbing harmony among people by making mischievous statements about freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (ACJM) Alok Verma passed the order on a criminal complaint filed by local lawyer Nripendra Pandey. The court found that prima facie offences under sections 153(a) (promoting enmity between different groups) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) were made out against Gandhi, also the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha. The ACJM rejected the complaint on June 14, 2023, but the revisional court set aside the rejection order on October 3, 2024, and remanded the matter to the ACJM for passing a fresh order based on the material that

had come on record in the complaint and statements of witnesses. In the inquiry, police confirmed that Gandhi made the "objectionable" statement against Savarkar in Maharashtra and it was broadcast on television and other communication mediums. The complaint in the case states that at a press conference during his Bharat Jodo Yatra in Akola, Maharashtra on November 17, 2022, Gandhi made serious remarks against Savarkar that spread communal disharmony, according to the order. The complainant alleged that Gandhi called Savarkar "a servant of the British who received a pension from them" and distributed pamphlets to media-persons to tarnish his image. Passing the summoning order, the court observed, "The material presented demonstrates that Gandhi's remarks, broadcast nationwide via TV and social media, were intended to spread hatred and enmity, undermining the nation's unity".

All Indian nationals who wished to return home from Syria evacuated: MEA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India has evacuated from Syria all its nationals who wished to return home after rebel forces overthrew President Bashar Assad's authoritarian government in the Arab nation. The Syrian government collapsed on Sunday as the rebels seized control of capital Damascus after capturing several other prominent cities and towns. India evacuated its nationals from Syria on Tuesday. "We have evacuated all Indian nationals in Syria who wished to return home following recent developments in that country. So far, 77 Indian nationals from Syria have been evacuated," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Friday. Our embassy personnel in Damascus accompanied them to a pilgrimage to Syria have also left Beirut yesterday to visit other religious sites in the region," Jaiswal added. The Indian Embassy in Syria con-



immigration, he said. He was replying to a question at his weekly media briefing. Jaiswal said the embassy made arrangements for their boarding and lodging in Beirut and for their travel back home. "Most of our nationals have already returned to India and the remaining will be arriving later today or tomorrow," he said. "The 44 Zaireen who were on a pilgrimage to Syria have also left Beirut yesterday to visit other religious sites in the region," Jaiswal added. The Indian Embassy in Syria con-

tinues to function, he added. India on Monday called for a peaceful and inclusive Syrian-led political process to bring stability in that country. "We are monitoring the situation in Syria in the light of on-going developments. We underline the need for all parties to work towards preserving the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria," the MEA had said. "We advocate a peaceful and inclusive Syrian-led political process respecting the interests and aspirations of all sections of Syrian society," it said.

TB continues to impose heavy economic burden on patients in India: ICMR study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Tuberculosis (TB) continues to impose a heavy economic burden on patients in India, with nearly 45 per cent incurring catastrophic costs due to lost productivity and hospitalization despite free diagnosis and care under the Government's National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP), a recent study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has revealed. Many patients, particularly those from lower-income groups and without health insurance, face significant out-of-pocket expenses, it said, noting that notably, hospitalised patients with TB (PwTB) and those notified from the private sector were more likely to incur catastrophic costs.



The study led by researchers from the ICMR-National Institute of Epidemiology (ICMR-NIE), in Chennai and published in the Global Health Research and Policy journal, estimated the costs incurred by 1,407 persons with TB during their care and also identified the factors associated with the costs. The team led by Kathiresan Jayashree, a scientist at ICMR-NIE measured total patient costs through direct medical,

non-medical, and indirect costs. Catastrophic costs were defined as expenditures on TB care cost more than 20 per cent of the annual household income. The mean age of the 1407 PwTB interviewed was 40.8 (16.8) years. Among them, 865 (61.5 per cent) were male, and 786 (55.9 per cent) were economically active. Thirty-four (2.4 per cent) had Drug Resistant TB (DRTB), and 258 (18.3 per cent) had been hospitalized for TB. Direct costs accounted for 34 per cent of the total costs. TB patients less than 60 years of age, without health insurance, and those hospitalised for the condition experienced higher median costs. About 45 per cent of TB patients experienced catastrophic costs. The study called for enabling early notification of TB, and

"expanding the coverage of health insurance schemes to include persons with TB. Implementing TB-sensitive strategies to address social determinants of TB may significantly reduce catastrophic costs incurred by persons with TB," Jayashree said. Expanding the net of coverage of health insurance schemes, both public and private, to cover TB diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation will encourage better health seeking and also reduce financial catastrophe in households of PwTB. "Future costing exercises may also calculate the costs incurred by patients after declaration of their treatment outcome, at least for a period of two years to capture costs due to physical, social and economic sequelae of TB," suggested the researchers including those from the WHO besides ICMR.

Parliamentary Panel seeks higher aid under rural housing scheme as costs soar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary standing committee has recommended the assistance provided under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) to be raised from current Rs 1.2 lakhs in keeping with the rising inflation and input costs. The scheme has been extended till March 2029 with an aim to construct two crore additional homes across the country for the landless people. "With rising inflation having a detrimental effect on the cost factor associated with the raw material, transportation cost, labour cost etc, constructing a new house of the requisite area under PMAY-G for poor and needy beneficiaries with such assistance amount seems to be an arduous task," said the Parliamentary Standing



Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, headed by Congress MP Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka. It pointed out that the assistance under the scheme had remained stagnant at Rs 1.2 lakh for a considerable period of time, often leading to cases in which the houses remained incomplete. "Housing for All" vision might not achieve its target until the beneficiaries were provided "proper hand-holding" in terms of financial assistance of right value and at the

right juncture, said the panel in their report tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The report also highlighted that more than two lakh landless beneficiaries were still waiting to get land or assistance from state governments to construct homes, which might also cause delay in hitting the target. The committee also noted that against an initial target of 2.95 crore houses to be constructed by March next year, 2.66 crore were constructed as on October

22 and 29 lakh were yet to be completed. A target of constructing an additional two crore houses in the next five financial years -- 2024 to 2029 -- has been approved by the government, the report said. "The committee finds it utmost necessary that a review of per-unit assistance be done on priority basis, particularly when the scheme has been extended to March 2029," the panel said and recommended revision of the per-unit assistance through a suitable hike. The panel expressed concern over landless beneficiaries getting assistance for land to build their house and, citing Union rural development ministry data, said that of 5,73,311 (5.73 lakh) landless beneficiaries identified under PMAY-G, 59 per cent or 3,60,837 (3.60 lakh) had been provided land for the construction of houses.

President Murmu, PM Modi pay tribute to martyrs of 2001 Parliament attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday paid tributes to the brave hearts who sacrificed their lives defending Parliament during the 2001 terror attack. In her tributes, President Murmu said the nation remained deeply grateful to the brave hearts. Reiterating India's unwavering resolve to combat terrorism, she said the nation stood united against the forces of terror. Terrorists of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed attacked the Parliament complex on this day in 2001, killing nine people. All five terrorists were gunned down by the security forces. "I pay my humble tribute to the brave hearts who sacrificed their lives defending

our Parliament on this day in 2001. Their courage and selfless service continue to inspire us. The nation remains deeply grateful to them and their families," the president said in a social media post. "On this day, I reiterate India's unwavering resolve to combat terrorism. Our nation stands united against the forces of terror," she added. Vice President Dhankhar, Prime Minister Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, several Union ministers and MPs on Friday paid floral tributes to those who laid down their lives in the 2001 terror attack on Parliament 23 years ago. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Home Minister Amit Shah, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju also paid tributes at an event organised outside the old Parliament building -- Samvidhan Sadan. Several



leaders were seen interacting with kin of those who were killed in the attack. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel offered salute or 'salami' at the venue after a which a moment of silence was observed to mark the anniversary. Till last year, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) used to offer 'salami shashtra' (present arms). The attack was carried out by five armed terrorists but personnel from Parliament Security Service, CRPF and Delhi Police foiled the attack as no terrorist was able to enter the building. Six Delhi Police personnel, two Parliament Security Service personnel, a gardener and a TV video journalist were killed in the attack. All five terrorists were gunned down in the forecourt of the then Parliament building. The Lok Sabha paid rich tributes to the security personnel who laid down their lives in

foiling a terror attack on Parliament on December 13, 2001. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla solemnly reiterated the commitment of the Lower House to fight terrorism and pledged to protect the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the nation. "This House and the entire nation solemnly remembers unfortunate incident of December 13, 2001, when some terrorists attacked India's Parliament, the greatest symbol of our democracy," Birla said as soon as the House convened at 11:00 am. "Our alert security personnel deployed to ensure security of the Parliament premises displayed extraordinary courage and foiled this attack," he said. The Lok Sabha speaker said eight personnel from the Parliament Security Service, Delhi Police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) laid down their lives while

courageously repulsing the terror attack. One worker of the Central Public Works Department also laid down his life in the incident, he said. "This House offers humble tributes to all those who made the supreme sacrifice in protecting Parliament on December 13, 2001," Birla said. "This House reiterates our commitment to fight terrorism and the pledge to protect the unity, integrity and sovereignty of our mother land," he added. The Lok Sabha members stood in silence for a brief while as a mark of respect to the martyrs. Rajya Sabha also paid tributes to the bravehearts. Prime Minister Modi said in a social media post "Paid homage to those martyred in the 2001 Parliament attack. Their sacrifice will forever inspire our nation. We remain eternally grateful for their courage and dedication."

Punjab Govt should procure all crops of farmers at MSP: CM Saini

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Friday said that all crops of farmers in Haryana are being procured at Minimum Support Price and the Punjab government should also come forward and announce that the produce of farmers in the AAP-ruled state will be purchased at MSP.

Interacting with reporters here on the sidelines of a handicraft exhibition, Saini said the works done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the past ten years for farmers' benefit are "historic". He was asked a question about Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who is sitting on fast-unto-death, and has also written an open letter to Prime Minister Modi in which he said that MSP to every farmer is like the fundamental right to live. Saini said the AAP dispensa-

tion in Punjab and the states where Congress is in power should also take a decision to empower the farmers.

"Punjab government should also take a decision to procure crops of farmers at MSP. They should not have a problem in this. When farmers of Punjab are facing problem, Punjab government should come forward and announce that they will procure all crops of farmers at MSP," Saini said.

"In Haryana, we are procuring all crops of farmers at MSP and the state government is taking every such step which empowers farmers," he said.

The Congress and other outfits which are part of the opposition's INDIA bloc do politics on everything, he charged.

Dallewal has been on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border between Punjab and Haryana since November 26 to press the Centre to accept



the agitating farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of MSP on crops. Farmers under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces.

A group of farmers made two attempts to enter Delhi on foot on December 6 and December 8. They were not allowed to proceed by security personnel in Haryana. The protesting farmers would make another attempt to march on December 14.

Saini also trained his guns at the Congress, saying it has been rejected by people of the country. The Congress "speaks lies"

and people have realised this and they have been rejected in Maharashtra also, he said, referring to results of the assembly polls held recently. "People have put their stamp of approval. In 2029 too under Narendra Modi's leadership the BJP will form government for the fourth time," the Haryana CM asserted.

The country is progressing fast and the government is working towards welfare of all sections, including farmers, and various steps have been taken for the empowerment of farmers, women, youth and poor, he further said.

To another question, Saini welcomed the Centre's move to implement its key plank of "one nation, one election", as the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday approved the constitutional amendment bill to roll out the concept of simultaneous Lok Sabha and state assembly

polls. "We used to be stuck in one election after the other. Sometimes, it is panchayat polls, sometimes municipal polls, Vidhan Sabha or the Lok Sabha polls. It not only involves a lot of expenditure in holding elections, but there is involvement of time too. We were not able to undertake development at the pace at which we want as the Model Code of Conduct comes into effect and development works get impacted," he said.

"I congratulate the prime minister and his entire team for the approval they have given to the One Nation One Election (initiative). The common people will get the benefit of this," he said.

Saini said the prime minister's vision is to make the country a developed nation by 2047 and the move will help the nation realise that goal even faster.

To another question, Saini hit out at AAP national convenor and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. "In Punjab, they showed greener pastures to people at the time of polls, but they have not been able to fulfil," he charged.

Further slamming Kejriwal, Saini said, "he went to jail for corruption. The AAP had come to power (in Delhi) saying they will give a transparent administration and claimed they were honest. But Kejriwal turned out to be more corrupt than even the Congress."

"Again, he has started showing greener pastures to the people of Delhi. He talked about giving clean drinking water, he had talked about making Yamuna river clean. People have understood his tall claims. Now, people of Delhi are waiting for the election to oust the AAP from power," he said.

Govt working hard to ensure rights, respect of indigenous people: Manipur CM

PTI ■ IMPHAL

Manipur Chief Minister Biren Singh on Friday said his government is working hard to ensure rights, respect and ownership of land for the indigenous people in the state.

Speaking at the inaugural function of the Manipur Indigenous People Cultural Exchange Festival in Chadong village in Kamjong district, Singh called for "constitutional protection" for the indigenous people.

"Now it is a critical period for indigenous people who have been living since time immemorial. Our land was safeguarded by spear and swords in the history of more than 2000 years and guns arrived only after the British came," he said.

Singh said he initiated the "Go to Hills" campaign to strengthen shared cultural and historical legacy.

"Understanding the indigenous communities is the need



of the hour...Many people do not want to acknowledge the demographic changes caused by events happening outside the state. We have been struggling to save the indigenous communities which are under threat," Singh claimed.

He also said, "The government is working hard to ensure the rights, respect, ownership of land and authority of the indigenous people. We will succeed in our endeavour."

An indigenous ethnic cul-

tural centre was developed at Rs 6 crore in Makhel village which is considered as the origin of indigenous people, he said.

"Ever since I became a chief minister, I initiated the 'Go to Hills' campaign as part of understanding our shared cultural and historical legacy. Several historical sites have been developed," Singh said. The festival organised by the Indigenous Peoples' Forum was supported by the government as part of its effort to

foster unity, the CM said. Singh also urged those who consistently criticise the government to first "study the changes in population and electoral rolls".

He appealed to them to "look at satellite images of the number of villages that have grown in the state and the size of forests that have disappeared due to deforestation".

"Please also study why there is a massive rise in population among one community and not in other communities. If there was anything wrong with what I had said and done, you could punish me. Mere gossip cannot save land and indigenous people" Singh said.

Singh also asked the residents of the state to "support the steps taken up by the government to protect the indigenous people". "The government will continue its struggle to protect the indigenous population until and unless constitutional protection for these people is achieved," Singh said.

Personal banker held for selling bank account to cyber fraudsters

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

A personal banker of DBS bank was arrested for allegedly changing the bank details of the victim and selling to the cyber fraudsters for Rs 5 lakh, police said.

Priyanshu Diwan, Assistant Commissioner of Police (cyber-crime), said that the arrested accused had been identified as Tipu Sultan, a native of Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh.

According to the police, a man filed a complaint at the Cyber Crime Police Station East on Wednesday that an employee of DBS Bank located on DLF Phase-2.

