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WORLD 9
AMERICANS REALISING
TRUMP'S TARIFFS ON CANADA
MAKE LIFE EXPENSIVE: TRUDEAU

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NO CONFIDENCE IN V-P DHANKAR: OPPOSITION



Photos: PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a first, Congress-led INDIA Bloc of Opposition parties on Tuesday submitted a notice to bring a motion in Rajya Sabha for the removal of Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, accusing him of "partisan" conduct as the chairman of the Upper House. Dhankhar is Chairman of the Upper House. If the motion is moved, these parties need a simple majority to get it passed, but they do not have the requisite numbers in the 243-member House. Opposition members, however, insisted that it was a "strong message to fight for parliamentary democracy". Parliamentary Affairs minister Kiren Rijiju dubbed the move as "extremely regrettable" and said the government is very proud of Dhankhar.

On behalf of the Opposition, Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and Naseer Hussain submitted the notice signed by 60 Opposition Members of Parliament, including from the Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Trinamool Congress (TMC), Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI-M, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Samajwadi Party (SP), to Rajya Sabha Secretary General PC Mody. The present move, spearheaded by the Congress, comes in the wake of verbal clashes between Opposition parties and the Rajya Sabha chairman. The Opposition has been upset with Dhankhar over multiple issues. The latest trigger was allowing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members to raise the allegations of links

between Congress leaders and organisations backed by billionaire investor George Soros which the ruling party claims are involved in "anti-India activities". The Opposition said his conduct of the House on December 9, 2024, was particularly one-sided and totally unfair, and said he was "encouraging and provoking" the Treasury Benches to make outrageous remarks. INDIA Bloc parties had in August this year also considered submitting a notice for moving a resolution to remove the vice president from his office. This is the first time that a notice for bringing a motion to remove the Vice President has been moved in the Rajya Sabha. A 14-day notice has to be given and it should be approved by the Deputy Chairman before the motion is taken up.

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Identify illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, orders LG

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor's secretariat has written to the Chief Secretary and Police Commissioner asking for initiating "strict action" against illegal Bangladeshi immigrants residing in the National Capital. According to Raj Niwas officials, the LG Secretariat has asked the Chief Secretary and the Police Commissioner to launch a special drive spanning over two months to identify illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in Delhi and take strict action as per the extant rules in a time-bound manner.

The move comes in wake of the representation made by the delegation of Ulemas and Muslim leaders from Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin and Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin to Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday. They had expressed deep concern about the attacks being undertaken on the Hindu and other minority communities in Bangladesh and accordingly, demanded stringent action against Bangladeshi infiltrators residing in the National Capital. "Prominent Ulemas and Muslim residents have requested that illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators should neither be given houses on rent nor should they be given employment by any establishment. Further, they have requested that their children should not be given admission in any government or private school. The Muslim leaders have also demanded removal of illegal



Social Organisations of Delhi organised a protest march on Bangladesh Embassy against the attacks on Hindus and human rights violations in Bangladesh at Teen Murti Chowk, in New Delhi on Tuesday

infiltrators from roads, footpaths, parks and other government lands, over which they have forcefully encroached and any documents like Aadhar Card, Voter ID, or any other government document acquired illegally by Bangladeshi infiltrators be cancelled immediately. They have also demanded that a special drive, like in the past, should be launched to identify the illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in Delhi and they should be sent back immediately," the letter from the LG Secretariat read. Meanwhile, Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) chairman Brijesh Goyal has

urged business communities to reduce their business activities with Bangladesh. The CTI has warned that if the atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh do not stop, then all the traders of Delhi and the country will end all trade with Bangladesh. "There is also resentment among the businessmen of Delhi against the Mohammad Yunus government of Bangladesh," he said. Security was stepped up outside the Bangladesh High Commission here on Tuesday, as hundreds of people from various organisations, including the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), held a protest

march at Chanakyapuri against alleged atrocities and human rights violations against Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh. Police had put barricades on the Teen Murti Marg on both the carriageway outside the Chanakyapuri police station where hundreds of people from various organisations gathered. Traffic was regulated in the area with vehicles redirected to alternative routes. There have been allegations of over 200 attacks on Hindus in various districts of Bangladesh since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5.



People gather near the wreckage after a BEST undertaking's bus rammed into pedestrians as well as vehicles on a road at Kurla, in Mumbai

Seven dead in Mumbai bus accident

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday appointed Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India. Malhotra, a 1990 Batch Rajasthan Cadre IAS Officer, will replace Shaktikanta Das, whose tenure ends on Tuesday. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet cleared Malhotra's name, who has been appointed as the RBI Governor for three years, starting Wednesday. Malhotra is an engineering graduate in computer science from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, and has a Master's in Public Policy from Princeton University, US. In his career of over 33 years, he has worked in multifarious sectors, including power, finance and taxation, information technology, and mines, among others. Before becoming Revenue Secretary, Malhotra held the post of Secretary in the Department of Financial Services under the Ministry of Finance.

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NIA arrests main accused in Laos human trafficking, cyber slavery case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday made a major breakthrough in the Laos human trafficking and cyber slavery case with the arrest of an absconding accused, who was nabbed with support of the Delhi Police's Special Cell. Kamran Haider's arrest marked a significant step towards dismantling the international human trafficking syndicate, the NIA said in a statement. Along with his co-accused, Haider was allegedly directly involved in arranging flight tickets and documents for the victims and facilitating their "illegal border crossings" with the help of contacts in the Golden Triangle region. The Golden Triangle refers to a large, mountainous region comprising parts of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos.

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SC seeks details from Allahabad HC on Justice Shekhar Kumar's speech

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Taking cognisance of news reports, the Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday called for details from the Allahabad High Court on the controversial speech of Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav, delivered at a Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) Legal Cell function at Prayagraj. "The Supreme Court has taken note of the newspaper reports of a speech given by Mr Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav, a sitting judge of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad. The details and particulars have been called from the High Court and the matter is under consideration (sic)," the SC statement read. Sitting judge Justice Yadav made the controversial remarks on December 8 while addressing a convention of the legal cell of the Vishva Hindu Parishad in Allahabad. A day later, videos of the judge speaking on provocative issues, including the law working according to the majority, were circulated widely, triggering strong reactions from various opposition parties which questioned his reported statements and labelled it as hate speech. He urged for Uniform Civil Code, blaming practices such as Triple Talq,



Nikah Halala in the Muslim community. "I have no hesitation in stating that this is Hindustan, and this country will function according to the wishes of the majority living here. This is the law. It is not about speaking as a High Court Judge; rather, the law operates in accordance with the bahusanyak (majority). Consider this in the context of a family or society - only what ensures the welfare and happiness of the majority will be accepted," Justice Yadav said. The judge also used the term "kathmullah", a slur against Muslims. Referring to extremists as "kathmullah", he said that the country should be circumspect about them. "But these kathmullah... this

may not be the right word... but I won't hesitate to say it because they are harmful to the country...they are detrimental, against the nation, and people who incite the public. They are the kind of people who do not want the country to progress, and we need to be cautious of them," said Justice Yadav at VHP's legal cell function. Kapil Sibal, president of the Supreme Court Bar Association called for the impeachment of Justice Yadav. He also urged the Prime Minister, Home Minister and Members of Parliament to extend support for impeaching Justice Yadav. Meanwhile, Lok Sabha MPs Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, Asaduddin Owaisi initiated MPs' signatures in Parliament, seeking impeachment against Justice Yadav. Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Brinda Karat, has written to the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna, demanding action against the Judge. Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR) headed by Prashant Bhusnal also urged the CJI to initiate action seeking in house Inquiry and suspension of the Judge for violating the code of conduct for Judges.

No mismatch in Maharashtra votes polled and VVPAT tally: ECI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
MUMBAI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday said no mismatch was found between the votes polled and corresponding tally of Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips in random counting in the last month's Maharashtra Assembly elections. The mandatory counting of VVPAT slips from five randomly selected polling stations in each assembly constituency was completed successfully, the ECI said in a statement. Opposition parties in the state had questioned the integrity of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) after the ruling BJP-led Mahayuti coalition won a landslide victory in the November 20 elections. The counting of VVPAT slips aims to verify the tally of votes recorded EVMs against the corresponding VVPAT slips, the ECI said, adding that representatives of candidates were present throughout the process.

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SC upholds enhanced compensation for KMP expressway landowners

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld an order which enhanced the compensation payable to some owners whose land in Haryana was acquired for Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway. A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan set aside a November 2021 verdict of the Punjab and Haryana High Court quashing an order of the district revenue officer-cum-land acquisition collector (LAC), Jhajjar enhancing the compensation. The LAC, in an order passed on September 15, 2020, enhanced the compensation to Rs 19,91,300 per acre along with statutory benefits as awarded earlier by the High Court to similarly-placed land owners. The Court delivered its verdict on an appeal filed by some land owners challenging the high court's November 2021 verdict. The Bench noted by a November 2004 notification under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, the land of the appellants in Jhajjar district was acquired for the expressway and by an award in March, 2006, a compensation of Rs 12.50 lakh per acre was determined. It



noted that aggrieved by the award, some similarly-placed land owners preferred a reference for enhancement of compensation before the additional district judge, Jhajjar but the same was dismissed. The Bench further noted such land owners approached the high court, which in May, 2016, enhanced the compensation to Rs 19,91,300 per acre along with statutory benefits. The Bench said on June 30, 2016, the appellants filed an application under Section 28-A of the Act before the LAC, Jhajjar, which held that appellants were entitled to benefit of the high court's May, 2016 verdict and enhanced the compensation. Section 28-A of the Act pertains to re-determination of amount of compensation on the basis of award of the court. The matter again came up

before the high court which set aside the LAC's order. Referring to a previous verdict delivered by the court, the Bench noted it was held that statement of objects and reasons of Section 28-A would reveal that the object underlying the enactment of the provision was to remove inequality in payment of compensation for same or similar quality of land. The Court said it was not in dispute that the first appeal, which was allowed by the high court in May, 2016, was with respect to the land covered by the same notification under which the appellants' land was also covered. "We are, therefore, inclined to allow the appeal. The impugned judgment and order of the high court dated November 25, 2021 is quashed and set aside and the order of the LAC dated September 15, 2020 is upheld," the Bench said.