The complainant told the police that he had opened an account in DBS Bank DLF Phase-2, Gurugram, and he asked the bank employee to close the account.

The employee told him that the bank account would have to be closed by coming to the branch.

After that, on December 6, he received a message on his mobile number that Rs 15,000 had been credited to the bank account.

When he told the bank employee, he said that this money had come from the bank and his account would be closed. After this, on December 9, Rs 1.96 crore had been credited to the complainant's account. After this, the complainant got suspicious; he went to the bank and enquired, and then he came to know that the bank employee had changed his mobile number and email ID from the bank account without his knowledge and registered another mobile number and email ID.

Based on his complaint, a case was registered under the relevant sections in Police Station Cyber East, Gurugram.

During the probe, a police team of the said police station arrested the suspect from Gurugram's Indra Colony on Thursday. The accused was later taken on

police remand. During interrogation, the accused disclosed that he was working as a Personal Banker at DBS Bank located in the DLF Phase-2 area in Gurugram. He has been working in the bank since June 2023.

The accused disclosed before the police that he met a person to open a current account but he refused. After this, the person said that he has an online betting business for which he needs a current bank account. That person asked the accused to provide a current bank account. In return, he lured the accused with Rs 5 lakh. "The accused then fraudulently changed the mobile number and email ID of the complainant's bank account in the matter and the accused gave the same bank account to his companions. The police have recovered 1 mobile phone and 2 SIM cards used in the crime from the possession of the accused," Priyanshu Diwan, ACP (cybercrime), said.

Tripura Govt planning to bring 7,000 hectares of wasteland under palm oil cultivation by FY' 27

PTI ■ AGARTALA

The Tripura government has planned to bring around 7,000 hectares of wasteland under oil palm cultivation by the 2026-27 financial year (FY'27), an official said on Friday.

Initially, the Centre had identified 7,000 hectares for oil palm cultivation in the state but the ICAR-Indian Institute of Oil Palm Research reassessment committee classified 1.46 lakh hectares as a potential area for such farming in 2020 through digital mapping.

"Under the National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), the state planned to bring at least 7,000 hectares of wasteland under oil palm cultivation by the 2026-27 financial year. The state has a favourable agro-climate for palm cultivation. Accordingly, we are working rigorously to achieve the target," Horticulture and Soil Conservation Department's Director P B Jamatia told PTI. He said the department has



selected two processors as technical associated partners-Godrej Agrovet Pvt Ltd and Patanjali Foods Pvt Ltd -for implementation of the national mission and allotted areas to these companies.

Jamatia said Godrej Agrovet has already set up an oil palm nursery at Nalkata in Dhalai district where 1.55 lakh of both exotic and indigenous type seedlings will be produced.

Patanjali Foods has also established another oil palm nursery at Jumerdepa in Sepahijala district for producing seedlings, he

Marine Pilots on work-to-rule agitation in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Maritime Pilots in Cochin Port Trust, disappointed by the union ministry of shipping's indifferent attitude to their demand for pay parity with other officers are on a work to rule agitation mode. This has affected the operations in Cochin Port at a critical time when India aspires to become a five trillion dollar economy within the next couple of years. Shipping operations have come to a standstill following the "work to rule" policy being followed by the maritime pilots under the auspices of Master Mariners Association.

Cochin Port accounts for 4.44 per cent of India's total import and export of 818 million tons which makes it crucial for business operations. Good manufactured in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and meant for US, Europe and Africa are routed through this port.

The Pilots are agitated because the Union



Government has not responded to their woes. "Though we have been highlighting the disparities faced by us with the ministry since 2010 the latter has been coldshouldering our demands for pay parity with officers who were much junior to us. Moreover, marine pilots have to be more qualified and experienced than the other categories of officers," said a representative of MMA.

Maritime pilots are former

reach the outer seas, the pilots take command. "One has to know the shipping channels like the back of one's hands to ensure the safety of the ships. This is an operation that has to be performed with care, concentration and calm," a senior pilot told The Pioneer. He said the agitation is to protect the dignity of the profession. "As masters of the ships we used to draw salaries running into lakhs of rupees per month. The high salaries itself is in recognition of our professional qualification and competence," he said.

"Though the Cochin Port Trust needs 14 pilots for round-the-clock operations, there are only seven pilots as on date working in the port. Any disruption in shipping operations in Cochin Port Trust is sure to dampen the State's economy," said Rajmohan Pillai, chairman, Beta Group, a Malta based company which is a major client of Cochin Port.

A senior bureaucrat in Kerala Government said that recent

events like the closure of the much talked about Smart City in Kochi and entrepreneurs leaving the State en masse to neighboring States has already tarnished the image of Kerala. "Cochin Port is infamous for "work to rule" and labor agitations. The pilots' agitation is like adding fuel to fire," said the bureaucrat. He said the maritime pilots are getting a raw deal from the union government.

"The babus in the ministry should learn the significance of the work being done by the pilots. Then only they will understand the seriousness of the issue," he said.

An office bearer of the Cochin Steamer Agents Association said that the work-to-rule agitation is a setback for the port as shipping operations are a continuous process. "We cannot ask the vessel managers to wait because the pilots are on strike. They will set sail to the nearest available port because for them time is more precious than money," said the CSAA office bearer.

Swarna Andhra 2047: CM unveils vision for 'wealthy, healthy and happy' State

PTI ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday launched "Swarna Andhra-2047" (golden Andhra) vision document, aimed at achieving a 'wealthy, healthy and happy' Andhra Pradesh.

The chief minister announced it during a public meeting at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium here, which encompasses 10 principles (padi sutralu) and one vision to accomplish a golden future for the southern state.

"We have assembled here to herald a new history. We are unveiling Swarna Andhra-2047 vision, which will change the course of the state. The foundation has been laid to transform the Telugu community as the world's top community today and I am telling you all that it is possible," said Naidu, addressing the public meeting.

Exhorting that India should emerge as a developed country by 2047, he said the vision will change the fate and future of the southern state's younger generations.

Zero poverty, employment, skilling and human resources development, water security, farmer-agri tech and best global logistics were some of the 10 principles.

Others include cost optimisation of energy and fuel, product perfection, swachh (clean) Andhra and incorporating deep tech in all walks of life.

During the recent second district collectors conference at the Secretariat in Amaravati, Naidu stressed that the TDP-led NDA government's governance will be based on the Swarna Andhra-2047 vision at state, district, mandal and panchayat levels.

Naidu introduced the SwarnaAndhra@2047 vision document during the

Assembly session in November to achieve its objectives in the next 23 years. He noted that 2047 is a significant milestone as it will mark the centenary of Indian independence from colonial rule, and everyone will need to proudly say what we have achieved in 100 years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Viksit (developed) Bharat 2047 and we are launching 'SwarnaAndhra@2047', said Naidu, adding that he wants the state to achieve a per capita income over USD 47,000 from the current level of USD 3,000.

According to the CM, the vision document was drafted following widespread consultations and grassroots-level engagement such as conducting workshops at mandal and municipality level and covering over 1.18 crore households, among others. Along with feedback from



school and college students, he said the Niti Aayog had also contributed to its creation, reviewing several programmes being implemented in foreign countries.

If all the resources such as rivers, coastline, talent pool and others available in Andhra Pradesh could be properly utilised, Naidu said the goals of the vision could be achieved.

Further, the CM briefly explained each of the 10 principles, which also included his plans to eliminate poverty by involving high net worth individuals to uplift the poorest people and turn the state into a green energy hub.

The CM also spoke of his vision to interlink rivers to make sufficient water available all over the state and highlighted that south India is

facing a water crisis. Similarly, he reiterated his call to have more children as the state could face the prospect of having more older people in the next 15 to 20 years.

"By 2047, Andhra Pradesh envisions a state of happy, thriving, and responsible Telugus, fostering a progressive and inclusive community, a valley of innovation, a knowledge hub for global speed of doing business," Naidu had said, reading the vision statement earlier in the Assembly.

Other goals of the vision include top per capita income for the state in the country with family as a unit and raising global thinkers.

Likewise, incorporating deep-tech in all walks of life and making the southern state a global hub for skills, among others.

Naidu had asserted that an irreversible foundation was

being laid with this vision document, irrespective of who comes to power in the state in the future.

"If we can correctly lay the foundation for this, then it (the state) will irreversibly go ahead," he had said, noting that he was laying a foundation whose progression cannot be reversed.

Further, he called upon MLAs to carry out a similar exercise at their constituency level, and prepare constituency-specific vision documents.

Naidu in September solicited suggestions from the people of the state to catapult it into Swarna Andhra Pradesh (golden state) with a GSDP of USD 2.4 trillion by 2047.

The chief minister had called for suggestions for the future vision of the southern state for achieving a per capita income of over USD 43,000 by 2047.

"Our target is to lead India with a GSDP of USD 2.4 tril-

lion and a per capita income of over USD 43,000 by 2047. As we embark on this journey towards Swarna Andhra Pradesh @ 2047, we're inviting suggestions from our fellow citizens on shaping a brighter AP (Andhra Pradesh)," Naidu said earlier in a post on 'X'.

After launching the vision, Naidu highlighted that achieving a per capita income of USD 43,000 is viable if a GSDP of USD 2.4 trillion could be accomplished in the next 23 years.

Further, he called on the people of the state to read the vision and formulate their own household visions, along with emerging as partners in this growth story.

He ended by leading a collective pledge to achieve the vision document, calling on the people of the state to dedicate themselves for the development of the state and building a Swarna Andhra.



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

One Nation One Election

India's democratic system is on the verge of a transformative change with the 'One Nation, One Election' initiative

The concept of 'One Nation, One Election' has been a subject of significant debate in India's political discourse. On December 12, 2024, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved draft legislation to implement simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha, state assemblies, and local bodies within 100 days. This proposal seeks to streamline India's electoral process, reduce the economic and administrative burden of frequent elections and enhance governance. The 'One Nation, One Election' initiative aims to align the election schedules of the Lok Sabha, state assemblies, municipal corporations and panchayats. The proposed legislation is likely to be introduced in Parliament during the ongoing Winter Session, reflecting the government's intention to initiate nationwide consultations on this transformative reform. The draft legislation incorporates 11 recommendations made by a high-level committee led by former President Ram Nath Kovind. These recommendations aim to address the frequent disruptions caused by the current staggered election schedule, which is a drain on economic, social, and political resources. One of the primary suggestions involves synchronising the election dates for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies in the first phase, followed by municipal and panchayat elections within 100 days. To ensure smooth execution, a dedicated implementation group will oversee the reforms.

Constitutional amendments, such as the introduction of Articles 324A and 325, are proposed to facilitate simultaneous elections, create unified voter rolls. Elections demand significant financial resources and conducting them simultaneously could reduce costs related to security, logistics and administrative expenses. Frequent elections also result in prolonged enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct, halting developmental activities, which a unified schedule could minimise. However, implementing this ambitious reform involves substantial logistical and constitutional challenges. Synchronising elections requires amendments to several constitutional articles, including Articles 83, 85, 172, 174, and 356, which must be ratified by a majority of state legislatures. Building political consensus among parties with diverse regional interests is another critical requirement. Furthermore, the Election Commission will need to mobilise resources, including additional EVMs and VVPATs and ensure readiness of polling staff and infrastructure nationwide. Besides, simultaneous elections might overshadow local issues due to the dominance of national narratives, potentially affecting regional representation. Coordinating nationwide elections within a short timeframe also poses logistical challenges. Moreover, synchronising subsequent elections in cases of mid-term dissolutions could create governance gaps, leading to policy paralysis. While the proposal promises efficiency and cost-effectiveness, its implementation demands careful consideration of constitutional, logistical, and political complexities.

PICTALK



A vendor displays miniatures of Santa Claus ahead of Christmas celebrations, in Nadia

PTI

Why simplicity and equality must redefine weddings

There is a pressing need to rethink our approach to weddings; advocating for a shift towards simplicity, equality and genuine joy rather than crass display of wealth

Weddings have long been a grand celebration where two people unite, signifying not just the union of two souls, but also the joining of two families. These joyous occasions are infused with rituals, traditions, and celebrations designed to enhance the richness and pride of cultural heritage.

Within the shimmering lights, the grand feast, and the spirited festivities, there exists a frequently ignored reality: the rising expenses these celebrations impose on families, especially those in the middle and lower-middle classes. Dowry, once regarded as a remnant of outdated and oppressive traditions, has taken on a contemporary guise. The concept of "dowry" may no longer be prevalent in everyday language, yet its core remains hidden beneath the polished surface of what we now refer to as "gifts." What was once viewed with disdain has now been embraced, illuminated by a fresh perspective that aligns with contemporary feelings. What's the final takeaway? Families, particularly the bride's, face immense



financial strain due to these "gift" expectations, which frequently manifest as expensive items, vehicles, and cash contributions. In many cases, what are presented as gifts are actually disguised demands. Middle-class families, determined to avoid the label of being stingy, frequently push themselves to the limit to maintain their standing. The expectation to host lavish weddings adds an extra weight, as in many cultures, these ceremonies are seen as a reflection of the family's standing in the community. In severe situations, for struggling families, this can be devastating; for individuals find themselves compelled to deplete their life savings or other assets, while others are

drawn into loan schemes. This debt, incurred at the expense of societal expectations, is repaid over years—and even decades—creating a relentless cycle of instability. The most concerning aspect of this situation is its ongoing nature and the way it sustains economic and gender disparities. When a groom traditionally requests gifts for the bride, it often creates an unfair financial burden on the bride's family, even if the demand is subtle. It merely reinforces the outdated notion that a family must "pay" to marry off their daughter. This approach truly detracts from the principle of equality in relationships and adds unnecessary stress to what should be a welcoming event.

Now is the moment for society to reevaluate its values and confront these detrimental customs. Marriage ought to be a celebration of love and togetherness, rather than a cause for financial distress or societal expectations. A shift away from materialism is essential, emphasising the importance of mutual respect, understanding, and equality. Families and communities should collaborate to foster an atmosphere that values simplicity and authenticity over extravagance and false displays of wealth. Both governments and social organisations can play a vital role in addressing this issue by implementing laws against all forms of dowry and raising awareness about its psychological and financial consequences. A debt-free, joyful beginning to married life is the greatest blessing any couple could hope for. The true essence of celebration is not found in the extravagance of the occasion, but rather in the commitment to a shared future rooted in love and respect.

RACHNA LAKHPATI

(The author is a freelance writer and a motivator; views are personal)

Unraveling the delicate threads of human interaction

Communication is the lifeblood of human connection, yet it remains one of the most intricate and fragile aspects of our existence



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Conversation is a delicate business. It is made even more fragile by being central to all human interaction. The more knowledgeable individuals feel that communication is only partially through words. It can also be through eyes, through touch, through gestures, and even through silence. The list can go on. This makes communication not only complicated but also a sensitive matter. Communication can be with oneself. It can be between two persons, or in groups. It can be a short distance or a long distance. The possibilities are immense.