Patiala House Court summons actor Dharmendra

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Patiala House Court has summoned former Member of Parliament (MP) and veteran Bollywood actor Dharmendra, and two others in a cheating case related to the Garam Dharam Dhaba franchise. The summons were issued based on a complaint filed by Delhi businessman Sushil Kumar, who alleged that he was lured into investing in the franchise. The other two accused have also been summoned for the offence of criminal intimidation under section 506 of IPC. Judicial magistrate Yashdeep Chahal passed the order against the 89-year-old actor on a complaint filed by Delhi

businessman, Sushil Kumar, who alleged that he was lured into investing in the franchise, lawyer DD Pandey said. The judge said there was a prima facie case of cheating and criminal conspiracy against the actor and the co-accused persons, Deepak Bhardwaj and Umang Tiwari, and directed them to appear before the court on February 20, 2025. The judge noted in an order passed on December 5 that the documents on record prima facie pertained to "Garam Dharam Dhaba" and the letter of intent also bore the logo of the restaurant. "It is fairly apparent that the transaction between the parties pertain to Garam Dharam Dhaba and was being



pursued by accused number 2 (Bhardwaj) and 3 (Tiwari), on behalf of accused number 1 (Dharam Singh Deol). The evidence on record prima facie indicates that the accused persons induced the complainant in furtherance of their common intent and the ingredients of the offence of

cheating are duly disclosed," the judge said. The court summoned Bhardwaj and Tiwari for allegedly criminally intimidating the complainant when he enquired about the project after the payment. It is fairly apparent that the transaction between the

parties pertains to Garam Dharam Dhaba and was being pursued by the co-accused on behalf of the actor, the court noted. According to the complaint, in April 2018, the co-accused approached him on behalf of Dharam Singh Deol (Dharmendra) with an offer to open a franchise of Garam Dharam Dhaba on NH-24/NH-9 in Uttar Pradesh. He claimed that he handed over a cheque for an amount of Rs 17.70 lakh in September, 2018. However, the accused stopped responding to him thereafter, the complainant alleged. A series of meetings and email exchanges reportedly followed, culminating in the execution of a letter of intent

on September 22, 2018. As part of this agreement, Kumar and his business associates were to invest Rs 63 lakh and provide suitable land for the franchise. Subsequently, Kumar alleged that he issued a cheque for Rs 17.70 lakh, which was encashed by the respondents. He also purchased land near Gajraula, District Amroha, Uttar Pradesh, on November 2, 2018, for the franchise. However, despite repeated requests for work to begin, the respondents neither inspected the site nor responded to Kumar's communications. Allegedly, they also threatened him with dire consequences if he attempted to contact them again.

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What's in a name? Communal harmony

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
JAUNPUR

In a rare socio-cultural shift, several Muslim families in the Dehari village of Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur district have started using Hindu surnames like Dubey and Tiwari, claiming Hindu ancestry. They have also embraced practices such as cow service, and traditional Hindu rituals to honor their lineage. Located about 45 km from Jaunpur's district headquarters, Dehari village has a predominantly Muslim population. The trend reportedly began two years ago when some villagers

traced their ancestry, sparking widespread curiosity and debate. After that around 30 to 35 Muslim families in the village have adopted surnames such as Dubey, Tiwari, Thakur, and Kayastha, claiming historical ties to these castes. The issue came into the limelight when Naushad Ahmed from Dehari printed his wedding invitation card with the name "Naushad Ahmed Dubey." When asked about the reason, Naushad explained, "Our ancestors were Hindus. I am reclaiming my ancestral gotra (clan) name."

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Two minor sisters die as scooter rams into divider

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two minor girls died after a scooter they were riding rams into a road divider on the Buddheshwar overbridge on Monday evening. One of them died on the spot, while the elder sister succumbed to injuries during treatment at a hospital on Monday. The victims were identified as Aqsa Bano (12) and Zikra Bano (6), residents of Dubagga. According to the victims' mother Reshma, a native of Hinuna in Amethi, she has been living in a rented house in Salamat Nagar, Andhe Ki Chowki (Dubagga), for the last three years. Her husband Asif works as a driver in Mumbai. There are two other daughters in the family: Kakhshan (10), and Ayesha. Aqsha was a Class VI student. On Sunday evening, Reshma went out to buy vegetables. During her absence, Aqsa asked a neighbour to drive her scooter, taking her younger sister Zikra along for a ride.

The speeding scooter collided with the road divider as a girl attempted to avoid a car coming from the opposite direction

While descending the Buddheshwar overbridge in Para, the speeding scooter collided with the road divider as Aqsa attempted to avoid a car coming from the opposite direction. The impact was severe, and both sisters were critically injured. Passersby immediately informed police. The police reached the scene and rushed the injured girls to KGMU Trauma Centre, where doctors declared Zikra dead on arrival. Despite efforts to save her, Aqsa also passed away during treatment. The tragic incident has devastated their mother and the entire family, and the local community is also mourning their loss.

After the post-mortem on Monday, the family took the bodies to Amethi. The last rites of both sisters are scheduled to take place on Wednesday. Inspector Suresh Singh stated that the vehicle's owner was identified from documents found on the scooter. Once the family submits their complaint, a case will be registered, and appropriate action will be taken. Meanwhile, a 65-year-old man among two people died after their motorcycle rams into a tractor-trolley parked on a road near Garbarda Bridge in Mirzapur, police said. Dharmaraj and Prashant Mishra (20) were going to Haliya market on a motorcycle. When they approached Garbarda Bridge, the bike rams into the tractor-trolley, killing them on the spot, Haliya SHO Virendra Singh said. The bodies have been taken into custody. Further investigations are underway, he said.

Portion of 185-year-old mosque demolished

PTI ■ FATEHPUR

Amid tight security, a portion of the 185-year-old Noori Masjid in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur district was demolished by local authorities on Tuesday claiming it was illegally constructed two-three years ago and was obstructing the widening of the Banda-Bahraich Highway. The mosque's management committee chief, however, claimed that the Noori Masjid in Lalauli town was built in 1839 while the road around it came up only in 1956, and said they have already moved the Allahabad High Court which will take up the petition on December 12. The district administration claimed that the portion demolished was illegal and had come up in the last two-three years, citing satellite and historical images of the mosque's site. The Public Works Department (PWD) had, in connection with the widening of Banda-Bahraich Highway No. 13, given a notice to remove some parts of the mosque due to their "illegal construction", but the mosque management did not implement it, according to officials.

"About 20 metres of Noori Masjid, which was obstructing the widening of Banda-Bahraich Highway No. 13, was demolished by a bulldozer on Tuesday in the presence of officials and now its debris is being removed," Lalauli police station in-charge Inspector Vrindavan Rai told PTI. In response to a question, he said, "Law and order remains strong. All shops within a radius of about 200 metres around the mosque have been closed and an area of 300 metres radius has been sealed." Lalauli virtually turned into a police cantonment during the demolition exercise due to heavy deployment of security personnel. The precautionary step comes in the backdrop of incidents of communal tension and opposition to demolition action by authorities in the state. Rai said police and Rapid Action Force personnel have been deployed in every nook and corner of Lalauli to maintain law and order. The PWD sent a notice to the Masjid Management Committee on August 17, 2024, to remove some part of the



mosque, but it did not implement it, he said. Mutawalli (chief) of Noori Masjid Management Committee, Mohammad Moin Khan alias Bablu Khan, said his advocate Syed Azimuddin has filed a writ petition in the Allahabad High Court against demolishing any part of the mosque which will be heard on December 12. "The Noorie Mosque in Lalauli was built in 1839 and the road

here was constructed in 1956, yet the PWD is calling some parts of the mosque illegal," he said. Additional District Magistrate Avinash Tripathi said notices were issued to 139 entities in August, including the mosque's management, to remove encroachments and other illegal constructions. "Repair work on the road and construction work for a drain have been proposed along the route because of which

encroachments have been removed after serving notice," Tripathi told reporters. He also stressed that the district administration duly informed the mosque management in the past. "The management earlier removed shops attached to it. Now removal of a portion became inevitable because it was constructed later. The rest of the mosque has not been demolished. It is evident from satellite and historical images that the construction was done two-three years ago. Only the encroached part has been removed," Tripathi said. Additional Superintendent of Police P Vijay Shankar Mishra oversaw the security arrangements at the site, where five circle officers, station house officers of 10 police stations, and scores of constables were deployed during the demolition drive. Meanwhile, in Bareilly, Islamic cleric Shahabuddin Razvi Bareilly denounced the action against the "historical" mosque. "It is recorded in all government records, Declaring Noorie Mosque as illegal and running a bulldozer on it in such a situation is sheer injustice," Bareilly said.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE
I have changed my name Amarjeet Singh Chhabra to Amarjeet Singh S/o Anolakh Singh R/o122/235, Amar Guest house, Sarojani Nagar Kanpur

NOTICE
It is informed to the general public that my daughter's RIYA SINGH date of birth is recorded as 13 February 2008 in the records, which is wrong. The actual date of birth is 13 August 2010. Therefore, this should be considered correct and true correct. Kalpana Singh W/O late. Rajendra Bahadur Singh, resident of Pure Audan Singh Majre Hathnasa Jhaampur District Raebareilly.

सूचना
मेरे भूखण्ड संख्या 979 ब्लॉक-आर. एन. रतनलाल नगर कानपुर की मूल लीजडीज वास्तव में कहीं खो गई है इसका प्रयोग अवैध होगा। श्रीमती प्रीत कौर पत्नी श्री गुरविंदर सिंह

NOTICE
Informd all, In Army Records No. 8019098L of my husband, My name and date of Birth is Mithles Kumari (07.04.1960), which is incorrect. Correct name and date of Birth is Mithles Mishra (15.01.1953) supported by my civil records. Mithles Mishra W/o late Ashok Kumar Mishra R/o Village Ashikpur Auraiya, Tahsil Distt Fatehpur (U.P.)

NOTICE
This is to inform that Original Last Page of sale deed bearing doc. no. 13585, dated on 10/12/2009, regarding the property Bhukhand no. 2 part of khasra no. 520min, Situated at Village Ganeshpur Rehmanpur, Pargana, Tehsil & District Lucknow, which was duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar Lucknow, was lost on 20.11.2024, with my client namely Mohit Agarwal S/O Sri Rajendra Kumar Agarwal R/O 16-A, Patiyala House, Ashok Marg, Hazratganj, Lucknow. If any person or any financial institution or bank has objection/claim in this regards, kindly inform within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice and after the completion of above time period, no claim of any kind will be considered. B.N. Tripathi Advocate, Res: C-15, Nehru Vihar, Kalyanpur, Lucknow, Mob: 9336127853.

NOTICE
To all men to Know that Flat no. A 82/31/01, 11/rd Floor, Block-A 82, Two Bed Room (Type-A) Ashraya-1, Sulabhi Awas Sector-1, Gomti Nagar Extension, Lucknow Allotted and Registered in the name of Shushma Rai there after Pankaj Yadav Purchased the same Property from Shushma Rai Through Registry Dated 28.08.2016 Ser. No. 13375 This same Property's Original Allotment Letter AND Last Page of Sale Deed Dated 28.01.2015 Ser. No. 1093 On which mentioned Real Signature of Sub Registrar 2 H.K. Pandey Both Papers are only Lost not been Mortgaged or not been used anywhere else. Proposed Purchaser Mr. Piyush Srivastava C/o Rakesh Chandra Srivastava (Contact No. 8896109111) is interested to purchase the property from Current Owner Mr. Pankaj Yadav S/o Layak Singh Yadav by finance facility through Bank. If any one found Lost Original Allotment AND Last Page of Sale Deed Dated 28.01.2015 Or Any one has the Objection Or Problem with this Advertisement and Related to Property Transactions Or Related to Peaceful Possession of this property So pls Show Or Inform Only Written Objection to Bank of Baroda, Lucknow, Branch-Roshnabad, Contact No. 7565004453

Woman alleges threats by extorted goon, seeks police protection

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman has accused a youth and his associates of threatening her son and her son, preventing her son from earning a livelihood, in the Naka police station area, police said on Tuesday. The woman claimed she was able to save her life only after falling at the feet of the accused, identified as Kishan Sonkar, who had previously been banished from the city due to his criminal record, they added. In her complaint, the woman, Rama Devi Kashyap, did not elaborate on the reasons why she and her son were being harassed by Kishan Sonkar, whom she described as a habitual offender with a history of serving jail terms. Seeking protection for herself, her son, and their property, she alleged that the threats intensified recently. According to the complaint, at around 12:15 pm on December

6, she received a call from Sonkar on her son's mobile. Upon answering, Sonkar allegedly ordered her to come outside and issued a warning. Sonkar introduced himself and demanded to know about her son Ashish. "Ashish has earned enough money until now. I will not let him earn anymore. Tell him that if he tries, I will ensure multiple cases are registered against him, or I will deploy men around your house so you'll remember this your entire life. I was extorted from the district for three months because of you people, and now that I'm back in Lucknow, I will not spare you," Sonkar was quoted as saying by the woman in her complaint. She further alleged that at around 5 am on December 7, Sonkar reached her house and called for her elder son Anshu. "He said he would get Ashish killed. Sonkar, who had a pistol tucked into his waistband,

was accompanied by an associate named Jeet Narayan. He abused Anshu, threatened us, and said he would ensure we could no longer live in the area, adding that we would be beaten with shoes and slippers daily," the complainant alleged. She claimed she had filed a complaint earlier that day, but no action was taken by the authorities. Later that evening, around 8:52 pm, Sonkar allegedly returned with his brother Arun Sonkar, Mausam Sonkar, Aman Sonkar, and 4-5 unidentified associates. They allegedly abused the woman and her family and attempted to attack her son with an iron rod. "In fear, my family and I folded our hands and pleaded with Kishan Sonkar and his group to leave. They then threatened to kill us and demanded we leave Lucknow immediately," she alleged, seeking immediate intervention and protection from the authorities.