The pitch of the voice could be an intervening variable, and sometimes the more well-versed practice cross-communication. It means giving one message through one medium and another through another. In other words, it can be one message through words and another message through the eyes.

If technology intervenes, it becomes even more complex. The technological interventions can be through a medium such as a handset, a telephone, or, in some parts, a piece of paper. In the past, pigeons have been known to serve a useful purpose. The permutations and combinations are immense, and each has a value, just as each medium has a context. Like in the case of many essentials in life, there is no primer available and there is no one author who has covered comprehensively all aspects of communication. Hence, much of this is on learning by practice.

Much of this is also learning by grief because in the absence of a proper 'Guru' one can only learn by trial and error. Many relationships get under strain or break because one meaning is intended, but another meaning gets conveyed. This can sometimes be incomplete or even distorted. Put simply, coding and decoding a message is a complex process and has to



do with many variables, most of which may not be under the control of the parties involved. Hence, it could become like fiddling with wires in the dark. The solutions are not difficult if they are systematically put into operation. In early childhood, when a person is being taught words, it would be helpful if the person is also helped to choose the better word to communicate his ideas. Proper pronunciation should also be taught. If the circumstances permit by linguicism or multi-linguicism can be practiced.

This would help adjustment to different levels of people; people of different ages and from different contexts. The solutions are known just as much as the problems are known. But there is little systematic attempt to put it in a frame and help better communication. It is obvious that communication can be between two people of equal age, between somebody who is older and somebody younger, people of the same gender, people of the opposite gender, people with prior antecedents of relationships, and people with no prior antecedents of relationships.



THE USUAL RESPONSE WHEN THERE IS A LACK OF CLARITY ON WHERE TO BEGIN, ONE SHOULD BEGIN JUST SOMEWHERE AND HOPE THAT IT RUNS ON SATISFACTORILY. IF IT IS NOT ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY, IT CAN BE CORRECTED AS ONE GOES ALONG

The contexts are huge and almost impossible to exhaustively list. This is not to say that the problem is not solvable or cannot be handled. The usual response when there is a lack of clarity on where to begin, one should begin just somewhere and hope that it runs on satisfactorily. If it is not entirely satisfactory, it can be corrected as one goes along. Being inundated by problems and not beginning at all cannot be the answer. Sometimes a simple problem can be so elusive that it becomes difficult to structure it for a solution. Effective communication is one such problem.

Any discussion touching on communication will be incomplete without the realisation, as already noted, that communication is not always with words. There is an oft-repeated quote to the effect of 'if you cannot understand my silence, you will not understand my words'. Interestingly, silence also communicates, and there are different types of silence. Often, body language takes over, but that is another matter. Unfortunately, communication through silence also needs deep insights and research. Communication

can be between people where one of the limbs that is centrally used in communication, loses its function or becomes unusable. For example, if someone has a problem with listening through one ear, the best course of action would be to help the person concerned restore their hearing through the other ear.

However, this may not always work. So options and support systems have to be generated. Like in many things, psychological factors become very heavily involved, and unfortunately, those who are not capable of deep thought fumble more. There is a case for serious research on all aspects of the communication enumerated above and more research on communication per se, in a scholastic mode, would help.

Till then, one can only hope that the general conversation on communication will alleviate the confusion that sometimes arises on communication points. One also hopes that research will help good communication all around.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FAMILY FIRST POLITICS

Madam — Family first is not only for Biden. It is rather a human tendency to attend to the needs and aspirations of the family first before thinking and acting for the cause of the society. Biden's act of granting a pardon to his son is seen as a great sin because the US is projecting itself as the promoter and protector of democracy and democratic values all over. Though it is expected of any leader to rise above all petty thinking and prioritise the benefit of the general mass and the country, many a time we do observe some people at the helm of affairs succumbing to simple human instincts, keeping the disciplines and decorum related to the position held at bay. No doubt, such acts not only demolish the image of the person that has been built for decades but also bring shame to the nation and the society he is attached to. We have seen the way the entire country of Sri Lanka was brought under the grip of one family that led to unprecedented levels of corruption, amassing wealth by the family, unleashing some sort of dictatorship, and plunging the common people into sufferings of all sorts.

But people are watching, which all the leaders should keep in mind. Biden lost in the US, and the family is out in Sri Lanka. India is not an exception. The leaders of the ruling dispensation, pointing at the Opposition for promoting the culture of family, assuming the leadership of the party, are simultaneously focusing on bringing their siblings to the limelight of political careers. In most of the states, the regional parties are almost converted into family organs, and they firmly believe in the dictum of 'the king and his family can do no wrong,' meaning that their family is above all the laws of the land and none of them can be questioned or punished. In India it is almost an accepted norm to bear with all the mistakes or misdeeds of the members of the family in power.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

Gukesh youngest world chess champion



India's young Grandmaster D Gukesh defeated China's World Champion Ding Liren in the 14th and final round, claiming the title of the youngest world chess champion. At just 18 years old, Dommaraju Gukesh has demonstrated that conquering the world is possible at a young age. Thursday was a historic day for Indian chess, thanks to Gukesh's remarkable achievement. Gukesh broke the 14-year-old

record held by Russia's Garry Kasparov, who became the youngest world champion at the age of 22 years, 6 months, and 27 days. Gukesh's victory marks a new chapter in the history of chess. After Viswanathan Anand, Gukesh is the second Indian chess player to earn the title of world champion. In a 14th-round match that lasted nearly four hours, Gukesh defeated Ding Liren in 58 moves, becoming the 18th world champion in chess history.

In October 2022, Gukesh had already captured everyone's attention by defeating then-world champion Magnus Carlsen in a rapid chess tournament. In 2024, Gukesh first triumphed in the Candidates Tournament. Later, he played a pivotal role in helping the Indian men's team win the gold medal in the Chess Olympiad. Now, by claiming the world championship title, he has added another feather to India's cap.

Dattaprasad Shirodkar | Mumbai

HC JUDGE FACES FLAK

Madam — The Allahabad High Court judge made insensitive comments about the Muslim community and its practices and used offensive language against them, which was not warranted from someone who is looked up to by thousands of common men seeking justice at the high court. It cannot be construed as a slip of the tongue, as he spoke for more than 30 minutes, and it is not the first time he has garnered attention for his controversial words; earlier too, his oral remarks in the court made headlines, and he has also said that cows exhale oxygen. Such poor statements have the potential to undermine public trust in the judiciary and raise a question mark over judicial integrity.

It is welcome that the apex court of the country has taken note of this and sought details of the speech. Some may argue about freedom of speech, but the fact that a judge's impartial conduct in office and public events should be above reproach. The Supreme Court's action in this matter should set the house in order for other

judges in district and high courts.

Bal Govind | Noida

RS CHAIRMAN FACES NO CONFIDENCE

Madam — It is unfortunate that the ruling BJP and the opposition parties in our country do not look at each other as ideological opponents but as real-time enemies. The present move by sixty members of the opposition expressing 'no confidence' against the RS chairman may not reach the extent of voting, and even if it does, it will get defeated as the opposition does not have the sufficient strength for the motion's success. However, such a move by the opposition expressing lack of confidence in the chair is a black mark in the world's largest democracy. This has led to the situation that they do not engage themselves with each other and ensure a fair and useful debate in both the Houses of Parliament, trying to score one over the other.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

HARMONISING WITH CHANGE

While change is often seen as a source of progress, its relentless pace can leave many mentally drained



RRAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Whether we like it or not, we have to constantly adapt to the changing time, changing thoughts, and changing future. Today, change has become so rapid that some people, especially professionals, have to keep a constant watch on the emerging trends and must be perpetually prepared to gear up in order to keep pace with change. As a consequence of keeping themselves in high gear constantly over a long period of time, many feel that rapid changes shake up their nerves and are physically and mentally so exhausting and taxing that life has become more of a problem than a pleasure. However, we must not have the impression that every change is an anathema.

No! On the contrary to common belief, change is generally a welcome feature of life, and stagnancy is always considered boring. It is the rapidity and high frequency of change, or the enormity of change, that forces responsible people to miss the necessary physical and mental rest, keeping them always on the move and causing them worry. But the question that arises is, what has led to this condition of rapid and ever-growing change? Observation and analysis tell us that it is science and technology that are responsible for this predicament, as they compel individuals to lead an increasingly faster life in a highly competitive world. They force people to move like machines, which, too, are moving faster day by day and are changing enormously in design and functions. But if we go deeper into the problem, then we would find that science and technology are, in fact, at the service of mankind; therefore, it is man



who decides what kind of gadgets and goods he requires and at what pace—not vice versa. The evolution of science is based on man's needs, desires, mindset, motives, emotions, set of values, conscience, and external influences, including exposure to media and to society's approval, appreciation, or criticism of his acts. Hence, these factors are the major driving forces that lead to new inventions or new forms and designs. It is these factors that determine the purpose and use to which science and technology should be put. It is these which set new trends. It is these that lead to the rejection of the old and the change to the new.

Therefore, the rapidity of change depends, to a great degree, on the rapidity of rejection of the old system, old set of values, prevalent fashions and customs, and existing norms and beliefs. This, in turn, depends on how rapidly a person is dissatisfied or discontented with the present goods, facilities, services, practices, norms, status-symbols, and security needs. This dissatisfaction or discontentment may, in some cases, be justified and may, in most cases, be due to a lack of man's inner stability and inner happiness stemming from a wrong set of values and wrong attitudes. A thorough analysis of the present situation would lead us to the conclusion that the current situation, which is leading us either to tension or depression or short-lived pleasure, is due to our own consumerist attitude, which is geared mainly to cater to man's indulgence in sensual pleasure or comforts.

In order to bring a change to this callous attitude and wrong lifestyle, we need to reform our mind by adopting a spiritual attitude through a spiritual set of values, or what is called 'Spiritualism,' which is a turnaround of thoughts and a way of living. Today, those people who are trying to cope with change without bringing change to their mindset, value system, and lifestyle through spirituality have really missed the message of the wise. Therefore, it's high time that we as a society realised that simplicity of lifestyle, by embracing spiritual values, alone would be the remedy to the present precarious situation that would empower us to manage rapid change with vigor and enthusiasm.

(The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist; views are personal)

Bangladesh's secular fabric under siege



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

The suppression of dissent, coupled with the growing boldness of extremist ideologies, risks steering the nation towards a fundamentalist Islamist state



It is increasingly clear that fundamentalist Islamist organisations, which are pathologically hostile to India as well as to all secular and democratic persons and organisations in Bangladesh, are increasingly calling the shots in that country under the rule of its interim government. An indication of this is the relentless persecution of Shahriar Kabir, an internationally acclaimed author, journalist, champion of human rights, democracy and secularism, and a tireless campaigner to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes during Bangladesh's liberation war in 1971. He continues to languish in Kashimpur jail under terrible conditions. Despite being designated as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International, a magistrate's order giving him Division One status, which would give him a separate room and other facilities remains to be carried out. This is because the deputy commissioner of Ghazipur district, where Kashimpur prison, where he is lodged, is located, has not signed the order, which will be effective only after his signature is affixed to it. Nor, according to reports, does he seem inclined to sign it soon.

As a result, Kabir, who is 74-years-old has to live among common prisoners and sleep on the floor during a cold winter as his health continues to deteriorate. Earlier, during a remand hearing at Dhaka's Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on 20 October, Kabir had complained that he was not receiving adequate medical treatment in jail. On November 2, he was taken to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital for a check-up. According to its deputy-director, he suffered from various old age-related ailments but these were not critical.

Kabir has high blood pressure and diabetes and a large accumulation of stones in his kidney. Blood is coming out with his stool. Given the role of the deputy commissioner, who presumably has nothing personal against him, it is difficult not to feel that it is the interim government, led by Nobel laureate Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus, that wants to deny him Division One status. That it continues to do so despite considerable international demand for his release is clearly the result of pressure from



A SPIRITUAL LEADER, PHILOSOPHER, MYSTIC POET AND SOCIAL REFORMER, LALON ARTICULATED A WELTANSCHAUUNG WHICH ENCOMPASSED THE ESSENCE OF THE BHAKTI CULT AND SUFISM, REJECTED ALL DISTINCTIONS OF CASTE, CLASS AND CREED, OPPOSED THEOLOGICAL CONFLICTS AND RACISM

organisations like the Hefazat-e-Islam (Hefazat) and Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (Jamaat). Hefazat's hand in Kabir's persecution is clear from the fact that one of the several charges on which he has been jailed was filed with Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal on August 20, 2024, by Mufti Harun Izhaz Chowdhury, Hefazat's joint secretary. It showed him, along with Sheikh Hasina, as one of the 23 accused, charged with crimes against humanity and mass killing in connection with the violent clashes between Hefazat's supporters and members of security forces and Awami League activists during it rally in Dhaka, on May 5, 2013, to press its 13-point charter of demands. The latter included demand for a stricter dress code as ordained by Islam, a ban on statues, candlelight vigils and public mixing of men and women, besides the scrapping of the Awami League government's women's development policy promising women equal rights to property. Comprising mainly of Sunni clerics heading a network of 19,199 Quami madrasahs and its students in Bangladesh, it has considerable power to mobilise in the streets. Its intensely anti-India orientation was reflected in its violent protests against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence on March 26, 2021. Thirteen 13 persons were killed and scores injured in clashes between its supporters and members of the security forces and Awami League's supporters.

While the Hefazat is not calling all the shots in the interim government, it certainly has a wide measure of influence and has its way wherever it wants, however small or big the event or the demand is. The "Mahati Sadhusanga and Lalon Mela" (great gathering of sadhus and Lalon fair) hosted by Muktidham Ashram and Lalon Academy in Madya Narsingpur, Kashipur Union Parishad in Narayanganj, was scheduled to begin on November 22, 2024. There was to be singing, dancing, festivities and food. Baul singers and devotee from all over Bangladesh were coming over for the occasion. The district administration, however, ordered its cancellation. A report in The Daily Star (November 23, 2024) quoted Fakir Shah Jalal, founder of the ashram and academy, said, "All arrangements had been made, but the administration did not permit the event, citing warning from some members of the "Muslim" community. Even when we requested to hold the event indoors, without loudspeakers, it was denied."

A spiritual leader, philosopher, mystic poet and social reformer, Lalon articulated a weltanschauung, which encompassed the essence of the Bhakti cult and Sufism, rejected all distinctions of caste, class and creed, opposed theological conflicts and racism. It is not surprising that such a person would be anathema to fundamentalist Islamists. The report in The Daily Star, cited above, had stated that Hefazat-e-Islam leader Maulana Abdul Auwal had warned the administration in a speech to stop the event or face intervention by protesters. Other Islamist organisations are also flexing their muscles. Speaking at a grand convention of the District Qaumi Madrasa Council in Dhaka on November 25, Mamunul Haque, the secretary general of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, described the August 5 revolution as a significant step toward an Islamic revolution in

Bangladesh, adding that the country was destined to undergo an Islamist transformation.

Not surprisingly, Ahmadiyas and Sufis have come under attack. Several of the former's mosques were attacked on August 6. A violent mob destroyed Baba Pagla Ali's Sufi shrine at Sherpur district on August 29; another such mob vandalised and looted Ismail Pagla's shrine in Sirajganj district on September 3. Meanwhile two Islamist terrorist outfits—Ansar al-Islam (erstwhile Ansarullah Bangla Team) and Hijab Tahrir (Tahrir) are increasingly active. Despite the ban on Tahrir, its supporters organised, on August 9, a rally in Dhaka city and demanded the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate in Bangladesh. Also, the statues of two police officers who died fighting the terrorists at the Holey Artisan Bakery in July 2016, have been destroyed and a Hijab Tahrir poster has been found at the site. Despite the arrest of its media coordinator in Dhaka in early October, its activities continue, albeit clandestinely, in many parts of Bangladesh.

This is because the interim government is pursuing a much softer line against both Ansar al-Islam and Tahrir than Sheikh Hasina's government. An example is the release of the 'chief' of Ansar al-Islam on bail on August 26. As a consequence, while the Hefazat and Jamaat are riding high and terrorist bodies are quietly active, champions of secularism like Shahriar Kabir are imprisoned and organisations opposing communalism are apprehensive and defensive. In a situation like this, one can hardly rule out Bangladesh slowly sliding towards becoming a fundamentalist Islamist country and even an exporter of terrorism.

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

The rise of preventative fillers: A new era in beauty standards

India's Millennials and Gen Z are embracing early cosmetic treatments like fillers as part of their self-care routines

In recent years, a noticeable trend has emerged among India's Millennials and Gen Z, the increasing popularity of early cosmetic treatments like fillers. This shift highlights evolving beauty standards influenced heavily by social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, where idealised images of flawless skin abound.

These platforms perpetuate an image-driven culture, encouraging young people to consider cosmetic enhancements as a means to maintain a youthful appearance and meet contemporary beauty ideals. Recent data from Deloitte underscores this trend, revealing that 65 per cent of Millennials and 58 per cent of Gen Z in India



HEMA PANT

have a positive outlook on using technology and aesthetic treatments to improve their lives. This optimism is coupled with a heightened focus on self-care and personal enhancement, which has led to the rising popularity of preventative fillers. Often referred to as "Baby Botox," these treatments involve minimal amounts of Botox or dermal fillers used before

the onset of wrinkles, appealing to those who wish to stave off the visible signs of ageing before they even begin. A significant demographic shift is evident in data from NASSCOM, which indicates that Millennials and Gen Z comprise 52 per cent of India's population. This figure highlights the growing influence of these younger generations who are increasingly well-versed in cosmetic procedures and less stigmatised by them. The normalisation of such treatments owes much to open discussions on social media, where people share their experiences and results, contributing to a growing acceptance. The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

reports that 64 per cent of practitioners have noted a rise in patients under 30 seeking cosmetic procedures, reflecting this broader cultural acceptance. The allure of preventative fillers lies not only in the desire to maintain a youthful appearance but also in the empowerment that comes from taking control of one's aesthetic journey.

Young individuals today are more informed and proactive about their beauty routines, often seeking expert advice to make informed decisions. This proactive approach to beauty and self-care represents a significant cultural shift toward embracing enhancements as a normal part of life in a digital era. However, while the



appeal of preventative fillers is undeniable, young people must approach these treatments with caution. Overuse can result in "filler fatigue," a condition where excessive treatments lead to skin stretching and the need for more frequent interventions.

A balanced approach that integrates overall skin health with aesthetic goals is essential to ensure that beauty enhancements do not compromise one's natural appearance. Education plays a vital role in this process. Young individ-

uals are encouraged to seek guidance from reputable professionals who prioritise safety and use high-quality products. By doing so, they can make informed choices that align with their personal beauty goals without succumbing to the pressures of fleeting trends. This emphasis on education and safety empowers them to navigate their beauty journeys with confidence, fostering a sense of self-assuredness in their natural selves.

The rise of early cosmetic treatments among India's youth illustrates a significant cultural shift towards embracing self-care and beauty enhancements in a digital era. As these generations navigate their identities in a visually oriented world,

they increasingly turn to options like fillers to maintain their youthful allure. By prioritising education and safety, young individuals are empowered to make informed decisions about their beauty routines, fostering confidence in their natural selves.

As this trend continues to evolve, it will be intriguing to observe how it shapes the ongoing conversation around beauty in modern society. The future of beauty is likely to be shaped by these young, informed consumers who value both innovation and authenticity, setting new standards for generations to come.

(The writer is Medical Director, Sculpt Clinics; views are personal)

President Macron names centrist ally Bayrou as France's next PM

AP ■ PARIS
French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday named centrist ally Francois Bayrou as prime minister in an effort to address the country's deep political crisis, after a historic parliamentary vote ousted the previous government last week. Bayrou, 73, a crucial partner in Macron's centrist alliance, has been a well-known figure in French politics for decades. His political experience is seen as key in efforts to restore stability to no single party holds a majority at the National Assembly. Macron's office said in a statement that Bayrou "has been charged with forming a new government." Former Prime Minister Michel Barnier resigned last week following a no-confidence vote prompted by budget disputes in the National Assembly, leaving France without a functioning government. Macron in an address to the nation vowed to remain in office until his term ends in 2027. Bayrou is expected to hold talks with political leaders from various parties in the coming



days in order to choose new ministers. The task appears challenging because Macron's centrist alliance does not have a majority in parliament and Bayrou's Cabinet will need to rely on moderate lawmakers from both the left and right to be able to stay in power. Some conservatives are expected to be part of the new government. Macron's strategy aims at preventing far-right leader Marine Le Pen from holding "make or break" power over the government. Le Pen helped oust Barnier by joining her National Rally party's forces to the left to pass the no-confidence motion last week.

The president of the National Rally, Jordan Bardella, said Friday his party will take a wait-and-see approach for now. "Our red lines are still there, they're not going to change," he warned. National Rally officials, including Le Pen, have said they want any new budget law to preserve the purchasing power of the French people. Bayrou's appointment comes also in line with Macron's efforts to build a non-aggression pact with the Socialists so that they commit not to vote against the government in any future confidence motion. Mathilde Panot, head of the hard-left France Unbowed

group at the National Assembly, criticised Bayrou's appointment in a message on X as "the continuity of (Macron's) bad policies." She said her party is ready to vote for a no-confidence motion again against the new government. Bayrou leads the centrist Democratic Movement, known as MoDem, which he founded in 2007. In 2017, he supported Macron's first presidential bid and became a weighty partner in the French president's centrist alliance. At the time, he was appointed justice minister, but he quickly resigned from the government amid an investigation into the MoDem's alleged embezzlement of European Parliament funds. Bayrou this year was cleared in the case by a Paris court, which found eight other party officials guilty and sentenced the party to pay a fine. Bayrou became well known to the French public when he was education minister from 1993 to 1997 in a conservative government. He was three times a candidate for president, in 2002, 2007 and 2012.

Israeli strike in Gaza kills 25 people as US makes new push for a ceasefire

AP ■ DEIR AL-BALAH (GAZA)
An Israeli airstrike has hit the central Gaza Strip, killing at least 25 Palestinians and wounding dozens more, Palestinian medics said, just hours after President Joe Biden's national security adviser raised hopes about a ceasefire deal to end the war in Gaza. Officials at two hospitals in the Gaza Strip, al-Aqsa Hospital in the north and al-Aqsa Hospital in central Gaza, reported they received a combined total of 25 bodies from an Israeli strike on a multi-storey residential building in the urban Nuseirat refugee camp on Thursday. Palestinian medics also reported that over 40 people, most of them children, were receiving

treatment at the two hospitals. The al-Aqsa Hospital said that the Israeli attack also damaged several nearby houses in Nuseirat. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the deadly strike. Israel is trying to eliminate Hamas, which led the attack on southern Israel in October 2023 that sparked the war in Gaza. The Israeli military says Hamas militants hide among Gaza's civilian population. Photos from the site showed a completely collapsed building with people walking through its mangled and charred remains, smoke rising from piles of belongings strewn over the rubble. The bombardment came just

hours after Jake Sullivan, President Biden's national security adviser, told reporters in Jerusalem that Israel's ceasefire in Lebanon has helped clear the way for another deal to end the war in Gaza. He plans to travel next to Qatar and Egypt, key mediators in the ceasefire talks, as the Biden administration makes a final push on negotiations before Donald Trump is inaugurated. Sullivan said "Hamas' posture at the negotiating table did adapt" after Israel decimated the leadership of its ally Hezbollah in Lebanon and reached a ceasefire there. "We believe it puts us in a position to close this negotiation," he said. Israel's offensive has killed over

44,800 Palestinians in Gaza, more than half of them women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not say how many were combatants. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence. The fighting has plunged Gaza into a severe humanitarian crisis, with experts warning of famine. Israel says it allows enough aid to enter and blames UN agencies for not distributing it. The UN says Israeli restrictions, and the breakdown of law and order after Israel repeatedly targeted the Hamas-run police force, make it extremely difficult to operate in the territory.

Biden watching situation in Bangladesh very closely: White House

PTI ■ WASHINGTON
President Joe Biden is closely monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and the US will hold the country's interim government accountable for ensuring the protection of religious and ethnic minorities, the White House has said. The security situation in Bangladesh has been difficult following the ouster of the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said. "We have been working closely with the interim government to enhance the capability of their law enforcement and security services to deal with the challenge," Kirby said at a news conference on Thursday.

Hasina was ousted as prime minister in the face of a massive anti-government protest in August. There have been a spate of incidents of violence against Hindus and other minorities, as well as attacks on temples in the last few weeks in Bangladesh. "We've been very clear in our engagement with all Bangladeshi leaders that protection of religious and ethnic minorities is absolutely critical, and the leaders of the interim government have repeatedly committed to providing security to all Bangladeshis, regardless of religion or ethnicity," he said. "We want to hold them to that," Kirby said in response to a question. Over the past few weeks, Indian Americans have held

peaceful protests and marches in several cities, including in front of the White House, in Chicago, New York, SFO, Detroit, Houston and Atlanta, urging Biden to help stop alleged brutalities against the minority Hindu community in Bangladesh. Earlier in the day, Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi urged members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to address the issue of violence against minorities, primarily Hindus, in Bangladesh during the confirmation hearing of Senator Marco Rubio for the position of secretary of state. President-elect Donald Trump has nominated Senator Rubio for the top diplomatic position. The date of his confirmation hearing has not been announced yet.

Speaker resigns in Sri Lanka

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka's Parliament Speaker Asoka Ranwala announced his resignation on Friday following days of speculation about him falsifying his educational qualifications. "In recent days, a problem with my educational qualifications has been raised in society. I have not made any false statements about my educational qualifications," Ranwala said in a statement. Asserting that he currently does not possess any documents to prove his qualifications, Ranwala said that it would also not be possible for him to obtain these from the relevant institutions. "However, in order to stop the inconvenience caused to the government and the people who had placed trust in the government, I have decided to resign from the post of Speaker," he said.

Blinken urges nations to support peaceful Syrian political transition

AP ■ JERUSALEM
US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is pressing ahead with efforts to unify Middle East nations in support of a peaceful political transition in Syria. He is meeting on Friday with Turkey's foreign minister after talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to try to bring Turkey into a consensus to prevent Syria from collapsing into wider turmoil. It's Blinken's 12th trip to the Mideast since the Israel-Hamas war erupted in Gaza last year but first since the ouster of Syrian President Bashar Assad. The outgoing Biden administration is particularly concerned that a power vacuum in Syria could exacerbate already heightened tensions in the region and create conditions for the Islamic State group to regain territory and influence. The fighting between Israel and Hamas has plunged Gaza into a severe humanitarian cri-

sis. Israel's offensive has killed over 44,800 Palestinians in Gaza, more than half of them women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not say how many were combatants. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence. The war in Gaza was sparked by an October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas in southern Israel in which some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed and around 250 others were taken hostage. Some 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead. Blinken says there's broad agreement between US and Turkey on Syria's future: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday there was "broad agreement" between Turkey and the United States on what they would like to see in Syria following the ouster of President Bashar Assad. "There's broad agreement on

what we would like to see going forward, starting with the interim government in Syria, one that is inclusive and non-sectarian and one that protects the rights of minorities and women" and does not "pose any kind of threat to any of Syria's neighbours," Blinken said in joint statements with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. The insurgent groups that toppled Assad in Syria have not made clear their policy or stance on Israel, whose military in recent days has bombed sites all over the country, saying it is trying to prevent weapons from falling into extremist hands. Blinken also said it was crucial to keep the Islamic State group under control. "We also discussed the imperative of continuing the efforts to keep ISIS down. Our countries worked very hard and gave a lot over many years to ensure the elimination of the territorial caliphate of ISIS to ensure that that threat doesn't

rear its head again," Blinken said. The Turkish foreign minister said the two discussed ways of establishing prosperity in Syria and ending terrorism in the country. "Our priority is establishing stability in Syria as soon as possible, preventing terrorism from gaining ground, and ensuring that IS and the PKK aren't dominant," Fidan said, in a reference to the banned Kurdistan Workers Party. Blinken said: "We're very focused on Syria, very focused on the opportunity that now is before us and before the Syrian people to move from out from under the shackles of Bashar al-Assad to a different and better future for the Syrian people, one that the Syrian people decide for themselves." Blinken and Fidan said they had also discussed a ceasefire for Gaza. "We've seen in the last couple of weeks more encouraging signs that (a ceasefire) is possible," Blinken said.

British Indian hedge fund trader jailed in Denmark

PTI ■ LONDON
A British hedge fund trader of Indian heritage has been sentenced to 12 years in prison by authorities in Denmark after being found guilty of a tax fraud amounting to over GBP 1 billion. Sanjay Shah, 54, was handed the maximum prison sentence for an economic crime by a district court in Glostrup this week. The Danish prosecution said in a statement that the court found it proven that Shah was the mastermind behind a complex setup in which 190 American pension companies and 24 Malaysian companies entered into agreements to purchase Danish list-

ed shares at times when the shares were traded with the right to dividends. "The verdict is a milestone in the criminal justice settlement following the dividend tax cases, as the convicted person was the main instigator of a fraud against the Danish state of historic proportions," said Marie Tullin, special prosecutor at the State Attorney for Serious Crime (SSK). "It is therefore with satisfaction that I can now state that the court has imposed a sentence that reflects the extremely serious and extensive nature of the case," she said. In addition to the prison sentence, the court confiscated a total of approximately 7.2 bil-

lion kroner (USD 1bn), corresponding to the economic gain of the convicted person. Among other things, deposits in accounts in foreign banks, shares and bonds, as well as a number of properties or shares thereof belonging to the convicted person, his companies or his wife were confiscated. "The fraud has caused a major loss for the Danish state, and it is therefore of crucial importance that the court today has confiscated an amount that corresponds to the convicted person's profits from the fraud," says Dennis Bæckmann, special prosecutor, National Unit for Serious Crime (NSK). Shah, who has denied wrong-

doing, was also expelled from Denmark permanently, and he was denied the right to participate in the management of a business in Denmark or abroad without being personally and unlimitedly liable for the company's obligations. He has lodged an appeal against the Glostrup district court's verdict in the High Court. According to the Danish Prosecution Service (AnklageMyndigheden), the British national was convicted of committing fraud of a "particularly serious nature for 9,025,205,871 kroner (GBP 1bn) and attempted fraud for an additional 553,346,302 kroner during a period from 2012 to 2015".