Not apologetic even if he said so: VHP chief on judge remark

Lucknow (PTI): Vishva Hindu Parishad chief Alok Kumar on Tuesday rejected opposition criticism of Allahabad High Court judge Shekhar Yadav for attending and speaking at a VHP event in Prayagraj, and asserted such "awareness meets" would continue to be organised. Justice Yadav spoke on Uniform Civil Code and other issues during a provincial convention of the VHP's Legal Cell and High Court Unit on Sunday. The videos of him speaking at the event, where he also reportedly said the law should work according to the majority, were circulated widely triggering a strong reaction from opposition parties. Kumar, who is VHP international president, said on Tuesday he was not present at the Prayagraj meeting, but was certainly aware of the deliberations. "We had invited the judge as a faculty to speak on the Uniform Civil Code. We work among former judges, invite them to work for the VHP, for Hindutva. But as far as sitting judges are concerned, we do not expect them or invite them to work for the VHP. Sometimes on topics like the UCC, we do invite them to enlighten us," Kumar told PTI on the phone. "So, on the issue of UCC, the HC judge said at the meet it was a Constitutional mandate under the Directive Principles of State Policy. He said it should be expected that the directives should be adhered to by elected representatives. He referred to various SC judgments that insisted the governments should evolve a UCC and said that the UCC would be good

for complete integration of society and unity of India," Kumar said. The VHP leader, however, said he was not aware of the exact nature of the comments on "majority" attributed to the HC judge, but "I would not be apologetic" even if the HC judge has said so about majority having a say in how the laws should work. "We had invited the judge to speak on the UCC. I would not be able to authenticate those views of his, but then the sentiments and emotions of the majority society deserve as much respect as the sensitivities of the minority," Kumar said. "For example, our respect for cows. They may or may not respect cows. Now we cannot force everyone to respect cows. But then, considering our sensitivities, others may not insist on cow slaughter... (and) if they have certain sensitivities on certain subjects, they should be respected. "Islam in India is technically a minority, but considering their good numbers, they are a second majority in India. So, unless we develop mutual respect, if not respect, then mutual tolerance for others' sensitivities, there cannot be any integration," the VHP leader said. "So, I would not be apologetic about it if he (the HC judge) said so. If a majority holds a particular view, then others should not make an issue of it," he said. Asked further on inviting a sitting judge at the event, Kumar said, "We ask our legal cell to organise awareness sessions or meetings inviting advocates in big numbers to advocate on

issues like liberation of Hindu temples, provisions and amendments of the Waqf Act, and on UCC. So there would be meetings everywhere." "We will invite former judges to speak on those aspects," the VHP chief told PTI. Kumar's reference to "former judges" possibly gave away that, at least for now, given the controversy the Prayagraj event stirred up, sitting judges might not feature in such VHP events. Meanwhile, lawyer and activist Prashant Bhushan wrote to Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna seeking an "in-house enquiry" into the conduct of Justice Yadav. In the letter, Bhushan said Justice Yadav delivered a speech endorsing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) while making controversial remarks perceived as targeting the Muslim community. In September 2021 also, Justice Shekhar Yadav made some observations on cows while hearing a case on their slaughter. "Cows should be declared the national animal, and cow protection should be kept as a fundamental right of Hindus because when the culture and faith of the country are hurt, the country becomes weak," he had said. He said the cow occupies an important place in Indian culture. "The great importance of the cow has been shown in the Indian Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana, etc. For this reason, cow is the basis of our culture." The VHP chief also said he was not aware of other comments attributed to the HC judge, including about how Hindu children were more tolerant than those from other faiths.

5 more KVVs to come up in UP

Lucknow (PNS): In a significant achievement for the Yogi Adityanath-led government in Uttar Pradesh, the state is set to have five new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVVs) in the near future. The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal, and the schools will be established in Ayodhya, Jaunpur, Kannauj, Bijnor, and Maharajganj, raising the total number of Kendriya Vidyalayas in the state to 127 — the highest in the country. The state has witnessed significant improvements in infrastructure and teaching methodologies, empowering students to excel in both national and international competitions. The addition

of these new schools is expected to further elevate the state's education standards and bring students previously deprived of quality education into the mainstream. Each of the new schools will have a capacity of 960 students and will create 63 permanent employment opportunities. Collectively, the five schools will provide high-quality education to 4,800 students while generating 315 permanent jobs. The Kendriya Vidyalaya in Ayodhya will be the second in the district, located in Chandpur Harvansh, ensuring greater access to quality education for local students. Similarly, schools will be established in Payagpur

(Jaunpur), Maharajganj, Kannauj, and Bijnor to cater to the growing demand for Kendriya Vidyalaya admissions. Currently, UP operates 122 Kendriya Vidyalayas across three divisions: Agra (37 schools), Lucknow (48 schools), and Varanasi (37 schools). With the addition of these new schools, the state strengthens its position as a leader in the Kendriya Vidyalaya network, offering the highest number of such institutions in India. All Kendriya Vidyalayas in the state, including the upcoming ones, will be designated as PM Shri Schools, adhering to the National Education Policy 2020.



People take part in a protest march against the atrocities on minorities in Bangladesh, in Lucknow on Tuesday PTI

Person faking sexual identity gets 20-year jail for raping minor

Bareilly (PTI): A local court here sentenced a 22-year-old person, who faked his sexual identity, to 20 years imprisonment for raping a minor girl, a police officer said on Tuesday. SP (City), Bareilly, Manush Pareek said initially the accused had claimed to be a female transgender, but a medical examination conducted at the SGPGI Lucknow, as per court orders, revealed the accused as biologically male. The incident occurred in the Mirganj area in August last year. Farin Kinar allegedly lured the minor victim on the pretext of watching TV. He also allegedly threatened to harm her if she disclosed the

incident, the officer said. "Hearing the case on Monday, Special Judge POCOS Court-3 Umashankar Khar found Farin guilty. The court considered the medical examination report and witness statements. Farin was sentenced to 20 years rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 12,000," the officer said.

incident, the officer said. "Hearing the case on Monday, Special Judge POCOS Court-3 Umashankar Khar found Farin guilty. The court considered the medical examination report and witness statements. Farin was sentenced to 20 years rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 12,000," the officer said.

Candidate caught with Bluetooth device during RPF SI exam

Lucknow (PNS): A candidate was allegedly caught cheating during the second shift of the RPF SI exam at UV Online Solution in Gomti Nagar Extension on Monday. The candidate had allegedly arrived at the exam centre with a Bluetooth device. The centre in-charge apprehended him and filed an FIR at the Gomti Nagar Extension police station. The police are currently carrying out an investigation into the incident. Ashish Singh, the centre in-charge, informed the police that the RRB RPF SI exam was being held on Monday in the second shift (12:30 to 2:00 pm). During the exam, invigilator Jyoti Gupta, who was on duty, discovered a Bluetooth device on the candidate, later identified as Akash. Jyoti Gupta immediately informed both the railway officials and the institute that had organised the exam. Akash, a resident of Rajan Nagla in Fatehgarh (Farrukhabad), was detained for further investigation. According to police, the Bluetooth device was found in the possession of the candidate, Akash. An FIR has been registered based on the complaint filed by the centre in-charge.

Unfinished structures sealed for land use violations

Lucknow (PNS): The anti-encroachment squad of Lucknow Development Authority on Tuesday sealed three incomplete structures, including one allegedly owned by a mafia figure claiming to be a leader of the opposition and enjoying the support of influential lobbies, along with two others in the Gomti Nagar area. Additionally, two unfinished commercial complexes and six low-cost houses were sealed in Gudamba. The unfinished marriage hall and banquet hall, occupying 3 bighas of land in Gomti Nagar, was set to be demolished, but a court order prevented the use of bulldozers. The developer is accused of violating the Urban Development Housing Act, failing to submit a layout plan to the mapping department, and grossly violating land use policy.

Upon learning that the ongoing project was to be sealed, the mafia attempted to pressurise LDA Vice-Chairman Prathmesh Kumar and senior officers, but to no avail. There was a heated exchange between the anti-encroachment squad members and local musclemen. Police officers accompanying the squad eventually removed the intruders. The operation lasted two hours without any untoward incidents.

IMM भारतीय प्रबन्धन संस्थान, रांची Indian Institute of Management, Ranchi
TENDER NOTICE
IIM Ranchi invites tender from eligible bidders for 'Engagement of an Agency for Preparation of Snag list for IIM Ranchi Project Phase-I'. The last date for submission of the bid is up to 03.00 PM on 24.12.2024. For More details, please refer to our website: www.iimranchi.ac.in

MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH PUNJAB TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, Dabwali Road, Bathinda-151001, Punjab (India)
(Established by Govt. of Punjab vide Punjab Act No. 5 of 1915)
No. E-TENDER/MRSP/UPR/PURCHASE/2024/544 Dated: 03-12-2024
E-TENDER NOTICE
E-tender is invited for Purchase of 3D Resin Printer. Rate Contact for Stationery items, Hiring of Chartered Accountants and Internet Lease Lines.
For details visit: www.mrspu.ac.in
Corrigendum, if any, will be issued on University website only.
Time & Schedule:-
Start Date: 09-12-2024 (11:00 AM)
Last Date of Submission: 30-12-2024 (03:00 PM)
REGISTRAR
na/12/26942/2023/39939 Dated CHD :- 12/9/2024

Yogi emphasises adapting to changing times



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi at the closing ceremony of the 92nd Founder's Week in Gorakhpur on Tuesday

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday highlighted the importance of adapting to the changing times, saying that those who fail to prepare and adapt to risks fall behind.

Adityanath said this while presiding over the closing ceremony of the 92nd Founder's Week celebrations of Pratap Shiksha Parishad here.

"The cycle of time moves continuously without waiting for anyone. Those who fail to prepare and adapt to risk fall behind," Adityanath said.

Welcoming Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi as the chief guest, Adityanath emphasised the importance of unity in driving initiatives for the welfare of society and the nation.

"When efforts are driven by collectivism and teamwork, the results naturally reflect the dedication and preparation involved, serving as a true measure of success," he said. The chief minister cited the successful fight against encephalitis in eastern Uttar Pradesh as an example of the power of teamwork and research.

He recalled how since 1977, the region suffered from encephalitis for over 40 years, which claimed the lives of thousands of children across 38 districts. In the early years, proper treatment facilities were non-existent, and even after vaccines became available, the virus adapted, prolonging the crisis, he said.

However in 2017, with the formation of his government, a collaborative effort involving the state and central governments, UNICEF, health organisations,

and various government teams, led to the creation of a robust action plan.

"The journey from facing a daunting challenge to achieving results exemplifies the power of teamwork and collective determination," the chief minister said.

He urged the youth to minimise the use of mobile phones, and focus their energy on hard work, studies, skill development and connecting with nature.

"We must ensure that we control technology and not let technology control us," he cautioned. Encouraging the youth to draw inspiration from Satyarthi's life and explore new opportunities that align with their interests and extend beyond personal preferences, he said, "Whether it's social service, women's and children's welfare, improving farmers'

lives, or any other area that benefits the society, choose a field and pursue it with dedication."

The chief minister also addressed the need for vision, preparation, and philosophical integrity in life, asserting that merely earning degrees or securing jobs should not define one's purpose.

Adityanath and Satyarthi jointly released the book 'Indian Concept of Education' authored by Shipra Singh, Head of the Department of Education. Satyarthi called for the globalisation of compassion, emphasising it as a divine force essential for human consciousness and wisdom.

Praising Adityanath, Satyarthi lauded his "humanitarian efforts", particularly during the pandemic. "CM Yogi is working with full dedication for the upliftment of humanity," he said.

Address public issues with urgency, empathy: CM

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday directed officials to address public issues with urgency and empathy, warning that negligence of any kind in redressal of people's grievances would not be tolerated.

These directives were issued during the CM's Janata Darshan held outside the Mahant Digvijaynath Smriti Bhawan in the Gorakhnath Temple complex here, an official statement said.

The chief minister listened to the concerns of around 150 individuals during the Janata Darshan, it said.

"Adityanath stressed the importance of prompt, transparent and satisfactory resolution of all issues faced by the citizens, reiterating that addressing public concerns is the top priority of the government," the statement said. He also forwarded the applications submitted by citizens to the concerned officials



and assured them of swift action and timely justice. Emphasising a zero-tolerance policy towards injustice, Adityanath directed officials to adopt a sensitive and proactive approach in assisting victims, particularly in cases of illegal land encroachments or

exploitation of vulnerable individuals, while ensuring strict legal action against the perpetrators. Several individuals sought financial assistance for medical treatment during the Janata Darshan and were promised full support by the chief minister, the statement said. He instructed officials to expedite the estimation process for treatment-related expenses to ensure timely aid. Adityanath arrived in Gorakhpur on Monday afternoon and stayed overnight at the Gorakhnath Temple, the statement added.

7 killed in truck-pickup vehicle collision

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Seven people lost their lives and 14 others were injured in a head-on collision between a container truck and pickup vehicle here on Tuesday, a senior official said.

According to police, the accident took place at the Jaipur village under the Hathras Junction police station. Hathras District Magistrate Rahul Pandey said, "Seven persons have died in the accident. This includes three men, three women and a child."

He added that seven injured persons are undergoing treatment at the district hospital in Hathras, while seven others

have been referred to a higher medical centre for treatment. Speaking to reporters, the DM said the pickup vehicle was going towards Etah and it collided head-on with a container truck.

He added that people of a family were travelling in the pickup vehicle.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in a post on X termed the loss of lives as "extremely sad and heart-wrenching."

"District administration officials have been instructed to carry out relief operations expeditiously and immediately take the injured to the hospital for proper treatment. I

pray to Lord Shri Ram to give a place to the departed souls at his feet and provide speedy recovery to the injured," Adityanath said on X.

Adityanath also instructed that a financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each be immediately provided to the families of the deceased, and Rs 50,000 each to the seriously injured, officials said.

Reports said that about 20 people and their relatives from Kumbhrai village of Chandapa police station area were going to see a 60-year-old cancer patient, a resident of Nagla Imaliya village in Etah, on Tuesday afternoon when a container hit their pickup vehicle

in Jaipur village near Salempur Bareilly-Mathura road of Hathras Junction area. The collision was so strong that the pickup vehicle overturned and rolled over before hurtling down a pit. Nearby villagers ran to the spot and took out the injured from the vehicle. Six people died on the spot, while others were injured. The injured were sent to the district hospital for treatment, where a woman also died. By the time the police reached the spot, passersby had taken out many injured from the pickup vehicle. The police have sent the bodies for the post-mortem examination and further investigations are ongoing.

Married couple found dead at their home, suspect held

LUCKNOW (PNS): A married couple was found dead inside their home in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi district on Tuesday, police said. A 60-year-old man has been arrested in connection with the incident.

The couple was allegedly killed with a sharp weapon in their home in Kutora village, under the Todi Fatehpur police station area. "The accused, Kashiram, entered the house on Tuesday morning and attacked Pushpendra (40) and his wife Sangeeta (35) with a sharp weapon. Pushpendra died on the spot, while Sangeeta succumbed to her injuries on the way to the hospital," Todi Fatehpur Station House Officer (SHO) Devesh Kumar Upadhyay said. The SHO stated that the motive for the killings is yet to be determined. "Kashiram has been taken into custody, and we are questioning him to determine the reasons behind the attack," Upadhyay added. The bodies have been sent for postmortem and further investigation is underway.

Power employees sport black bands to protest privatisation

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

On the call of the Vidyut Karmachari Sanyukt Sangharsh Samiti, a state-wide protest was organised against the privatisation of power distribution companies in Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday.

UP power employees and engineers sported black bands across the state in protest against the privatisation of power distribution companies. Power employees in Punjab and Maharashtra also joined the protest in support of UP.

As per the decision of the action committee, the power employees did not allow the work to be affected but showed their unity by wearing black bands and pledged to fight decisively against privatisation. Chief engineers also wore black bands.

Chairman of All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) Shailendra Dubey stated that a meeting of the National Coordination Committee of Electricity Employees and

Engineers (NCCOEEE) would be held in Lucknow on December 11 (Wednesday), in which the outline of the nationwide movement against the privatisation of electricity being carried out in Uttar Pradesh and Chandigarh would be decided.

He said NCCOEEE includes all the major power employees federations of the country, the Power Diploma Engineers Federation, and the All India Power Engineers Federation. NCCOEEE is the apex body of the Federation of Electrical Engineers, Diploma Engineers, and Engineers.

He added that deep resentment prevails among power employees across the country over the unilateral privatisation of Discoms in Uttar Pradesh.

In Uttar Pradesh, power employees in every district, including the capital Lucknow, expressed their anger against privatisation by wearing black bands.

From Class IV employees to chief engineers, all showed sol-

idarity by wearing black bands. During lunch breaks and after office hours, the electricity employees raised slogans against privatisation in the office premises.

The AIPEF appealed for the immediate intervention of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to cancel what they termed the "anti-employee privatisation."

The AIPEF said that under the leadership of the chief minister, the power employees of Uttar Pradesh have created a record by supplying the maximum electricity, up to 30,000 MW, in the country, and that the power employees of UP are determined to provide a better electricity system in the future. Hence, privatisation should not be unilaterally imposed on power employees.

AAP LEADER FLAYS GOVT

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) UP chief spokesperson Vanshraj Dubey criticised the Yogi Adityanath government's move to privatise electricity, claiming it would increase

unemployment instead of creating jobs.

He expressed concern over rising electricity rates in the state, calling it a serious issue for the common man. Dubey alleged that the government's privatisation plan aimed to benefit private companies, while people of UP deserved electricity similar to what Delhi residents receive.

Dubey opposed the privatisation proposal, saying it would cost 50,000 contract workers their jobs and lead to higher electricity prices for consumers. He highlighted the government's failure to create new jobs, while already-employed workers faced job insecurity.

He urged the government to withdraw the privatisation decision, protect workers' jobs, and avoid further financial hardship for the state's residents.

AI-enabled cameras in Kumbh for accurate headcount

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Artificial intelligence-enabled cameras will be installed at the Maha Kumbh 2025 to ensure an accurate headcount of devotees visiting one of the world's largest religious gatherings.

More than 40 crore people are expected to attend the Maha Kumbh, making it a record-breaking event. With AI-driven crowd density algorithms, the Uttar Pradesh government expects to achieve an impressive headcount accuracy of up to 95 per cent.

Organised every 12 years, the Maha Kumbh will be held from January 13 to February 26. Devotees from across the country gather at Prayagraj's sacred Triveni Sangam of the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati. The state government has created a new district, Mahakumbh Nagar, comprising 66 villages of four tehsils — Sadar, Soraon, Phulpur and Karchhana — for the Kumbh Mela.

The Uttar Pradesh government said in a statement on Tuesday that with the integra-

tion of modern systems, every devotee will be accounted for, creating a new milestone in crowd management and setting a global benchmark for such monumental events.

Under the guidance of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the fair administration is striving to make this the "largest headcount in the world", leveraging AI along with other innovative methods to achieve this groundbreaking feat, it said.

It noted that the gathering of devotees in Prayagraj during the Kumbh and Maha Kumbh has always been massive but the absence of precise technology for counting them posed challenges in the past.

The government said that to ensure precise headcount data, AI-enabled cameras are being deployed extensively.

"These advanced cameras will provide real-time updates every minute, with a primary focus on tracking devotees at the ghats," the statement said.

"The system will operate actively from 3 am to 7 pm, the peak hours for bathing rituals," it said.

"Previously, similar methods

were successfully implemented during the Magh Mela, demonstrating their reliability. With these advanced measures, the headcount at the Maha Kumbh 2025 is expected to achieve an impressive accuracy of up to 95 per cent," it added.

Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant said more than 40 crore people are expected to attend the Maha Kumbh 2025, making it a record-breaking event. To manage this unprecedented crowd, special measures have been put in place.

"Around 744 temporary CCTV cameras will be installed at 200 locations within the fair area while 1,107 permanent CCTV cameras have been set up at 268 locations across the city. Additionally, 720 CCTV cameras are being deployed across more than 100 parking areas to ensure seamless tracking and crowd management," he said.

To ensure effective monitoring of the vast gathering, dedicated viewing centres have been established at the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), Police Line Control Room and in Arai and Jhansi areas, he added.

POETIC TOUCH

The Maha Kumbh 2025, scheduled from January 10 to February 24, will feature a magnificent cultural extravaganza as the Yogi government spotlights artistes across diverse genres, including singing, dancing, and poetry. Being organised by the Uttar Pradesh Culture Directorate, the event promises to be a dynamic platform for both celebrated and emerging talents.

A major highlight of the cultural activities will be a Kavi Sammelan, where Kalpvasis, devotees, and tourists will immerse themselves in diverse poetic expressions, including Veer Ras, Shringar Ras, Hasya Ras, Karuna Ras, and Bhakti Ras.

Esteemed poets from Uttar Pradesh and across India will come together, making it a vibrant and national event. Eminent poets like Vishnu Saxena, Buddhinath Mishra, Ashok Chakradhar, Hariom Panwar, Kumar Vishwas, Shailesh Lodha, Manoj Muntashir, Vineet Chauhan, Anamika Ambar, Gajendra

Solanki, Dinesh Raghuvanshi, and Sunil Jogi will enthral audiences with their thought-provoking verses.