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, left, meets with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, middle, and Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, at Ankara Esenboga Airport. AP/PTI

Suspected spy with business ties to Prince Andrew barred from UK

AP ■ LONDON
A suspected Chinese spy with business ties to Prince Andrew has been barred from the UK because of concerns he poses a threat to national security. A British immigration tribunal upheld the decision on Thursday in a ruling that revealed the Chinese national had developed such a close relationship with Andrew that he was invited to the prince's birthday party. Government officials were concerned the man could have misused his influence because the prince was under "considerable pressure" at the time, according to the ruling. British authorities believe the Chinese national, whose name wasn't released, was working on behalf of the United Front Work Department, an arm of the Chinese Communist Party that is used to influence foreign entities. The government determined that the businessman "was in a position to generate relationships between senior Chinese officials and prominent UK fig-

ures which could be leveraged for political interference purposes by the Chinese State," according to the tribunal's decision. Prince Andrew, the younger brother of King Charles III, has been repeatedly criticised for his links to wealthy foreigners, raising concerns that those individuals are trying to buy access to the royal family. Andrew's finances have been squeezed in recent years after he was forced to step away from royal duties and give up public funding amid concerns about his relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, the American financier and convicted pedophile who committed suicide in prison in 2019. British intelligence chiefs have become increasingly concerned about China's efforts to influence UK government policy. In 2022, Britain's domestic intelligence service, known as MI5, warned politicians that a British-Chinese lawyer had been seeking to improperly influence members of Parliament for years. A parliamentary researcher was arrested in 2023 on suspi-

cion of providing sensitive information to China. The 50-year-old Chinese national covered by this week's ruling was described as a man who worked as a junior civil servant in China before he came to the UK as a student in 2002. He earned a master's degree in public administration and public policy at the University of York before starting a business that advises UK-based companies on their operations in China. He was granted the right to live and work in the UK for an indefinite period in 2013. Although he didn't make Britain his permanent home, the man told authorities that he spent one to two weeks a month in the country and considered it his "second home." He was stopped while entering the UK on November 6, 2021, and ordered to surrender his mobile phone and other digital devices on which authorities found a letter from a senior adviser to Andrew confirming that he was authorised to act on behalf of the prince in relation to potential partners and investors in China.

Biden grants clemency to four Indian-Americans

PTI ■ WASHINGTON
Four Indian-Americans facing sentences ranging from 17 years to life imprisonment are among nearly 1,500 people granted clemency by President Joe Biden. These four Indian-Americans are Meera Sachdeva, Babubhai Patel, Krishna Mote and Vikram Dutta. "America was built on the promise of possibility and second chances. As President, I have the great privilege of extending mercy to people who have demonstrated remorse and rehabilitation, restoring opportunity for Americans to participate in daily life and contribute to their communities, and taking steps to remove sentencing disparities for non-violent offenders, especially those convicted of drug offences," Biden said in a statement on Thursday. "That is why, today, I am pardoning 39 people who have shown successful rehabilitation and have shown commitment to making their communities stronger and safer. I am also commuting the sentences of nearly 1,500 people who are serving long prison sentences - many

of whom would receive lower sentences if charged under today's laws, policies, and practices," he said. This was the largest single-day act of clemency in recent times. In December 2012, Dr Meera Sachdeva was sentenced to 20 years in prison and ordered to repay nearly USD 8.2 million for fraud at a former Mississippi cancer centre she ran. She is now 63. Babubhai Patel was sentenced to 17 years on 26 convictions for a healthcare fraud conspiracy, a drug conspiracy, and related fraud and drug violations in 2013. Also in 2013, Krishna Mote, 54, was sentenced to serve life in prison after he was convicted of conspiracy to distribute more than 280 grams of crack cocaine and more than 500 grams of cocaine, and distribution of crack cocaine as an aider and abettor. Vikram Dutta, 63, was in January 2012 sentenced to 235 months in prison after he was found guilty of conspiracy charges stemming from his use of his perfume distribution business to launder millions of dollars for a Mexican narcotics organisation.

Russia targets Ukrainian power infrastructure

AP ■ KYIV
Russia on Friday launched a massive aerial attack against Ukraine, involving dozens of cruise missiles and drones, the latest such strike aimed at crippling the country's electricity system. The Russian military targeted the Ukrainian power grid, energy minister Herman Halushchenko wrote on his Facebook page. "The enemy continues its terror," he said. Halushchenko said energy workers do everything necessary to "minimize negative consequences for the energy system," promising to release more details on damages once the security situation allows it. Ukraine's air force reported multiple strike drones launched at Ukraine overnight followed by swarms of cruise missiles in the country's air space. It said Russia also used air-launched ballistic Kinzhal missiles against Ukraine's western regions. Friday's attack is the latest in a series of such raids that has heightened fears that the

Kremlin aims to destroy the country's power generation capacity as the winter sets in. Since launching its invasion in February 2022, Russia has relentlessly pummelled Ukraine's electricity system, resulting in repeated shutdowns of critical heating and drinking water supplies during the bitter winter months in an apparent attempt to break Ukrainian spirits and resolve. Moscow has declared that the attacks are aimed at hobbling Ukraine's defence industry, thwarting the production of missiles, drones, armoured vehicles and artillery, among other weapons. A similar massive attack on November 28 involved about 200 missiles and drones and left more than a million households without power until emergency teams restored supplies. Ukrainian officials have warned that Russia is stockpiling cruise and ballistic missiles for more attacks. On November 21, Russia for the first time used an intermediate range hypersonic ballistic missile to strike an industrial

plant in the city of Dnipro, in eastern Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin described the attack with the Oreshnik missile as retaliation for Ukrainian strikes on Russian territory with longer-range Western weapons. He declared that more attacks with the new weapon could follow. The Pentagon warned Wednesday that Russia could use its new missile against Ukraine again soon. Around half of Ukraine's energy infrastructure has been destroyed during the almost three years of war with Russia, and rolling electricity blackouts are widespread. Kyiv's Western allies have provided Ukraine with air defence systems to help it protect critical infrastructure, but Russia has sought to overwhelm the air defences with combined strikes involving big numbers of missiles and drones. Russia has held the initiative this year as its military has steadily rammed through Ukrainian defences in the east in a series of slow but steady offensives.

Trump invites Xi Jinping to his Jan 20 inauguration

PTI WASHINGTON US President-elect Donald Trump has invited Chinese President Xi Jinping to attend his inauguration on January 20, according to his spokesperson. "This is an example of President Trump creating an open dialogue with leaders of countries that are not just our allies but our adversaries and our competitors too," the incoming White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told Fox News in an interview on Thursday. "We saw this in the first term. He got a lot of criticism for it, but it led to peace around the world. He is willing to talk to anyone. He will always put America's interest first," she said. Leavitt, however, did not say if the invitation had been accepted by the Chinese president. The White House preferred not to comment on the merit of the invitation.

PUBLIC NOTICE It is to inform to the public at large that the entire First Floor Without Roof Rights, With One Common Car Parking at Ground Floor, Built-On Property Bearing No. C-32, Having Area Measuring 100 Sq. Yds., Out Of Kharsa No. 25, Rect. No. 10, Situated In The Area Of Village Asalatpur Khardar, Delhi State Delhi, Colony Known As Jeevan Park, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi from 1. Sh. Ravi Kumar (90% Share) & 2. Sh. Vinay (10% Share) who became owners vide Notarized GPA dated 04.09.2024 & Notarized Agreement to Sell dated 04.09.2024 executed by Sh. Naven Kumar Goyal and same to be financed & mortgaged by Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. If any person having any type of claim/right/interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objection, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc. Lucern Legal LLP B-03B, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank Sector 2 Noida UP-201301 Contact: 9128-4269379

PROVISION OF SERVER BASED IP EPABX SYSTEM E-Tender Notice No. N. 4_HO-2024-25-RT Dated: 11-12-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. N. 4_HO-2024-25-RT. Name of work: Provision of Server Based IP EPABX system over N.F. Railway. Tender Value: ₹9,52,18,937.58/- Earnest Money: ₹6,26,100/- Date & Time closing of Tender: 12.00 hrs. of 03-01-2025. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

ENGINEERING WORKS UNDER ALIPURDUAR DIVISION E-Tender Notice No. 111/W-21/APD/J: Dated: 11-12-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Tender No. 27-AP-III-2024. Name of Work: New Mal Jn. (SL)-Alipurduar Jn. (SL)-TSR(P)-22.00 Tkm & Siliguri Jn.-New Mal Jn. (SL)-TSR(P)-17.00 Tkm. Tender Value: ₹18,11,79,388.85; Earnest Money: ₹10,55,900.00. E-tender will be closed at 13.00 hrs. on 02-01-2025 and opened at 15.00 hrs. on 02-01-2025. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in the website http://www.ireps.gov.in

DRM (Works), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY "Serving Customers With A Smile"

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203 Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

VACANCIES Advt. No.BFU-24/27 Online applications are invited w.e.f 17/12/2024 to 06/01/2025 from eligible candidates through University website i.e www.bfuchs.ac.in to the recruitment of 01- Director, 02-Law Officer, 02-Medical Record Keeper, 02-Driver, 01-Accountant, 04-Radiography Technician, 04-Radiographer (Radio-diagnosis), 01-Gas Manifold Operator and 01-Sanitation Supervisor on regular basis at Tertiary Cancer Care Centre, Fazlika constituent institute of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot. For details/updates/eligibility/no. of Posts/terms & conditions visit website www.bfuchs.ac.in Sd/- nil/12/25/3/2023/39997 Dated CHD - 12/13/2024

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना // भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन, 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के तहत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि ग्राम- बासीन, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.) में स्थित निम्नलिखित 02 फर्शी पत्थर (गोण खनिज) (1) मेसर्स श्री प्रमोद टोपडरे, ग्राम- बासीन, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.) स्थित खसरा नं. - 1503/1 (पाटी), कुल रकबा- 0.63 हेक्टेयर, फर्शी पत्थर (गोण खनिज) उत्खनन क्षमता- 4856 टन प्रतिवर्ष एवं (2) मेसर्स श्री तुलाश रांजे, ग्राम- बासीन, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.) में स्थित खसरा नंबर- 1436 एवं 1440 (पाटी), कुल रकबा- 0.62 हेक्टेयर, फर्शी पत्थर (गोण खनिज) उत्खनन क्षमता- 4110 टन प्रतिवर्ष के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति बाबत संयुक्त लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 17/01/2025 को समय दोपहर 12:00 बजे से ग्राम पंचायत भवन बरभोता, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित हो कि लोक सुनवाई के दौरान भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली के ऑफिस मेमोरेण्डम F.No.22-25/2020-IA.III दिनांक 14.09.2020 तथा कोरोना वाईरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरशः पालन कराय जाना अनिवार्य होगा। ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन, 14 सितम्बर, 2006 (यथा- संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अलावा अन्य / पठन हेतु द्वापरे ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) ज़ायरेक्टर, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, एकीकृत क्षेय्रीय कार्यालय, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, अण्डय भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.), कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत गरियाबंद, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी, जनपद पंचायत- फिंगोशर, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), कार्यालय सपरच / सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत बासीन, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), कार्यपालक सपरच / सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत बरभोता, तहसील- राजिम, जिला- गरियाबंद (छ.ग.), क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, न्यू ऑफिस बिल्डिंग, रिंग रोड नं.- 2, टाटीबंध, रायपुर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.) एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.) में रखी गई है।

सदय सचिव छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Atul Bhatia S/o Shri Arjan Kumar Bhatia R/o 40, Gagan Vihar, Delhi - 110051 do hereby solemnly affirm and inform that I am the owner of property No. 40, situated at Gagan Vihar, Delhi - 110051. I have lost/misplaced my original Conveyance Deed dated 10 - 01 - 2007 vide regd. as Document No. 541, Book No. 1, Volume No. 2364, on pages 25 to 27 dated 10 - 01 - 2007 in the office of SR - VII, Delhi alongwith other previous documents of property No. 40, Gagan Vihar, Delhi - 110051. I have also filed a complaint in respect of lost / misplaced of above said documents vide M.O. 430/2014 and LR No. 231845/2024 dated 19-11 - 2024. Atul Bhatia

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIED CHANGE OF NAME

I, Joyamala Paul, Mother of JC-773325H Sub Shyam Paul, R/o- Daharthuba (West), PS+PO- Habra, Teh- Barasat, Dist- North 24 Parganas, W.B.- 743263, have changed my name from Joyamala Paul to Joymla Paul, vide affidavit No. IN-DL01684330495543W, dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Joymla Paul, Mother of JC-773325H Sub Shyam Paul, R/o- Daharthuba (West), PS+PO- Habra, Teh- Barasat, Dist- North 24 Parganas, W.B.- 743263, declare that in my son's service records, my DOB is wrongly written as 01/07/1956 whereas my correct DOB is - 01/01/1961, vide affidavit No. IN-DL01682496780251W, dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Bhollu Dass, Father of No.15794455L Hav Amrit Pal Singh, R/o- Maharaja Ranjit Singh Nagar, Badrukhan, Sangrur, Punjab- 148001, have changed my name from Bhollu Dass to Bholu Dass, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Hafiza Bibi, Mother of No.14929812H Hav Safikul Mallick, R/o- Vill- Khardattapara, PO- Hapania, Dist- Purba Bardhaman, W.B.- 713512, have changed my name from Hafiza Bibi to Hafija Bibi Mallick, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Artee, W/o- No.16022559A R/V/NK Shailendra Singh, R/o-Vill/PO- Kanera, Teh- Ater, Dist- Bhind, M.P.- 477111, have changed my name from Artee to Arti, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Uma Bai, Mother of No.16022559A L/NK Shailendra Singh, R/o-Vill+PO- Kanera, Teh- Ater, Dist- Bhind, M.P.- 477111, have changed my name from Uma Bai to Uma Devi, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Ambri Khatun, Mother of JC-471939N Sub Firoz Ahmad Khan, R/o- Ghosia Kalan, Ghusia, Rohtas, Bihar-802212, have changed my name from Ambri Khatun to Ambari Khatoon, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Nar Singh, Father of No. 16022559A L/NK Shailendra Singh, R/o- Vill/PO- Kanera, Teh- Ater, Dist- Bhind, M.P.- 477111, have changed my name from Nar Singh to Narasingh, vide affidavit dated 13/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(107)C I, Rajiya, D/o , Mohammad Jaharodin, R/o, B-798 Jahangirpuri, Delhi-33, That I have Changed My name from Rajiya Tak To Rajiya for all Purposes.