On the opening day, emerging poets like Anil Choubey from Varanasi, Shlesh Gautam from Prayagraj, Abhijeet Mishra from Rae Bareilly, Bhalchandra Tripathi from Azamgarh, and Vibha Singh from Sonbhadra will set the tone for the event. Similarly, on January 11, poets like Shailendra Madhur from Prayagraj, Neeraj Pandey from Rae Bareilly, Pankaj Pandit from Lalitpur, Shekhar Tripathi from Lucknow, and Abha Mathur from Prayagraj will captivate the audience.

On January 16, famous poets, including Buddhinath Mishra from Dehradun, Shashikant Yadav from Dewas, Aman Akshar from Indore, Akhilesh Dwivedi from Prayagraj, and Rajendra Shukla from Balaghat will enchant the audience with their poetic brilliance.

The grand finale on February 22 will include Kumar Vishwas and Shailesh Lodha along with Manoj Muntashir and Dinesh Digvijay.

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
 (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)
 CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
 Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031.
 Tel : +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

The following borrowers and co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) The loans of the below-mentioned borrowers and co-borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loan were classified as NPA as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) are mentioned as per respective notices issued more particularly described in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be applicable and the same will be charged as per contractual rate with effect from their respective dates.

| Sr No. | Loan Account No. | Type of Loan | Name of borrowers and co-borrowers | Section 13 (2) Notice Date | Outstanding amount as per Section 13 (2) Notice |
|--------|------------------|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | 112431752 | LOAN AGAINST PROPERTY | 1. BHUPINDER SINGH GANDHI 2. AMARDEEP KAUR GANDHI | 30.11.2024 | 11,36,396.55/- |

PROPERTY ADDRESS : ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PART OF RESIDENTIAL HOUSE NO. 76/1-2, ADMEASURING 37.174 SQ. METER, SITUATED AT CHANDAR NAGAR, OM NAGAR WARD, NEAR JAI PRAKASH CHAURAHA, AROGYA DHAM, TEHSIL/DISTRICT LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226005, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: REMAINING PART OF HOUSE NO.76/1-2, WEST: HOUSE OF SARDAR KARTAR SINGH, NORTH: REMAINING PART OF HOUSE NO.76/1-2, SOUTH: ROAD 12 FEET WIDE

You are hereby called upon to pay the amounts to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) as per the details shown in the above table with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc. within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to initiate proceedings, under Section 13 (4) and section 14 of the SARFAESI Act, against the mortgaged properties mentioned hereinabove to realize the amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited). Further you are prohibited under Section 13 (13) of the said Act from transferring the said secured assets either by way of sale/lease or otherwise.

Sd/-
 Authorized Officer
 IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)

Date : 11.12.2024
 Place : LUCKNOW

इंडियन बैंक
 (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)
इलाहाबाद

Indian Bank
 (A Govt. of India Undertaking)
ALLAHABAD

POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)
 [Under Rule-8 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) below with rule 3, 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice as detailed here in below calling upon the borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/ Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him/ her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules.

The Borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charges of the Indian Bank.

The Borrower's / Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

This Possession Notice is being served to the Borrower (s), Guarantor (s) & Mortgagor (s) to deposit the said dues. Details as under:

| S. N. | Name & Address of the Borrower (s)/ Guarantor (s)/ Proprietor / Mortgagors | Description of the Immovable Property | Dt. of Demand Notice Dt. of Possession Outstanding Amount |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Branch : Jankipuram Branch | | | |
| 1. | M/s Vijay Traders (Borrower), Registered Office: 616/30B, Sitapur Road, Vedanathpuram, Lucknow-228021 | (a). All part and parcel of the property consisting of Land and building at house at Plot No. 5, Khasra No.: 37(M) at village Mohibullahpur, Ward- Faizullahganj Jankipuram Tehsil and District- Lucknow measuring 72.30 square meter (778 square feet) in the name of Sri . Ram Krishna Singh Tomar S/o Ranvijay Singh Tomar (Proprietor, Guarantor and Mortgagor) Sale deed Registered in Book No. 1, Jild No: 2566 (Registration No.:378) ,Pages No. 197 to 212 at serial no. 378 dated 14/01/2005 with SR-IV, Lucknow. | 05.10.2024 07.12.2024 Rs. 53,93,165.01 and interest thereon |
| 2. | Mr. Ram Krishna Singh Tomar (Borrower, Proprietor and Mortgagor) S/o Ranvijay Singh Tomar, House at Plot No. 5, Khasra No.: 37(M) at Mohibullahpur, Ward- Faizullahganj Tehsil and District- Lucknow | Boundaries: East: 20 feet Wide Road, West: House of Saroj, North: House of Suresh P. Singh, South: House of Surjeet Kumar Shukla | |
| 3. | Mrs. Beenu Singh w/o Ram Krishna Singh Tomar (Guarantor), House at Plot No. 5, Khasra No.: 37 (M) at Mohibullahpur, Ward- Faizullahganj Tehsil and District- Lucknow | (b). All part and parcel of hypothecation of entire current assets of the firm including stock/inventory, Book debts and other movable assets of the firm. | |
| 4. | Mr. Manoj Kumar Singh s/o Girja Singh (Guarantor), House at Plot No. 5, Khasra No.: 37(M) at Mohibullahpur, Ward- Faizullahganj Tehsil and District- Lucknow | (c). All part and parcel of hypothecation of Commercial vehicle- Good Carrier registered with no.: UPS2SN3548 (In the name of M/s Vijay Traders) | |

Date : 11.12.2024 Place: Lucknow Authorised Officer Indian Bank

Chaudhary: BJP will win most seats in 2027 assembly poll

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Uttar Pradesh Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Bhopendra Singh Chaudhary, while talking to mediapersons here at party's Bundelkhand-Kanpur office in Keshav Nagar on Tuesday, said the incident in Sambhal was a part of the battle for supremacy between two families which cost the people there dearly.

He said causes of party's defeat in Sisamau (Kanpur) constituency bypoll were reviewed. In 2027 assembly elections, BJP will emerge victorious on most of the seats all over the state, including Sisamau, he added. Chaudhary said under the



State BJP President Bhopendra Singh Chaudhary addressing mediapersons on Tuesday.

Sangthan Mahapary 2024, party had made 2.5 crore ordinary members in the state in the first phase. In the next phase, it roped in two lakh active members. Besides, 1.62

lakh local committees (booths) had also been set up. Up to December 15, the process for setting up mandal committees and till December 30, the appointment of district presidents will be finalised. The process for the selection of state president will be over by January 15, 2025, and thereafter the selection of national president will take place. He said the 'One nation, one election' Bill was likely to be passed soon. He had already put up his views before Prime Minister Narendra Modi on this issue and efforts were on to conduct all elections at one time to avoid wastage of money and inconvenience to people, he said.

Power employees protest against privatisation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

On the call of Vidyut Karamchari Samyukta Sangharsh Samiti, Uttar Pradesh, the Electricity department employees and engineers of Varanasi, like all other districts of the state, projects and UPPCL headquarters Lucknow, tied black armbands and registered their protest here on Tuesday. Along with this, they appealed to the Prime Minister and Chief Minister to cancel the proposed decision of privatisation of electricity in public interest. The employees and officers took an oath and said that they will work day and night for the progress of the department and consumer service. As per the decision of the JAC, the electricity employees did not let the work get affected but showed their unity by tying black armbands and resolved to fight decisively. The chief engineers of the state also tied black armbands.



The Electricity department employees protesting in Varanasi on Tuesday.

According to the power employees, a meeting of the National Coordination Committee of Electricity Employees and Engineers (NCCOEEE) will be held in Lucknow in which the outline of the nationwide movement against the privatisation of the Electricity department will be decided. The JAC leaders have once again appealed to the CM to immediately intervene

in the matter and cancel the anti-employee process of privatisation. They said under the leadership of the CM, the electricity employees of UP have created a record by supplying the highest power supply of 30,000 MW in the country and the electricity workers are committed for even better power system in future and in such a situation, privatisation should not be imposed on the

electricity employees of the state. **WOMEN PUBLIC HEARING:** The Uttar Pradesh State Women Commission is running a programme of review/women public hearing/inspection of incidents of harassment of women in the district in the government guest houses of various districts of the state with the senior administrative officer nominated by the District Magistrate of the district concerned, Senior Superintendent of Police or senior police officer nominated by him, Mahila police station head and the CO of the police station concerned. In its continuation State Women Commission member Neelam Prabhat will conduct a women public hearing in the Circuit House auditorium here on December 11 at 11 am and thereafter women's prisons, girls/women homes and Anganwadi centres will also be inspected.

ASHA workers identifying children suffering from pneumonia: CMO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS) campaign is being run from November 12 with the aim of reducing the mortality rate of children up to five years by preventing pneumonia and providing timely and appropriate treatment. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said under it children suffering from pneumonia are being identified at the community level by ASHA workers in urban and rural areas and they are being referred to the hospitals if symptoms are found. The CMO said the medical care of children is being continuously supervised and monitored. "About 17.5 per cent of deaths in children below the age of five are due to pneumonia. Pneumonia is caused by lung infection, bacteria, virus and fungal infection. For the good health of the child, all lactating mothers should breastfeed the child immediately after birth till six months and after it they should give proper supplementary food and vitamin A supplements. To prevent diseases, they should

pay special attention to vaccination of the child and hygiene of hands, clean drinking water and household pollution", Dr Chaudhary added. Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Nodal Officer of RCH Programme Dr HC Maurya said the doctors and paramedical staff of all community health centres (CHCs), primary health centres (PHCs) and district hospitals have been sensitised for the management of pneumonia, and all equipment and medicines have been made available so that the lives of children suffering from pneumonia can be saved in time. "So far, during the campaign, 3,522 children have been examined by ASHA workers, in which 272 children were identified, 118 were treated at the PHCs and 154 were referred to the district hospitals and medical college", he said. He said there can be various reasons for pneumonia in children such as low weight, malnutrition, not breastfeeding for six months and not paying attention to household pollution, not getting measles and PCV vaccination done, congenital malformations like cleft palate, genetic heart defects and asthma increase the chances of pneumonia.

Protection for Bangladeshi Hindus demanded



A massive dharna-cum-demonstration being staged at GNK school compound, Bara Chauraha on Tuesday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

On the call of Bangladeshi Hindu Raksha Sangharsh Samiti (BHRSS), a massive dharna-cum-demonstration was staged under the leadership of eminent seers at the GNK School compound, Bara Chauraha, here on Tuesday. The event aimed at seeking protection for Bangladeshi Hindus. After the dharna, a large number of community members took out a foot march up to the office of the Divisional Commissioner where they handed over a memorandum, addressed to the President of India, to the assistant divisional commissioner Renu

Singh. Prominent seers and RSS office-bearers who led the demonstration were Mahant Jitendra Das, Krishna Das of Hanuman temple, Mahant Balyogi Arun Chaitanyapuri of Baba Sidhnath Dham, Mahant Arun Bharti of Anandeshwar temple, RSS office-bearers Virendrajit Singh, Bhawani Bhiik, Sriramji and Dr Shyam Babu Gupta. Addressing the gathering, former Kheshtra Sangchalak Virendrajit Singh said the dharna was organised in protest against the alleged atrocities on Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh. Mahant Jitendra Das, Balyogi Arun Puri, general secretary of Kanpur Bar Association Amit Singh also spoke on the occasion. Prakash

Sharma put up the objectives of the programme while Gaurang conducted the proceedings. A large number of seers, public representatives, lawyers, office-bearers of various trade and social organisations were also present at the dharna. **BULLDOZED:** The Enforcement Squad of Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) bulldozed 27 illegal constructions in Gangaganj Panki and Shatabdi Nagar on Monday. The officials of the squad also ordered to cut the trees on the plots. On protest, officials informed that they had the consent of the forest department to cut them. They also warned the encroachers that FIR will be filed against people

CCRS to conduct safety inspection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In order to upgrade passenger facilities and expand the infrastructure for operational ease by the Railway administration, after the completion of the doubling work of the newly-constructed important bridge number 111 and its approach via duct with electrified line of Prayagraj Rambagh-Jhusi (7.33 km) rail section of Varanasi Division (North Eastern Railway), Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety (CCRS) Janak Kumar Garg will conduct safety inspection of this section on Wednesday. During this inspection, Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) Abhay Kumar Gupta, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM/Varanasi) Vineet Kumar Srivastava,

Executive Director of RVNL Vikas Chandra, Chief Project Manager (RVNL) VK Agrawal along with senior officials of NER Headquarters Gorakhpur, Varanasi Division and Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) will be present. After this proposed safety inspection, CCRS Special is also to conduct a speed test at full speed on the Jhusi to Prayagraj Rambagh rail section. The Railway administration has appealed to the people around the railway track falling in Jhusi - Prayagraj Rambagh rail section to maintain a safe distance from this rail section and electric traction/poles during the inspection and speed trial of CCRS and do not let the children and animals go near the railway track because it can be dangerous.

Two killed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Two youths riding a bike were killed after colliding with a trolley near Rangnath Mod on Devghat Marg in Koraon police station area of Prayagraj late on Monday night. The police have sent the bodies for postmortem and have started the investigation. Pappu (25) of Badowa Pal of Koraon police station area and Anand Kumar (23) of Nevdihiya Pal village were returning home from Koraon market on Monday night. Due to a slope on the Devghat main road near Rangnath Mod, they lost control over the vehicle and rammmed into a trolley parked on the side of the road from behind. As a result of which both died on the spot. On getting information Koraon police reached the spot and took both the bodies into possession. Koraon police station in charge Nitendra Kumar Shukla said that the bodies have been sent for post-mortem. Investigation is being done on the complaint of the family members. Further action will be taken soon. Meanwhile the body of a 25-year-old youth who was found lying in a pool of blood on the banks of the Ganga river in Lilapur Khurd Kachhar under Sarai Inayat here was identified by his relatives on Tuesday. The body was identified when the photographs of the victim was circulated on the social media. The deceased was identified as Sipu Patel of Sadapur Dhamaoayan village. His wife Pooja Patel reached the police station and identified the body. Police station in charge Sanjay Gupta said the police is engaged in investigation from many angles. On Monday the villagers going to bathe in the Ganga spotted the body and informed the police. As soon as the news spread, a crowd of villagers gathered there. A heavy iron object, knife, liquor bottle etc. were found lying near the body.

Importance of addressing emerging challenges in infectious diseases through innovation stressed



The Infectious Disease Update-2024 being inaugurated at IMS-BHU in Varanasi on Tuesday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Director of Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (IMS-BHU) Prof SN Shankhwar emphasised the critical importance of addressing emerging challenges in infectious diseases through collaboration and innovation. He was inaugurating the Infectious Disease Update-2024, a prestigious and highly impactful academic event organised by the Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, IMS-BHU at KN Udupa Auditorium here on Tuesday alongside Prof Ashok Kumar, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, and Prof Gopal Nath, Dean, Research. The scientific sessions were enriched by the presence of eminent speakers from across the country, whose expertise captivated the audience. Dr P Senthur Nambi, an infectious diseases specialist from Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, delivered an insightful lecture on emerging therapies for carbapenem-resistant gram-negative organisms. Dr Atul Gogia, senior consultant at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi, presented a fascinating assortment of interesting infectious disease cases, which sparked engaging discussions. The session by Dr BB Rewari,

who had been the National Programme officer at NACO and established the ART programme in India deliberated on the current standard of Care of HIV patients and beyond. Dr V Ramasubramanian, an expert from Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, offered a comprehensive analysis of fungal infections in the ICU, addressing critical care concerns. Lastly, Dr Umang Agrawal, infectious diseases consultant at PD Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai, highlighted the growing threat posed by gram-positive organisms, bringing attention to urgent healthcare challenges. The event was attended by about 200 delegates from different parts of the country. It served as a transformative platform for healthcare professionals, researchers and students to exchange innovative ideas and explore the latest advancements in the field of infectious diseases. The Infectious Disease Update 2024 was organised under the leadership of Prof Shyam Sundar as the organising chairman, Prof Jaya Chakravarty as the organising secretary, with the support of Prof LP Meena, Head of the Department of Medicine and Prof Manaswi Chaube. Dr Jaya highlighted the growing prevalence of antibiotic resistance among

patients referred to BHU and the need among health care workers to be updated on the new treatment options for these infections. **TRICENTENARY CELEBRATION:** The 'Punyashlok' Ahilyabai Holkar Jayanti tricentenary celebration is scheduled to be held in Swatantrata Bhawan Auditorium of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) on Tuesday. Giving this information while addressing a press conference at Vishwa Sanvad Kendra here on Monday, renowned writer and member of Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar Tricentenary Celebration Organising Committee Neeraja Madhav said the role of mother power has always been underlined in the preservation and promotion of Indian culture. "The entire life of Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar is a witness to the fact that Ahilyabai, born in an ordinary household later became inspirational as a justice loving queen, people loving ruler, religious and cultural protector. Lokmata Ahilyabai devoted her entire life to the reconstruction and renovation of temples destroyed by the Mughals. She dedicated her life for the common people", she said. Dr Kumkum Pathak, media coordinator of the ceremony, said to transfer all these facts once again to the society and new generations, a grand celebration of the 300th anniversary of Mata Ahilyabai Holkar is being organised at the Swatantrata Bhawan of BHU on Wednesday from 3 pm. The Rajyabhishek (coronation) of Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar took place on December 11 itself, hence the organisation of this ceremony has been confirmed on this date in Kashi. She said the programme will also be attended by Sah Sarkarvah of the Rashtriya

Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Mukund. As special guests, descendants of Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar, Uday Singh Raje Holkar and retired Lieutenant General Dr Madhuri Kanitkar will be present. Along with this, a special issue of Chetna Pravah based on the entire life of Ahilyabai Holkar will be released, she added. This programme will be presided over by Prof Chandrakala Padia. Organising Committee member Prof Ramnarayan Dwivedi said Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar is our ideal, her 300th birth anniversary is being celebrated with great enthusiasm throughout the country and it is the good fortune of all of us that we will be witnesses to this auspicious occasion. **CONFERENCE:** The International Conference on 'Stories Matter: (Re)-thinking Narratives, Aesthetics and Human Values' saw its successful culmination at Swatantrata Bhawan in BHU here on Monday with insightful sessions and talks by eminent scholars. The valedictory session had an address by the eminent academic, writer and anthropologist Prof Malashri Lal, Department of English, University of Delhi. She delivered her address on the topic 'Rethinking Mythology: Gender and Human Values for Current Times'. The session was chaired by Principal of Vasanta College for Women, Rajghat (Varanasi), Prof Alka Singh. This was followed by a presentation of the report of the conference, delivered by Prof Archana Kumar, the co-convenor of the conference. Prof Kumar proposed the vote of thanks. The Head of the English department, BHU, and the convenor of the conference, Prof Anita Singh graced the session, along with other faculty members, scholars, and students from around the country.

Human Rights Day celebrated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Human Rights Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm by the Human Right Cell of Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar, on Tuesday. The event aimed at spreading awareness about human rights and emphasise the importance of equality, dignity and freedom for all. The rally which began at 10:30 am from college campus was flagged off by the Principal Prof Anju Choudhary. Students, faculty members and staff holding slogan posters and banners with messages promoting human rights, such as "Equal Rights for All", "Stand for Justice", and "Dignity Without Discrimination" participated enthusiastically. Following the rally, a human chain was formed nearby the college campus symbolising unity and collective effort toward safeguarding human rights. The participants stood hand in hand, showcasing their



The MVV Kidwai Nagar organised a rally on Human Right Day on Tuesday.

commitment to the cause. A slogan writing competition was also organised among the students. Principal Prof Anju Choudhary addressed the gathering and emphasised the significance of recognising and protecting human rights in today's world. Convenor of the Human Right Cell Dr Anamika Verma said "Every individual deserves respect, equality, and justice. Events like these remind us of our responsibilities toward creating an inclu-

sive and just society." The programme concluded with a pledge taken by all participants to uphold human rights and work towards spreading awareness within their communities. Co-convenor Dr Saba Yunus, Dr Noor Fatima, Dr Shobhana Dwivedi, Dr Shalini Srivastava, Prof Mamta Gangwar, Dr Dipali Nigam, Dr Meera Tripathi, Dr Nishi Singh, Dr Mamta Mishra and all the MVMians made the programme successful.

Road accident claims lives of two cousins

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Two cousin brothers were killed when an unidentified vehicle hit their bike from behind in Chakeri police station area late on Monday night when they were going to attend a marriage ceremony. On being informed by some passers-by, police rushed to spot and took the injured brothers to the Kashiram Hospital where they were declared dead by the doctors. Thereafter police informed the kin of the deceased. According to a report received here Mohit Paswan (25) of Gambhirpur village, Panki, was going to attend a marriage ceremony in

Chakeri on the bike along with cousin Satyam Paswan (23). When they reached near Shyam Nagar, Koela Nagar, the unidentified vehicle knocked them down from behind. The passers-by informed the police on Dial-112 after which PRV reached the spot and took the injured youths to the Kashiram Hospital where they were declared dead by the doctors. Station House Officer (SHO) Ashok Kumar Dubey said the bodies had been sent for an autopsy. On the basis of complaint, a first information report (FIR) will be lodged and action will be taken against the guilty, he said.

Gita Jayanti Mahotsav

Varanasi (PNS): Gita discourse is organised every Sunday in every academic session by Gita Samiti, Malaviya Bhawan, BHU in which renowned scholars from India and abroad are invited for Gita discourse. Like every year, this year also the organisation of Gita Jayanti Mahotsav has been confirmed on Wednesday at 10.30 am. In it winners of Gita recitation and speech competitions in junior, middle and senior categories were held recently will be awarded on the occasion of Gita Jayanti Mahotsav by the chief guest of the programme and V-C of Jagadguru Shri Rambhadracharya Divyanga University Prof Shishir Kumar Pandey. The main speaker will be CEO of Kashi Vishwanath Temple Vishva Bhushan Mishra.