PD(106)C I, Ruchika Madaan, W/o Shri Manoj Kumar Madaan, R/o B-2/179 Block B-2, sec-6, Rohini Delhi 110085 declare that my name before marriage was Ruchika Rani and after marriage Ruchika Madaan and have changed my name Ruchika Rani to Ruchika Madaan for all purposes PD(107)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of MRS. USHA who is owner of Residential Property No. 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000. Encumbrances, lien etc. Lucern Legal LLP Plot No. 136, (Basement) Uday Park, New Delhi-110049, Contact # 011-40046316

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, MR. ANIL KUMAR SETHI S/O MR. DALIP CHAND SETHI R/O 255, BHERA ENCLAVE, PASCHIM VIHAR, DELHI . have purchase Unit No. 433 in NE CENTRAL Tower/Block, project NORTH EYE, situated at PLOT No: GH-0A, SECTOR-74, NOIDA., I have lost the original Allotment Letter dated 19.08.2020, all Receipts of the above said property, I have requested M/s SUPERTECH LIMITED, to issue the duplicate Allotment letter, Receipts, of the said property, if anybody or Financial Institutions have objection, he/she may contact to M/S Supertech Limited, office - Plot No. C-2, Sector 96, Noida 201303 (U.P.) Within 15 days. DIWAKAR JHA (ADVOCATE) Ch. 45, Sub-Registrar Compund, Sector-33, Noida-201301 (U.P.), Mob. 9711299949

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Wife late RANJANA SAHRAWAT booked a Flat 1702, Tower A - 2, in project called Supertech Eco Village - 2, in plot No. GH-01, SECTOR-16B, GREATER NOIDA, now after her Demise I have requested to M/S Supertech Limited to Remove her name the said Flat. If anybody has an objection, in this regard he/she may contact to M/S Supertech Limited office at Plot No C-2, Sector 96, Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201303 within 15 days of the Published notice, SACHIT KUMAR SAHRAWAT (co-Appllicant) S/o SH. MAHENDRA SINGH R/O Z/88A, TIMAR PUR, NEW DELHI-110054. DIWAKAR JHA (ADVOCATE) Ch. 45, Sub-Registrar Compund, Sector-33, Noida-201301 (U.P.), Mob. 9711299949

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Public at large is hereby notified that I, Sudhir Kumar S/o Shri Arvind Kumar intend to purchase a Property No.D-95, First Floor, Gali No.5, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092 from Shri Parvesh Kumar Jindal S/o Shri Ashok Kumar Jindal, who represent himself as owner of the property on the basis of WILL dated 10.12.2002, vide regd. as Document No. 11344 in Book No.3, Volume No. 324, on Pages 166 to 167 Dated 10/12/02 in the office of Sub-Registrar VIII Delhi executed by Late Smt. SHANTA RANI in her lifetime. It is therefore, Notified that anybody claiming any right, title, interest, share or lien over the aforesaid property may file such claim or objection to the undersigned within a period of 7 days from the date of Publication of this notice. Otherwise, it will be presumed that the said property is free from all encumbrances, charges and/or lien, etc. and I am free to purchase the said property from the above named seller. Sd/SUDHIR KUMAR # 160, Street No.8, Block-E, Karawal Nagar Road, Khajoori Khas-E, Karawal Nagar Road, Khajoori Khas-E, Karawal Nagar Road, Delhi-110094, Contact No. 9899282023 Sudhir Kumar

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publicly notified that Flat No. 055D, Block-U-3, Sector-11, Noida has been allotted in the name of Vinod Jain S/o S.L. Jain R/o 1793/28, Faridabad Haryana, and the GPA executed at Noida Vide Book No IV Volume No 1650 on pages 212 at Document No. 1446 and Add Book No. IV Volume No. 1684 on pages 331 to 336 dated 22.07.1995 in favour of Parveen Phull W/o Tribhuvan Kumar Phull R/o 156, First Floor, Ashoka Enclave Part-III, Sector-35, Amar Nagar Faridabad Haryana So with the help of the notice it is informed the transfer of the above flat in favour of Ashok Kumar S/o Shri Yogendra Prasad Singh R/o 117- C, 2nd Floor, Block-U-3, Sector-11, Noida and the Agreement to Sell was not registered. If any one has any objection he/she may submit his/her objection in the Housing Department of Noida Authority alongwith sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication this notice. Parveen Phull

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Transfer of ownership in respect of Flat No. 1802-Tower A, situated at Time Residence, Sector-63, Gurugram, Haryana-122102 consequent upon the intestate death of owner Sh. Sandeep Chattoo S/o Pyare Lal Chattoo. Sh. Sandeep Chattoo who was the owner of the subject cited property as per record has died or had on 31.12.2023 and has have no registered or unregistered will, leaving behind following legal heirs. i) Ms. Nirmla Chattoo (Mother) ii) Sh. Samarth Chattoo (Son) iii) Ms. Prapti Chattoo (Daughter) iv) Poonam Chattoo (Wife) all residence of 1, Chatur Singh Gardens, Govind Pura, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir-180003 intendstend to transfer of the above said property in their favour being the legal heirs. If any person is having any objection against the transfer of property, he/she can submit objections in writing along with supporting documents within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, otherwise the said property shall be transferred in the names of legal heirs and may not entertain subsequent claims. if any. On behalf of (Legal heirs) PRAVEEN RASTOGI (Advocate) ENR No. : D-24/06 Address: RZ-97, Khushi Ram park, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059 Mob: 9810986643

AUGMENTATION OF HT & LT NETWORK FOR RELIABILITY OF POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM

E-Tender Notice No. DYCEE-PS-MLG-HQ-31R-24-25 Dated: 11-12-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Name of work: At Maligaon (HQ): Augmentation of HT & LT network for reliability of power supply system of NFR HQ Complex and nearby area. Tender Value: ₹1,19,08,463/- Earnest Money: ₹2,09,600/- Date & Time closing of Tender: 15.00 hrs. of 02-01-2025. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/HQ NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Serving Customers With A Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE

For kind attention of allottees of the real estate project, "70 Grandwalk" developed by M/s Shine Buildcon Pvt. Ltd.

- 1. The above-mentioned project was registered with the Interim RERA Panchkula vide registration No. 28 of 2017 dated 28.07.2017, and the registration was valid up to 30.12.2022. 2. The promoter has made an application with the request to the authority that instead of revoking the registration on its expiry, the authority may permit it to remain in force subject to such further terms and conditions as it thinks fit to impose in the interest of the allottees, and any such terms and conditions so imposed shall be binding upon the promoter. 3. The Authority is considering an application of the promoter to permit the continuation of the registration certificate under section 7(3) of the Act for this project to remain in force and hereby invite objections from the allottees in particular and any other concerned persons in general in this regard. 4. Those objections shall be filed in the registry of the Authority before 28.12.2024 and appear in the Authority on 06.01.2025 at 11.00 AM for considering the objections received, failing which the Authority will consider the present application for continuation of the registration under section 7(3) of the Act. Secretary For Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram Dated: 14.12.2024

SHINE BUILDCON PRIVATE LIMITED

Registered Office: H-334, Ground Floor, New Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 India . Corporate Office: 281, Udyog Vihar Phase-II, Gurugram, Haryana-122015, India. Email: shinebuildcon@rediffmail.com, Phone No. : 011-26744111, 28744112

Public Notice Whereas M/s Shine Buildcon Private Limited is in process of developing a Commercial project namely "70 Grandwalk" situated in Sector-70, Badshahpur, Gurugram - 122 001, Haryana over an area measuring 2.893 Acres under License No.34 of 2012 valid up to 14.04.2025 granted by Director Town and Country Planning, Haryana and having HREERA Registration No. 28 of 2017 dated 28.07.2017. And where is M/s Shine Buildcon Private Limited (hereinafter referred "Company") has applied for change in Bank Account from Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd to HDFC Bank Ltd and accordingly, the Company has obtained in principal approval for Change of bank accounts from Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram. Accordingly, vide this public notice, the general public is hereby notified/informed of the following changes in bank accounts:

Table with 3 columns: Particulars, Previous Bank Accounts, New Bank Accounts. Includes details for Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd and HDFC Bank Ltd.

Any person having objections may file its objections before concerned office of Haryana RERA, Gurugram or Company within 15 days of this public notice. M/s Shine Buildcon Private Limited Date: 14.12.2024 Place: Gurugram

OFFICE OF THE NAGAR PALIKA PARISHAD HATTA -DIST DAMOH

(Third Call) Notice Inviting e-Tenders Dated: 10-12-2024

NIT No. 1027 Online lumpsum bids for the following works under "sbm (u) - 2.0" (estimated on uadd issr (w

Switzerland suspends India's most favoured nation status

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Swiss government has suspended the most favoured nation status (MFN) clause in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and Switzerland, potentially impacting Swiss investments in India and leading to higher taxes on Indian companies operating in the European nation.

According to a December 11 statement by the Swiss finance department, the move follows the Supreme Court of India last year ruling that the MFN clause doesn't automatically trigger when a country joins the OECD if the Indian government signed a tax treaty with that country before it joined the organization. India signed tax treaties with Colombia and Lithuania that



provided tax rates on certain types of income that were lower than the rates it provided to OECD countries. The two countries later joined OECD. Switzerland in 2021 interpreted that Colombia and Lithuania joining the OECD

meant a 5 per cent rate for dividends would apply to the India-Switzerland tax treaty under the MFN clause, rather than 10 per cent as outlined in the agreement. But post suspension of the MFN status, Switzerland will from January 1, 2025, levy a 10

per cent tax on dividends due to Indian tax residents who claim refunds for Swiss withholding tax and for Swiss tax residents who claim foreign tax credits. In the statement, the Swiss Finance Department announced suspension of the

application of the MFN clause of the protocol to the agreement between the Swiss Confederation and the Republic of India for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to taxes on income.

Switzerland cited a 2023 ruling by Indian Supreme Court in a case relating to Vevey-headquartered Nestle for its decision to withdraw the MFN status. This means that Switzerland will tax dividends that Indian entities will earn in that country at 10 per cent from January 1, 2025.

According to the statement, in 2021, the Delhi High Court in the Nestle case upheld the applicability of the residual tax rates after taking into account the MFN clause in the double taxation avoidance treaty. However, the Indian Supreme

Court, in a decision dated October 19, 2023, reversed the lower court's decision and concluded that, the applicability of MFN clause provided "was not directly applicable in the absence of 'notification' in accordance with Section 90 of the Income Tax Act".

Commenting on the decision of Swiss authority decision, Nangia Andersen M&A Tax Partner Sandeep Jhunjhunwala, said the unilateral suspension of application of the MFN clause under its tax treaty with India, marks a significant shift in bilateral treaty dynamics.

"This suspension may lead to increased tax liabilities for Indian entities operating in Switzerland, highlighting the complexities of navigating international tax treaties in an evolving global landscape," he

said. It also underscores the necessity of aligning treaty partners on the interpretation and application of tax treaty clauses to ensure predictability, equity, and stability in international tax framework, Jhunjhunwala said.

AKM Global, Tax Partner, Amit Maheshwari, said that the main reason behind the decision to withdraw MFN is of reciprocity, which ensures that taxpayers in both countries are treated equally and fairly.

"Swiss authorities announced in August 2021 that based on the MFN clause between Switzerland and India, the tax rate on dividends from qualifying shareholdings would be reduced from 10 per cent to 5 per cent, effective retroactively from July 5, 2018.

However, the subsequent Supreme Court ruling in 2023 contradicted the same," Maheshwari said.

Overall, he added that this could impact Swiss investments in India as dividends would be subject to higher withholding now and income accruing on or after January 1, 2025, may be taxed at the rates provided for in the original double taxation treaty between Switzerland and India, regardless of the MFN clause.

JSA Advocates & Solicitors Partner Kumarmanglam Vijay said this would especially impact Indian companies having ODI (overseas direct investment) structures with subsidiaries in Switzerland and will raise the Swiss withholding tax on dividends from 5 per cent to 10 per cent from January 1, 2025.

Delhi-Dehradun expressway to be completed within three months says Union minister Nitin Gadkari

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Friday said that the Delhi-Dehradun expressway, which is expected to reduce travel time between the two cities to two hours, will be completed within the next three months.

Currently, the travel time between the two cities is five to six hours. Addressing 'Times Network India Economic Conclave 2024', Gadkari further said that construction of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway is expected to be completed within two months. The travel time between the two metropolitan cities is expected to reduce to 12 hours with the completion of the expressway from the present

24 hours. The road transport and highways minister said Delhi-Dehradun highway project has two packages. "A Rs 10,000 crore project has been approved for Delhi's Kalindi Kunj, extending to Faridabad. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the project within the next 15-20 days," Gadkari said. Gadkari also said that the Modi government is working to reduce air pollution, lower the import of fossil fuel and enhance farm income. "The transport ministry is responsible for 40 per cent of the air pollution... While a huge part of pollution is due to stubble burning in neighbouring states of Punjab and Haryana, road construction and fossil fuels

also add to the annual problem," he said. The minister also pointed out that the problem of stubble burning will be solved in two years as the government is working on 400 projects that will convert 200 lakh tonnes of rice straw every year to alternate fuels. Gadkari said that his ministry is working on 36 green express highways, which will help reduce the logistics costs in the country. "India's logistics cost is 14-16 per cent compared to 8 per cent in China and 12 per cent in the US and European Union. We aim to bring this down to 9 per cent in two years," he said. According to the minister, this will push India's exports by 1.5 times and help us become more competitive.

Sebi proposes algo trading for retail investors with safeguards

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday proposed facilitating the participation of retail investors in algorithmic trading (algo trading), which provides advantages of faster order execution and improved liquidity. The proposal, if implemented, is expected to fill the void for retail investors who want to trade using algo with adequate safeguards. In an effort to enhance market efficiency and transparency, Sebi introduced algo trading through the Direct Market Access (DMA) facility, which provided significant advantages like faster order execution, reduced transaction costs, greater transparency, better audit

trails and improved liquidity. However, access to these facilities has been limited to institutional investors. In its consultation paper on Friday, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) proposed extending the existing regulatory framework, with additional safeguards, to facilitate the participation of retail investors in algo trading. "The evolving nature of algo trading, particularly with the increasing demand for algo trading by retail investors, has necessitated a further review and refinement of the regulatory framework so that retail investors are also able to participate in algo trading with proper checks and balances," Sebi said. Further, the regulator

proposed spelling out the rights and responsibilities of the main stakeholders of the trading ecosystem -- investors, stock brokers, algo providers/ vendors and Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs)-- so that the retail investors can avail algo facilities with requisite safeguards.