One nation, one subscription initiative to provide access to 1.8 Crore students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

About 1.8 crore students from state-funded higher education institutions, including universities and IITs, will have access to research papers published in top journals across the world from January 1 as part of the government's 'One Nation, One Subscription' initiative. Addressing a Press conference, the government's Principal Scientific Advisor AK Sood said more than 13,400 international journals covering science, technology, engineering, medicine, mathematics,



management, social sciences and humanities would be made available to researchers under the 'One

Nation, One Subscription' (ONOS) initiative's first phase. Under the initiative, 451 state public universities,

4,864 colleges and 172 institutes of national importance will be among the 6,380 higher education and research institutes that will have access to top journals published by 30 publishers, including Elsevier, Springer Nature, and Wiley. "Earlier, the institutions such as IITs or central universities subscribed to a small set of journals related to specific disciplines but, under the ONOS, all institutions will have access to 13,400 research journals," said Department of Science and Technology Secretary Abhay Karadikar. He said the ONOS initiative would

be launched on January 1 and access to top journals available for the next three years. In the second phase, the government plans to extend the initiative to private academic institutions through a public-private partnership model. The third phase will grant universal access to international journals through designated access points at public libraries. ONOS will be coordinated by a central agency - the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), an autonomous inter-university centre of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

President Murmu highlights emerging threats to human rights, citing AI, cyber crimes and climate change

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said the human rights discourse so far has been centred on the "human agency" as the violator is assumed to be a human but with AI entering our lives, the "culprit could be a non-human" but an intelligent agent. In her address at an event hosted by the NHRC to mark the Human Rights Day, the President also underlined that cyber crimes and climate change are "new threats" to human rights. Human Rights Day is observed on December 10 every year to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. The UDHR serves as a

global benchmark for the protection and promotion of human rights. "As we progress into the future, we are confronted with emerging challenges. Cyber crimes and climate change are new threats to human rights," Murmu said. The digital era, while being transformative, had brought with it complex issues such as cyber bullying, deep fake, privacy concerns and spread of misinformation, she added.

"These challenges underscore the importance of fostering a safe, secure and equitable digital environment that protect the rights and dignity of every individual," the President said. In her address, she also touched upon the aspect of AI and its impact on human lives. "Artificial intelligence has now entered our day-to-day life, solving many problems, and creating several new ones too," Murmu said. The human rights discourse so far has been "centred on the human agency", that is the violator is assumed to be a human being, who would have a "range of human emotions such as compassion and guilt," she said. "With AI, however, the culprit could be a non-human but intelligent agent. I leave the matter for you to ponder over," the President said.

India issues 361 Ayush visas to foreigners for medicine treatment



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As of December 4, 2024, a total of 123 regular Ayush Visas, 221 e-Ayush Visas, and 17 e-Ayush Attendant Visas have been issued under the Ayush Visa category introduced in July last year, specifically for foreigners seeking treatment under the Ayush system of medicine. These include Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy. The Ayush Visa is granted to foreign nationals whose primary purpose is to seek therapeutic care or wellness treatment at hospitals or wellness centers accredited by government authorities, the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH), the National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH), or the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) said Union Minister

of State for Ayush, Prataprao Jadhav, in a written reply to a query in the Rajya Sabha. In addition, the Advantage Healthcare India portal, launched by the Union Health Ministry serves as India's official "one-stop" platform for facilitating Medical Value Travel (MVT). It provides essential information for international patients seeking medical treatment in India. Interested patients can access the portal at www.healinindia.gov.in, said the Minister. It was in 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced creation of Ayush Visa, seeking to make it a part of India's roadmap for the Heal in India initiative of the government. To further promote India as a destination for medical tourism, the Government hosted the Ayush Medical Value Travel Summit 2024 in Mumbai on September 30, 2024. The summit, themed "Global Synergy in Ayush: Transforming Health and Wellness through Medical Value Travel", aimed to integrate traditional Indian medicine with modern healthcare and strengthen India's position in the global MVT sector, the Minister added.

India, EU to launch first-ever ministerial strategic foreign policy dialogue amid rising geo-political tensions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



India and the European Union on Tuesday agreed to hold the first-ever ministerial strategic foreign policy dialogue soon to jointly navigate an array of critical challenges including geo-political tensions and Chinese belligerence in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. The decision to institute the strategic dialogue was taken during a phone conversation between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his counterpart from the 27-nation bloc Kaja Kallas. In a post on 'X', Kallas, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, said it was agreed to hold the first ministerial strategic foreign policy dialogue soon.

The move to hold the dialogue comes months before India and the EU hold summit-level talks in New Delhi that is expected to see significant outcomes in terms of deepening of cooperation in a range of areas such as security, digital public infrastructure and trade. It is expected that the dialogue at the level of foreign ministers of the two

sides will provide a platform to evolve joint strategies and forge deeper cooperation in confronting various geo-political challenges including from China, people familiar with the matter said. "It was great talking to @DrSJaishankar of India this morning. Global security challenges are interconnected. We will focus together to make

progress on security, trade, digital and green transition," Kallas said. "We agreed to hold the first ministerial Strategic Foreign Policy Dialogue soon," she added. On his part, Jaishankar said: "Discussed developments in Europe, West Asia and Indo-Pacific. Look forward to an early meeting." On the Jaishankar-Kallas talks, EU Ambassador to India Herve Delphin said both sides committed to advance India-EU cooperation on a wide range of foreign policy and security issues of mutual interest. The decision to institute the strategic dialogue is seen as a major move after the launch of India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) in February last year.

Subsequently, both sides established three working groups under the TTC. The first working group is on strategic technologies, digital governance and digital connectivity. The second one is on green and clean energy technologies and the third one is on trade, investment and resilient value chains. The TTC is facilitating exchange of critical technologies relating to an array of domains including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors and cybersecurity. The TTC with India was the European Union's second such technology partnership after the first one with the United States that was formed in June 2021. The formation of the TTC

followed the announcement on it by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on April 25, 2022. India and the EU are also looking at forging deeper cooperation to ensure a free, open, inclusive and rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific. In August last year, the EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Atlanta flagship, ITS Durand De La Penne conducted a joint activity at sea with the Indian destroyer INS Visakhapatnam in the framework of the EU's strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Operation Atlanta is a critical maritime security operation under the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Ecologist Madhav Gadgil receives UN's highest environmental honor for western ghats conservation



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The United Nations on Tuesday honored ecologist

Madhav Gadgil with the prestigious Champions of the Earth award, its highest environmental recognition, for his outstanding contributions to

the conservation of the Western Ghats, a critical biodiversity hotspot. Gadgil, the only Indian recipient this year, chaired the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, which studied the impact of population growth, climate change, and development on the region's fragile ecosystem. In 2011, the panel recommended declaring the entire Western Ghats an Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) and dividing it into

three Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ 1, 2, and 3) based on environmental vulnerability. It also called for a ban on activities like mining, quarrying, and large-scale infrastructure projects in the most sensitive zones (ESZ 1). Despite strong opposition from state governments, industries, and local communities, Gadgil's recommendations laid the groundwork for future conservation efforts.

In 2012, UNESCO recognized the Western Ghats as a World Heritage Site, and the following year, the Government established a High-Level Working Group in 2013, led by K. Kasturirangan, to develop sustainable development and protection measures for the region. This group identified 37% of the Western Ghats, covering nearly 60,000 square kilometers, as ecologically sensitive.

PM Modi to interact with young innovators at Smart India Hackathon 2024



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with young innovators at the grand finale of Smart India Hackathon - 2024 via videoconferencing on Wednesday, his office said. The seventh Smart India Hackathon will run concurrently at 51 centres nationwide, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said. Modi will interact with the young innovators at the grand finale via videoconferencing around 4:30 pm on Wednesday. More than 1,300 student teams will participate in the grand finale and the prime minister will also address the gathering. The Software Edition will run nonstop for 36 hours while the Hardware Edition will run from Wednesday to Sunday. Like past editions, the student teams will work on either the problem statements given by ministries, departments or industries or submit their own ideas in the Student Innovation Category against any of the 17 themes linked to sectors of national importance. These sectors are -- healthcare, supply chain and logistics, smart technologies, heritage and culture, sustainability, education and skill development, water, agriculture and food, emerging technologies, and disaster management. Some of the interesting problem statements of this year's edition include "Enhancing Images of Darker Regions on the Moon" presented by ISRO; "Developing a Real-time Ganga Water Quality Monitoring System using AI, Satellite Data, IoT, and Dynamic Models" presented by the Union Jal Shakti ministry, and "Developing a Smart Yoga Mat Integrated with AI" presented by the AYUSH ministry. This year, more than 250 problem statements have been submitted by 54 ministries, departments, state governments, PSUs and industries.

Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announces 16-fold increase in urban sector investments since 2014

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday said there has been a substantial increase in investments in the urban sector since 2014 and emphasised the Centre's dedication to realising the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. Addressing a press conference on achievements of his ministry, the Union Housing and Urban Affairs minister said investments have increased 16-fold, rising from approximately Rs 1,78,053 crore between 2004 and 2014 to Rs 28,52,527 crore since 2014. Urban development schemes have been expanded and implemented with greater speed and efficiency in the past six months, asserting that the rapid pace of urbanisation has made urban development a key pillar of India's growth



strategy, he said. The minister said that under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) between 2004 and 2014, projects worth Rs 66,837 crore were sanctioned, but the Modi government has sanctioned projects worth Rs 2.73 lakh crore under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) since 2014. Talking about urban housing and PMAY 2.0, Khattar said a new rental housing vertical has been introduced under the second phase of the

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), benefiting the migrant population. Under this scheme, new initiatives such as provisional sanctions for around 7 per cent of the planned 1 crore urban houses based on the population of states signing MoUs, have been made and it will ensure timely allocation and expediting the process. To streamline operations, sanctions to states will be finalised based on the demand received by March 31, 2025, providing clarity on yearly house allocations, he said,

adding that 88.32 lakh houses have competed under the PMAY 2.0. Khattar said a revamped National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) will soon be launched, informed by the results of a pilot project currently underway in 25 cities. Giving details about the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), the union minister said loan amounts of 13,422 crore have been disbursed under the scheme so far. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, since June 9, 2024, the government has released more than Rs 1,123 crore. Over the past six months since June 9, two major dumpsites in Ahmedabad and Hyderabad have been completely remediated, successfully addressing approximately 2.5 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste, Khattar added.

'Hamara Shauchalay: Hamara Samman' campaign achieves milestone in sanitation drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Over 3.35 lakh new individual household latrines were sanctioned and assessment and functional improvement of over 1.54 lakh Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs), covering more than 70 per cent of existing facilities, it said. Additionally, over 3.35 lakh new Individual Household Latrines (IHHLs) were sanctioned, addressing critical sanitation gaps and advancing the mission of complete sanitation coverage, the statement said. States across the country showcased innovative approaches during the campaign. In Jammu and Kashmir, mobile LED-equipped vehicles spread sanitation awareness across districts. Bihar involved Self-Help Groups to conduct surveys and promoted school-based activities for youth engagement. Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi district

utilised Google Maps to track CSCs, ensuring accessibility and proper maintenance. Rajasthan led efforts with the construction of over 750 pink toilets and the beautification of one lakh IHHLs. Gujarat introduced the "Our Toilet, Our Respect" initiative in schools, while West Bengal established model toilets in all gram panchayats. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu focused on beautifying CSCs and IHHLs, transforming sanitation facilities into community landmarks, the statement said. The campaign also included high-level involvement, with active participation from governors, Union ministers, Members of Parliament, state leaders, and panchayat members. Water and sanitation committees were activated at multiple levels to ensure accountability and long-term sustainability, the statement added.