Ajay Garg, Director and CEO, SMC Global Securities, said allowing algorithmic trading for retail investors is indeed the need of the hour. Under the new framework, retail investors will get access to the approved algo only from the registered brokers, which will safeguard the interests of these investors. This presents great opportunities for stockbrokers to expand their

customer base in a regulated environment.

The past study of Sebi in F&O trading revealed that around 97 per cent of FPI profits and 96 per cent of proprietary trader profits were generated from algo trading in FY24. The proposed refined framework of algo trading will build the trust of retail investors and help them generate higher profits, given that it benefited the FPIs and institutional investors in the past, Garg said. Sebi said the facility of algo trading would be provided by the stock broker only after obtaining requisite permission from the stock exchange for each algo. Further, all algo orders would be tagged with a unique identifier provided by the

stock exchange in order to establish an audit trail, and the broker would seek approval from the exchange for any modification or change to the approved algos or systems used for algos. For the purpose of provision of algo trading through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), brokers should be the principal, while any algo provider or fintech/vendor would act as its agent while using the API provided by the broker. "All orders above the specified order per second threshold, originating/flowing through API extended by brokers to their clients/service providers, shall be treated as algo orders and shall be tagged with a unique identifier provided by the stock exchange.

TVS Motors, Reliance Jio, Tata AIG among winners of 17th BML Munjal awards



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

TVS Motors, Reliance Jio, Tata AIG, OYO, ONGC Videsh and HPCL have been adjudged winners of the 17th BML Munjal Awards for Business Excellence in Learning & Development. TVS Motors won in the Private Sector (manufacturing) category, Reliance Jio Infocomm and Tata AIG General Insurance won in the Private Sector (Services) category, Oravel Stays (OYO) won in the Emerging Stars category, ONGC Videsh won in the Public Sector category and Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL) won in the Sustained Excellence category. Union Minister Piyush Goyal and India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant graced the occasion and gave away the awards.

The BML Munjal Awards annually celebrate excellence in Learning and Development (L&D) and are a tribute to the enduring legacy of the late Dr. Brijmohan Lall Munjal, founder of the Hero Group. The six winners were eventually picked by an independent jury comprising of Sanjay Nayar, Founder and Chairman, Sorin Investment Fund, Gopal Srinivasan, Chairman & Managing Director, TVS Capital Funds, Rajat Dhawan, India Managing Partner & Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company, Vishesh Chandiook, CEO, Grant Thornton Bharat, Padmaja Ruparel, Co-Founder, Indian Angel Network, Simrit Kaur, Principal, Shri Ram College of Commerce, Rajeev Dubey, Editor In Chief, Fortune India and Sunil Kant Munjal, Chairman, Hero Enterprise. Announcing this year's awards, Sunil Kant Munjal, Chairman of Hero Enterprise, stated, "People are the only assets that appreciate as time goes on, and they need to be placed at the centre of every model, whether it is for a business enterprise or a social venture."

No staff fired, it was campaign to highlight workplace stress: YesMadam co-founder

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After beauty services platform YesMadam faced backlash on Monday over a purported internal email leaked on social media suggesting the termination of staff who indicated workplace stress, the company co-founder on Friday clarified that no staff was fired and called it a marketing initiative "to shed light on workplace stress and mental health."

YesMadam Co-Founder Mayank Arya in a note said the intent behind the campaign was to highlight an important issue, but it inadvertently triggered negative reactions. "It is important to clarify that no firing mail was sent to employees, and no one was terminated. The picture shared on LinkedIn was the first step toward introducing the initiative, and the clarification shared the following day was meant to serve as a wake-up call for the industry about the importance of mental health awareness,"



he said. He added that the campaign was conceptualised with the genuine objective of raising awareness about mental health challenges in corporate and startup environments. "Our intentions were rooted in addressing workplace stress and fostering a healthier work culture. However, we understand that the approach taken was inappropriate and led to unfavourable feedback. I deeply regret any confusion or discomfort caused by this initiative," he said. He acknowledged that the "execution fell short and unintentionally triggered unintended emotions". Anushka Dutta, whose

LinkedIn profile identifies her as a UX copywriter at the company, on Monday posted on LinkedIn, "What's happening at YesMadam? First you conduct a random survey and then fire us overnight because we're feeling stressed?" She attached a screenshot showing an email from the company's HR official, which suggested that the company was laying off employees who reported workplace stress in an internal survey. N o i d a - h e a d q u a r t e r e d YesMadam secured investments from Lenskart's Peyush Bansal, Sugar's Vineeta Singh, OYO's Ritesh Aggarwal and boAt's Aman Gupta on Shark Tank India.

Sebi extends timeline to submit comments on proposed appointment process of key officials at MIIs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The regulator, in its consultation paper issued in November, proposed a process for the appointment of KMPs (key managerial personnel) - Compliance Officer, Chief Risk Officer, Chief Technology Officer, and Chief Information Security Officer - of an MII and cooling-off period for KMPs, including MDs and directors, including public interest directors of an MII joining a competing MII. On the proposed process for appointment, Sebi stated that market infrastructure institutions (MIIs) comprising stock exchanges, clearing corporations and depositories, should engage an independent external agency to identify suitable candidates for specific KMP roles. The agency should submit recommendations to the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC) for evaluating the recommendations and forwarding them to both the governing board of the MII and Sebi. Thereafter, Sebi should review the NRC's recommendations and provide comments within a specified time frame. If no comments are received, the governing board may assume Sebi has no objections. The governing board should make the final appointment decision, considering NRC's recommendations and Sebi's comments, if any.

Sebi on Friday extended the deadline to December 31 for submitting public comments on a proposal on the process to appoint key officials of stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions and a cooling-off period before they can join a competing institution. Earlier, the deadline was December 12 for submitting comments. In a statement on Friday, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said, "It has been decided to extend the timeline to submit the public comments on the consultation paper till December 31, 2024."

Sebi on Friday extended the deadline to December 31 for submitting public comments on a proposal on the process to appoint key officials of stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions and a cooling-off period before they can join a competing institution. Earlier, the deadline was December 12 for submitting comments. In a statement on Friday, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said, "It has been decided to extend the timeline to submit the public comments on the consultation paper till December 31, 2024."

Sebi on Friday extended the deadline to December 31 for submitting public comments on a proposal on the process to appoint key officials of stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions and a cooling-off period before they can join a competing institution. Earlier, the deadline was December 12 for submitting comments. In a statement on Friday, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said, "It has been decided to extend the timeline to submit the public comments on the consultation paper till December 31, 2024."

TAC Security gets global certification for cyber risk assessment of IoT devices

CHANDIGARH ■ NEW DELHI

Cybersecurity firm TAC Security on Friday said it has received certification from global body ioXT to conduct testing and risk assessment of Internet of Thing (IoT) devices for enterprises. TAC Security is now empowered to conduct IoT security assessments under the esteemed ioXT certification programme, guaranteeing that connected devices meet the highest global



security, transparency, and upgradability. With this, TAC Security joins an exclusive league of eight companies worldwide, further cementing its leadership in driving advanced evaluations for a safer digital future, it said. TAC Security said it will foray into the IoT security market, offering security assessments through its ESOF vulnerability management platform. The company intends to roll out the services from February 2025. "Being approved as an ioXT authorized lab empowers us to ensure manufacturers and enterprises meet global security benchmarks. This milestone is a significant leap in our mission to become the world's largest vulnerability management company," said Saransh Rawat, Chief Technology Officer, TAC Security. TAC Security will incorporate IoT security assessments into its ESOF Vulnerability Management Portfolio, offering organisations a comprehensive platform to manage IT (Information Technology), OT (Operation Technology), and IoT risks seamlessly, he said. Trishneet Arora, Founder and CEO, TAC Security, said, "Becoming an ioXT authorized lab is a testament to TAC Security's unmatched expertise, cutting-edge infrastructure, and commitment to global security benchmarks. With an estimated 25.4 billion IoT devices expected by 2030, IoT security is critical for safeguarding smart cities, healthcare systems, industrial automation, and smart homes, the company said, adding that the market is projected to grow to USD 59 billion by 2030. TAC Security aims to achieve 10,000 global customers by March 2026. The company also has other certifications, including ISO 17025, Google CASA Assessor, Google MASA Assessor, AppDecence Alliance Security Assessor, CERT-IN (Government of India), and CREST Certified Penetration Testing Company.

IFSEC India 2024 kicks off, showcasing cutting-edge security solutions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The three-day security expo and conference IFSEC India 2024, billed as the largest in South Asia, kicked off on Thursday at the Bharat Mandapam. The event brought together over 300 leading security and fire safety brands, featuring more than 5,000 products from cutting-edge CCTV and video surveillance systems to biometrics, RFID and perimeter security technologies. Deputy High Commissioner, UK High Commission in India, Christina Scott said, "India's success in executing the

world's largest democratic process with minimal risks highlights the strength of its security infrastructure." DCP, Delhi Traffic Police, HQ & Road Safety, SK Singh said, "With 35 per cent of critical assets still at risk of cyber threats, integrating robust digital defences alongside physical measures has become imperative." IFSEC India 2024 has received strong support from prominent associations, including Asian Professional Security Association (APSA), American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) Delhi, Ahmedabad, and Mumbai Chapters, Electronic Security

Association of India (ESAI), Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) Delhi and Chennai Chapters, International Institute of Security and Safety Management (IISMS), Central Association for Private Security Industry (CAPSI), Global Association for Corporate Services (GACS), and Mitkat Advisory. India's security landscape is undergoing a remarkable transformation, with cities increasingly adopting advanced solutions such as video analytics, facial recognition, and integrated CCTV systems, driving the shift toward smarter and safer urban environments.

Dhankhar to inaugurate the Geoscience Museum in Gwalior

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will inaugurate the GSI Geoscience Museum in Gwalior on Sunday. Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel, Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region Jyotiraditya M Scindia, and Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey will participate in the event, the mines ministry said in a statement on Friday. Housed in the Victoria Market Building, the state-of-the-art museum is set to become a hub for geoscience education and public engagement, it said.

The museum represents an initiative by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) to showcase the wonders of earth sciences, while promoting scientific temperament and knowledge-sharing among the public, it said. The museum features two galleries designed to raise awareness about earth, atmospheric, and ocean sciences, as well as the evolution of life, as per the statement. Developed in coordination with the Gwalior Municipal Corporation and the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), the museum represents GSI's commitment to advancing geoscience literacy.

INBRIEF

54TH GNDU ANNUAL INTER-COLLEGE ATHLETICS MEET FROM DECEMBER 14

AMARAVATI: Guru Nanak Dev University is all set to host the 54th Annual Inter-College Athletics Meet (Men & Women) 2024-25 from 14th to 16th December 2024 at the GNDU campus. This event will bring together top athletic talent from colleges across the region to compete in a variety of track and field events.

BSES HONORED ON THE GLOBAL STAGE: WINS 8 GOLDS AT ICQCC 2024, SRI LANKA

We are delighted to share that BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) have achieved international acclaim by winning 8 Gold Awards at the prestigious International Convention for Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) 2024, held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from November 11th to 14th, 2024.



GRACE IN EVERY GESTURE

Indian classical dance is a beautiful and spiritual form of expression that connects the artist to the divine. **SAMASRAVA: An Ode to Classical Heritage** was a stunning tribute to this tradition, offering a rich, immersive experience for the audience at Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre. The performances were not only visually captivating but emotionally resonant, bringing out the timeless relevance of these art forms in today's world. The evening opened with Arunima Ghosh's Odissi performance, which immediately captured the audience's attention. Her graceful movements and deep emotional connection to the piece were evident throughout. In Yahi Madhava, she portrayed Radha's inner turmoil and vulnerability with such sensitivity that it left a lasting impact. The subtlety of her facial expressions and the fluidity of her movements beautifully conveyed Radha's frustration and sorrow, giving the audience a glimpse into the emotional complexity of the character. Vinod Kevin Bachan's performance, *Devi Mahamaya: The Rise of the Divine Shakti*, was a powerful display of strength and grace. Bachan's portrayal of Durga embodied the goddess's divine energy and formidable presence. Each movement exuded confidence, reflecting the unstoppable force of the feminine divine. The intensity of his performance reminded the audience of the spiritual power that classical dance can convey and how it can bring mythological stories to life in a way that resonates deeply. Arohi Munshi's Bharatnatyam pieces also made a strong impression. In *Shringara Lahiri*, she captured the essence of the goddess through fluid movements and expressions that spoke to the beauty and rhythm of the divine. Her portrayal of Yashoda calling out to Krishna in *Krishna ni begane baro* was equally deep. The tenderness in her gestures and expressions beautifully conveyed the maternal love of Yashoda, drawing the audience into the emotional



SAMASRAVA: An Ode to Classical Heritage beautifully celebrated Indian classical dance, showcasing its enduring relevance and emotional depth through dynamic performances, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



world of the character. Diksha Rawat's Kathak performance concluded the evening, bringing the rhythm and dynamism of the art form to the forefront. Her *Taal Ashtamangal* was a brilliant demonstration of her technical skill, with intricate footwork and rhythmic precision that left the audience in wonder. Her second piece, a traditional *Banaras Gharana thumri*, was emotionally charged as she portrayed Radha's plea to Krishna. The intensity of her abhinaya and the complexity of the rhythm made this performance a fitting finale to the evening. What made **SAMASRAVA** special was the variety of classical dance forms, each showcasing its unique style, yet all communicating the same emotional and spiritual depth. The dancers not only demonstrated their technical brilliance but also their ability to tell compelling stories through movement, emotion and expression. The evening was a celebration of the enduring relevance of Indian classical dance, a reminder that these ancient art forms continue to evoke deep emotions and speak to the human experience in ways that resonate today. This event was a powerful reminder of the enduring legacy of classical dance and its ability to connect audiences with the divine, the emotional and the eternal. **SAMASRAVA** reaffirmed the importance of preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage while making it accessible to contemporary audiences. The performances were a beautiful reflection of the grace and spiritual power of classical dance, leaving the audience with a sense of wonder and appreciation for these timeless art forms.

PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR



"Art reflects a culture's spirit, capturing its traditions, dreams and enduring beauty"

The **Parampara Series 2024** at New Delhi's Kamani Auditorium brought together three evenings of exceptional artistry, celebrating India's classical dance and music heritage. Each performance honoured the depth and diversity of the country's cultural traditions, showcasing the seamless blend of history and creativity that continues to inspire across generations. The series opened with a riveting Kuchipudi presentation by the renowned Raja Radha Reddy Repertory. Their storytelling and precision enthralled the audience, setting an inspiring tone for the evenings to come. This was followed by the soulful Hindustani vocals of Mahesh Kale, whose emotive artistry left a lasting impression. The second evening shone a spotlight on the SRJAN Ensemble, who brought the intricate elegance of Odissi to life through their refined movements and expressions. Accompanying this visual splendour was the Hindustani flute recital by maestro Rakesh Chaurasia, whose

TRIBUTE TO CLASSICAL ARTS

The **Parampara Series 2024** in New Delhi celebrated the richness of India's classical dance and music, showcasing its cultural legacy, writes **TEAM VIVA**

melodies resonated deeply with the audience. Audiences not only experienced mesmerising performances but also the stories embedded into each art form, reflecting centuries of cultural evolution. Every gesture, note and rhythm carried forward a legacy passed down through generations, offering a meaningful connection to India's artistic roots. The final night featured the graceful Mohiniyattam performance by Neema Prasad and her group, followed by an evocative classical music act by Tal Fry, which brought the event to a memorable close. The event witnessed attendance from notable personalities such as Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Rajiv Pratap Rudy, among others, underlining its cultural significance. The 28th edition of the **Parampara Series** was a celebration of India's cultural heritage. As the performances concluded they left behind a deep sense of connection to tradition and artistry. Such events keep India's rich legacy alive, inspiring people across generations.



Brushstrokes of Devotion

In the serene surroundings of the Open Palm Court at the India Habitat Centre, Shruti Gupta Kasana's solo exhibition, *Sampurn Vrindavan*, offered a unique and thought-provoking exploration of Lord Krishna's life. The exhibition focused on three key themes: Krishna's childhood in Vrindavan, his life in the kingdom of Dwarka and his deep affection for cows. Kasana's artistic interpretation brought these stories to life in a way that was both captivating and immersive. The exhibition featured a combination of vibrant acrylic paintings and mixed-media works that reflected the essence of Krishna's life and teachings. The themes of Anterdweep, depicting the underwater city of Dwarka and Krishna's bond with cows were particularly striking, capturing his tenderness and divine connection with all living beings. The works portrayed Krishna not only as a powerful deity but as a compassionate and loving figure whose legacy continues to inspire. In addition to the paintings, Kasana's artistic vision extended into fashion, with a series of statement knitwear

Sampurn Vrindavan by Shruti Gupta Kasana beautifully captures the essence of Krishna's life through stunning art, fashion, and eco-conscious design, **SAKSHI PRIYA**



pieces incorporated into the exhibition. These garments, made with a mix of hand embroidery, applique patchwork and Bengali Kantha techniques, were designed not just as wearable pieces of art, but as representations of the themes within the exhibition. The blend of traditional craft and modern design created a dynamic interaction

with environmental consciousness. By blending jute with cotton, she has created a unique medium that supports her artistic vision while also promoting sustainability in the art world. The exhibition offered a deep, meaningful look into the life of Krishna, celebrating not only his mythology but also his love for nature and compassion for all beings. Kasana's work, through its vibrant colours, intricate details and thought-provoking themes, invited visitors to engage with Krishna's story in a modern context, while also highlighting the artist's versatility and innovation. *Sampurn Vrindavan* was a powerful artistic journey into the heart of Krishna's life and teachings. It brought together the worlds of mythology, fashion and sustainability in a way that felt both fresh and deeply rooted in tradition. Kasana's unique vision and skill left a lasting impression, offering a new lens through which to appreciate the eternal message of love, compassion and devotion that Krishna embodies.

PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR

By **TEAM VIVA**

The India International Centre Annex recently hosted a compelling photo exhibition, *Portraits of Persistence: Enduring Communities of North Bihar*, as part of the Visual Katha series. It was inaugurated by Sunita Narain, Director General of the Centre for Science and Environment, the exhibition offered a powerful portrayal of North Bihar's rural communities and their resilience in the face of relentless annual flooding. Curated by Eklavya Prasad, a social development professional and photographer, the exhibition presented a poignant visual narrative of submerged homes, devastated farmlands, and fractured infrastructure. Prasad's photographs documented not only the immediate impacts of flooding but also the long-

VISUAL ODE TO NORTH BIHAR'S RESILIENCE



term transformations it imposes on livelihoods and societal structures. Amidst these challenges, the exhibition celebrated stories of

adaptation, ingenuity, and survival, showcasing community-driven solutions and innovative coping mechanisms.

Prasad, reflecting on his nearly two decades of grassroots work with Megh Pyne Abhiyan, shared that the exhibition was born from his desire to inspire sustainable interventions for flood-affected regions. His images shed light on the everyday heroism of these communities, demonstrating their strength in adapting to nature's adversities. Sunita Narain, in her inaugural address, commended the series for its depth and impact. She highlighted how the exhibition went beyond capturing the seasonal aftermath of floods to reveal the year-round struggles of these communities. She also stressed its relevance in the era of climate change, urging the need for focused and sustainable solutions. The exhibition concluded, leaving visitors with a profound appreciation for the resilience of North Bihar's flood-affected communities.

Bumrah is a combination of legendary pacers, says Chappell

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Jasprit Bumrah embodies the qualities of pace legends such as Dennis Lillee, Andy Roberts and Richard Hadlee but at the same time is forging his own legacy, one that is set to inspire future generations of pacemen, feels former India coach Greg Chappell. He also said that Bumrah is the only player standing between Australia and the Border Gavaskar Trophy. "What sets Bumrah apart is his combination of skills: (Malcolm) Marshall's adaptability, Lillee's aggression, Richard Hadlee's control, Roberts' strategy, Wasim (Akram) and Waqar's (Younis) reverse swing, (Glenn) McGrath's precision, (Dale) Steyn's explosiveness, and (Kagiso) Rabada's modern versatility." "As Nasser Hussain aptly observed, 'He's the complete bowler. As he has had back



against the best batsmen of his era. "His ability to make it hard for batsmen to score runs with his probing line and length, allied to his guile and determination, made him the champion that he was. Bumrah, though less overtly

combative, channels Lillee's ability to unsettle batsmen. His deadly yorkers and disconcerting bounce – especially with his unorthodox release point and trajectory – echo Lillee's capacity to dictate terms. "Bumrah's quiet intensity and precision make him a nightmare, much like Lillee's unrelenting aggression." Another great of the game was Roberts, who combined pace with strategic brilliance. Chappell felt Bumrah's 2018 performance at the MCG where he used variations to get the better of the batters was reminiscent of the way Roberts operated. "Bumrah shares Roberts' cerebral approach. Both bowlers use subtle variations to outfox batsmen, relying on strategy rather than brute force. Bumrah's spell in the 2018 Boxing Day Test against Australia – culminating in 6-33 – was a modern echo of Roberts' game-changing

bursts." "Roberts had a loping and relaxed run-up and a very strong shoulder action like Bumrah, and skidded onto you quite quickly, so it was important to be focused on the ball leaving the hand. "The danger of a bowler who zeroes in on the stumps, as Roberts did and Bumrah does, is that if you relax for a moment and try to hit across their deliveries, you become even more vulnerable to LBWs and bowled. I would use the same approach against Bumrah," Chappell added. The 31-year-old has consistently churned out stellar performances and is the go to bowler when the Indian team is in need of wickets. "With 151 wickets at an average of 21.03 in just 30 Tests, his ability to excel in diverse conditions recalls Marshall's dominance. Bumrah's reverse swing on abrasive surfaces and his

ability to seam and swing the ball under cloudy skies have been pivotal, evoking the same uncertainty that batsmen faced against Marshall. "As Ian Botham famously remarked of Marshall, 'He gave you no respite.' Today, batsmen echo similar sentiments about Bumrah," Chappell wrote. Drawing comparison to Hadlee, Chappell said "Bumrah's meticulousness draws comparisons to Hadlee. His mastery of English conditions, where he averages 22.02, and his ability to exploit even the slightest movement resemble Hadlee's clinical dismantling of batting orders. "Like Hadlee, Bumrah's focus on perfecting every delivery has made him indispensable in critical moments. He is also carrying the Indian pace attack at present as Hadlee did for New Zealand in his era," he added.



Dismissals during first innings did affect his flow, admits Gill

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Shubman Gill admitted that the fall of wickets at the other end affected his game in the Adelaide Test but expressed confidence that the Indian batting group would deliver a stronger first-innings effort in what is now effectively a three-match series. Gill didn't play the first Test due to a finger injury but looked good in his brief innings of 31 and 28 during the pink ball Test at Adelaide which India lost by 10 wickets. "As a batting group, we are looking to post a big total first up. That's been the key discussion and every batter has his own game plan," Gill said in the pre-match press conference after the team scored 150 and 180 in the first innings at Perth and Adelaide respectively. Gill believes that he wouldn't curb his natural game although he did get edgy seeing wickets tumble at the other end. "I still have the freedom as a batter. One of the challenges is whether you can play the game you want to play, irrespective of what's happening at the other end and irrespective of scorecard. "I faltered in the first innings because of what happened at the other end and I take that upon myself." There was a four-over period

Ignore the criticism, it comes with the territory: Anand to Gukesh

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Legendary chess player Viswanathan Anand on Friday asked D. Gukesh to ignore those questioning the standard of the World Championship title showdown with China's Ding Liren, saying criticism always comes with success. Indian Grandmaster Gukesh made history on Thursday, becoming the youngest-ever to win the world title defeating Liren in the 14th and final game of the championship in Singapore. Former world champion Vladimir Kramnik was not impressed with the quality of chess on display during the match, calling it the "end of chess as we know it." Kramnik expressed his frustration over the game's quality, calling a critical blunder by Ding Liren "childish". In his reaction, Kramnik wrote on 'X', "No comment. Sad. End of chess as we know it." In another tweet, he said,



"Never yet has a WC title been decided by such a childish one-move blunder." Five-time world champion, Norway's Magnus Carlsen too has been critical of the quality on display in earlier rounds, saying, "This does not look like a game between two World Championship contenders. It just looks like maybe the second round or third round of an open tournament." However, Anand, the five-time world champion and Gukesh's mentor, said he saw "history being made by Gukesh". "I feel very happy. I was literally watching history being made yesterday," Anand told PTI Videos. "It (criticism) comes with every match. To be honest, I think it just comes with the territory. You ignore it and that's all. You know Gukesh's achievement, everything and his concomitant rise. I mean if you look at the Olympiad, he showed that he's actually become a much stronger player. "He won the Candidates this



Hazlewood replaces Boland in Australia XI for third Test against India

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Australian captain Pat Cummins on Friday announced that pacer Josh Hazlewood will replace Scott Boland in his playing XI for the third Test against India after having recovered from a side strain. The injury had forced Hazlewood to sit out of the Pink Ball Test in Adelaide last week. Cummins exuded confidence that Hazlewood would pull through the match without any "hiccups". "He had a really good bowl yesterday, he had another bowl in Adelaide a couple of days previously. Him and the medical team are really confident," he said on the eve of the game at the Gabba. Cummins said he had to take the ball away from Hazlewood at Perth to prevent his injury getting worse. "We've seen it a few times where Josh has pushed through to get through a Test match and a little bit of soreness turns into a month or two of injury. "So, we made the call then that it probably wasn't worth the risk of keeping him bowling. I think he bowled an extra two overs leading into tea break and he said it felt ok, but I just kind of thought from there, 'that's enough,' said Cummins. The Australian captain was sympathetic for Boland after the veteran pacer made a stirring return to Test cricket



at Adelaide after last year's Ashes. Boland had a match-haul of five wickets that included the prized scalp of star India batter Virat Kohli in the second innings. "It's tough. He was fantastic in Adelaide. Unfortunately, he's spent quite a bit of time on the bench over the last 18 months and whenever he plays he's fantastic. "It's a shame for Scotty, but still a fair bit to play out this series. I'd be surprised if he didn't play again in this series," said the New South Wales player. Green is fading at Gabba The green tinge on the Brisbane deck was significantly reduced on the match eve. Once a fortress of the Aussies, India had breached the 'Gabba' barrier during the 2020-21 series to end the hosts' winning run dating back to 1988. After that the West Indies too beat Australia here, riding on the back of pacer Shamar Joseph's heroics. "I looked at it yesterday – it looked like a good wicket, like it has been the last few years," said Cummins. "A bit of sun baking it the last couple of days (means) I don't think it's as green and leafy as it was against South Africa," he said. Cummins was referring to the Test against South Africa here in 2022 which ended inside two days.

Hojlund scores twice for Manchester United to beat Viktoria Plzen 2-1 in Europa League

AP ■ LONDON

Rasmus Hojlund scored twice after coming off the bench and Manchester United rallied to beat Viktoria Plzen 2-1 in the Europa League. The Denmark striker netted in the 88th minute after collecting Bruno Fernandes' pass off a free kick to seal the victory and put United into the top eight of the standings. Hojlund replaced Marcus Rashford in the 56th and scored an equalizer six minutes later after Amad Diallo's shot was deflected by goalkeeper Martin Jedlicka into his path for an easy finish. The 21-year-old Hojlund also scored twice in the previous round, when United beat

Norwegian team Bodo/Glimt 3-2, and has five goals in his six appearances in the second-tier competition. "It feels good to have scored two goals but I am more happy with the win," Hojlund said. "My instructions? Go out there and score two goals! Just to use my qualities, run the channels and be assertive in front of goal." United had come off two straight losses in the English Premier League, 2-0 away to Arsenal, and 3-2 at Old Trafford to Nottingham Forest that left the club 13th and eight points adrift of the top four as progress looked slow under new coach Ruben Amorim. Matej Vydra, who previously played for Burnley and Watford, opened the scoring



three minutes into the second half. United has 12 points from six games after three wins and three draws in Europa League play – good enough for seventh place. The top eight qualify directly to the Round of 16. The teams played No. 9 to No. 24 go into a two-legged playoff. Tottenham continued to show inconsistent form in a 1-1 draw at Rangers, leaving the north London team in ninth place. The Scottish side is eighth. Substitute Dejan Kulusevski was fed by fellow substitute Dominic Solanke to score 15 minutes before time and salvage a point at Ibrox Stadium. Spurs were held 2-2 at home by Roma in the previous

round and lost 3-2 to Galatasaray before. The draw came after losing 4-3 to Chelsea in the Premier League on Sunday. coach Ange Postecoglou, who led Celtic for two seasons. Fisayo Dele-Bashiru and veteran Pedro Rodriguez scored one each for Lazio in the second half to defeat Ajax 3-1 in Amsterdam and move to the top of the standings with 16 points from six games. Bilbao is level on points but in second on goal difference. Anderlecht beat Slavia 2-1 in Prague to move into third place. Lyon jumped to fourth by beating Eintracht Frankfurt 3-2. The German team is fifth. Among other results, substitute Sergio Peña equalized in stoppage time for Malmö to hold unbeaten Galatasaray 2-2. The Turkish club is sixth in the standings. PAOK routed Ferencvaros 5-

0. Roma showed signs of improvement by beating Braga 3-0 for a second straight victory that came after the struggling club earned its first win under new coach Claudio Ranieri, 4-1 over visiting Lecce in Serie A. Braga goalkeeper Matheus received a red card in the 68th with the score 2-0. Conference LeagueA youthful Chelsea lineup made the most of a long trip to Kazakhstan by beating Astana 3-1 to stay perfect in the UEFA Conference League. Marc Guiu struck twice within five minutes early in the first half. The 18-year-old forward opened the scoring on a solo effort in the 14th and added his second after

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.