Indian universities shine in QS sustainability rankings 2025: IISc, IITs make significant gains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Indian universities have made significant strides in the latest QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025, with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru securing a spot among the world's top 50 institutions for Environmental Education. Released by QS Quacquarelli Symonds, global higher education experts, the rankings evaluate universities based on sustainability efforts across environmental and social impact metrics. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi leads the Indian list, achieving a remarkable improvement of 255 places to

secure 171st rank globally. It is followed by IIT Kharagpur (202nd) and IIT Bombay (234th), both of which have also climbed significantly in the rankings. University of Delhi is the only Indian varsity which has seen a decline in ranks this year, as it slipped from 220 last year to 299 rank this year, but has appeared sixth on the Indian list. A total of 78 Indian universities feature in the 2025 QS Sustainability rankings, with nine of the top 10 institutions in the country improving their ranking this year. A total of 21 varsities are new to the ranking this time. IIT-Delhi and IIT-Kanpur have been ranked among the world's top 100 for

environmental impact. IIT Delhi (IITD) is the top ranked Indian institution in the Social Impact (362) and the Environmental Impact (55) categories. It is also top in two lenses - Employability and Outcomes (116) and Environmental Research (256). Manipal Academy of Higher Education - Manipal University (MAHE) is the top ranked Indian university in the Governance category. It is also top in India for Equality, ranked at 390 globally. IIT Bombay is top in the Environmental Sustainability lens, placed at 38 globally. IIT Kharagpur is top in India for two lenses - Impact of Education (676) and Health and Wellbeing (391). Also,

DU is top in India for Knowledge Exchange, coming in at 121 globally. IISc is placed 32nd worldwide in the Environmental Education lens. Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru has been ranked among world's top 50 for environment education. "Of the 78 Indian universities that feature in the 2025 QS Sustainability rankings, 34 have improved on last year's placing and eight have maintained their positions. "This is an excellent achievement for the Indian higher education ecosystem and shows that Indian universities are forging ahead with their sustainability initiatives," said Ben Sowter,

Vice President of London-based QS. "Within the Social Impact category, Indian universities can look to improve their indicator scores in the Health and Wellbeing, Impact of Education and Equality lenses, where no institutions from the country feature in the top 350. Universities from India scored better in the Knowledge Exchange and Employability and Outcomes lenses," Sowter added. This time, seven African universities rank in the top 500. The University of Cape Town ranks 45th, the highest in the region. Cairo University is ranked 370th. Australia has 14 universities in the top 100, with the

University of Melbourne maintaining its position at ninth. QUT is the only Australian institution to climb the table. The 2025 rankings showcase over 1,740 universities from 107 countries and territories, reflecting significant growth from the previous edition, which included 1,397 institutions across 95 locations. The University of Toronto is the top ranked university this year, ahead of ETH Zurich which got second place, and Lund University in Sweden and University of California, Berkeley (UCB) in joint third. Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU) has made an

emphatic statement about its commitment to sustainability by ranking in the 951-960 bracket in the QS World Sustainability Rankings 2025. Rising to 35th place in India and 288th in Asia, the University has emerged as a frontrunner in integrating sustainable practices into education, research, and governance. The University excels in Governance, ranking 711 globally and 25th in India, showcasing its strong leadership and transparent practices. Its global rank of 773 in Knowledge Exchange highlights its pivotal role in fostering innovation and societal impact through collaborative efforts.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

It is getting hot!

Global warming is becoming reality as 2024 set to be the hottest year on record

As global temperatures soar to unprecedented levels, 2024 is shaping up to be the hottest year on record, a grim milestone that underscores the accelerating crisis of climate change. European Union scientists have confirmed that the first eleven months of 2024 have set a new high, making this year the warmest since records began. This will be the first year where the global average temperature surpasses 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, a threshold that world leaders have long warned could trigger catastrophic climate impacts. With this alarming reality, the world faces a rapidly intensifying climate emergency, one that requires immediate and drastic action. The impacts of global warming are already being felt around the world. In 2024, extreme weather events have ravaged communities, causing widespread devastation. Severe droughts have gripped Italy and South America, while fatal floods in Nepal, Sudan and Europe have displaced thousands. Heatwaves in regions like Mexico, Saudi Arabia and Mali have killed thousands of people, while cyclones have torn through the United States and the Philippines. These events are not just random occurrences; scientific studies confirm that they bear the unmistakable fingerprint of human-caused climate change.



The overwhelming cause of global warming is carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels. These emissions trap heat in the atmosphere, causing global temperatures to rise at an alarming rate. The most effective way to curb this warming is by reducing emissions to net-zero levels, a goal that many nations have pledged to achieve in the coming decades. However, despite these green pledges, global CO2 emissions are on track to hit record highs this year. This contradictory trend highlights the gap between political promises and the real, tangible actions needed to mitigate climate change. This year's UN climate talks produced a \$300-billion deal aimed at addressing the global climate crisis. However, poorer countries have criticised this deal, arguing that it is insufficient to cover the soaring costs of climate-related disasters. While this deal may have made some progress, it is clear that the global response is not yet enough to prevent further warming. The rise of climate change deniers, particularly within the political sphere, has made it even harder to combat this crisis. US President-elect Donald Trump, in particular, has consistently downplayed the severity of global warming and rolled back numerous environmental regulations during his previous term. Under Trump's leadership, the US withdrew from the Paris Agreement, a global pact aimed at reducing emissions and limiting global temperature rise. Such actions would undoubtedly exacerbate the climate crisis, making it even harder to reduce emissions and avoid the most catastrophic effects of global warming. The time to act is now, and the window for meaningful change is rapidly closing.

Earlier that week PM Narendra Modi attended the 19th India-ASEAN meeting and made a powerful presentation of Delhi's Act East policy and criticised China for its expansionist policy in SCS. The Chinese have been testing the waters in the Philippines EEZ in SCS. Filipinos call the West Philippines Sea with several forays against Filipino boats to check how far the US will go in its support. Filipino vessels in their EEZ have faced intimidation and bullying by Chinese coast guard ships over the dispute Thomas Shoal 2

Philippines confronts Chinese assertiveness

The South China Sea remains a flashpoint of escalating tensions as China intensifies its aggressive maritime activities, targeting nations like the Philippines



ASHOK K MEHTA

NS Admiral Dinesh Tripathi during his customary briefing of media before Navy Day last week expressed concern about Chinese maritime activities in the South China Sea, all of which China claims. Two countries it especially targets in SCS are Taiwan and the Philippines in whose waters it has indulged in offensive naval actions. It signed a defence agreement with the US in 1951; last month it signed an intelligence and technology agreement facilitating satellite intelligence and access to high-grade US weaponry following President Marcos promulgating Maritime Zone Act and Archipelago Sea Lanes Act that China denounced and summoned its envoy. US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin told his counterpart Gilberto Teodoro: We are more than allies; we're family.

The week-long ASEAN summit in Vientiane, Laos from 6 to 12 October witnessed stern exchanges between China, the US and the Philippines especially over the South China Sea at a time when the West is seized with Ukraine and West Asia crises, even as President-elect Trump is issuing multiple threats. While Chinese Premier Li Qiang blamed "external forces" for interfering in regional affairs, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US is concerned about increasingly dangerous and unlawful activities of China in disputed SCS. Marcos complained to ASEAN leaders that his country continues to be subjected to Chinese bullying and intimidation.

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where Sierra Madera a Philippine vessel has been grounded since 1999 to assert its sovereignty. The Chinese are equally active and defiant against Japan in the East China Sea and recently crossed the First Island chain for the first time with an aircraft carrier and two warships.

Taiwan continues to face periodic challenges as China relentlessly violates the 2016 UNCLOS ruling that the Philippines secured over China's illegal claim to the South China Sea under its 9-dash line. During my interaction with Philippines security experts in Manila in June, clashes over the resupply of a marooned vessel in Thomas Shoal 2 had reached the climax; and some suggested it could be a feint for Taiwan. The incident had ruffled feathers in Manila with calls for invoking the US Mutual Defence Agreement which gets triggered only during armed external attack. Clashes have occurred between the two sides and despite talks and a hotline, no compromise was reached. On September 28 Chinese Navy missile boat fired laser beams at a Philippines Cessna Patrol aircraft while Filipino coast guard vessels continued to be chased. Chinese insisted resupply of the marooned ship would happen under their supervision and in a mid-August clash, several Chinese



EARLIER THAT WEEK PM MODI ATTENDED THE 19TH INDIA-ASEAN MEETING AND MADE A POWERFUL PRESENTATION OF DELHI'S ACT EAST POLICY AND CRITICISED CHINA FOR ITS EXPANSIONIST POLICY IN SCS

ships blocked passage of Filipino supplies for the stranded ship. The Chinese have said that the Philippines ship is illegally stranded/marooned at the disputed Thomas Shoal atoll which it owns as part of its claim to SCS. China calls it Xianbin Reef which is 150 km west of the Philippines island of Palawan. As before, it had repeatedly said it would promulgate its maritime laws including the use of firearms and arrest offenders in defence of its sovereignty and national interest. Teodoro said at the end of August that Thomas Shoal is a sovereignty issue of the Philippines.

According to South China Morning Post (September 16), Admiral Samuel Paparo, US Indo-Pacific Command accompanied by Gen Romero Brawner, Chief of Philippines armed forces, said there is a range of options as countermeasures for the Chinese grey zone tactics adding the US is ready to escort Philippines ships in SCS in event of a spike in hostilities. Brawner said they would seek help if the Chinese blocked food supplies and soldiers were dying of hunger. In Manila, I was asked whether re-supply by other means like helicopters was feasible and had suggested discussing it with their US allies. Meanwhile, Paparo took a video call with Gen Wu Yanan, PLA Southern Theatre Commander responsible for

SCS and Taiwan.

Wu attended an International conference at the Indo-Pacific command in Hawaii in September even as Teodoro took the contingency of escalation to the next level, of the Chinese towing away the grounded Sierra Madera which would constitute an act of war; invoking a defence pact with the US. A code of conduct for ASEAN in SCS has been in the works for two decades but is far from fruition. It is akin to India's LAC/border with China that Beijing has refused to resolve as it would put a stop to grey zone tactics and salami slicing. India has voiced clear support for the Philippines during the June 17 clash with the Chinese coast guard and Foreign Minister Jaishankar has been on a goodwill visit. Delhi has sold Brahmos anti-ship missiles to Manila, the first country to buy them. Former Defence Secretary, Giridhar Aramane was in Manila recently for the fifth joint defence cooperation dialogue. While Taiwan may not be on the cards, Thomas Shoal 2 could end up in Chinese possession as Mischieff Reef 24 km north of it did in 2012.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal)

PICTALK



Badrinath Dham receives the first snowfall of the season, in Chamoli

PTI

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CONTROVERSY AT IIT KHARAGPUR

Madam — I have never heard of any controversy in the teaching campus of IIT Kharagpur. But now it is happening. For the last six months, open differences have started coming to the fore between the director and the teaching staff. The Indian Institute of Technology has issued show-cause notices to 90 faculty members in response to allegations against its director V K Tiwari of bias, "retaliation in faculty selection," and failure to set up the promised hospital on campus. In addition, three department heads have also been replaced. The controversy began in September when the IIT Teachers' Association wrote a letter to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan accusing Tiwari of arbitrary recruitment processes and other irregularities. About 100 faculty members have protested by wearing black bands and participating in silent marches on campus. The faculty is reportedly now considering legal action. On December 2, the administration replaced the heads of the departments of mathematics, artificial intelligence, and biosciences and biotechnology. I want to say that when the education minister was informed about the arbitrary behaviour of director VK Tiwari five months ago, why did he not take any action?

Why was the director not removed from his post with immediate effect? This means that the environment of this great educational institution is being deliberately spoiled so that this institution can be defamed. IIT Kharagpur is the first IIT to be established by the Government of India. The institute was formally inaugurated on 18 August 1951 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. IIT was established to provide trained technical personnel for India. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took the initiative to establish IIT, he believed that science and technology are important for the modernisation of India.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

Sanjay Malhotra as new RBI Governor



The union governments have appointed Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, before the six-year term completion of Shaktikanta Das at the post of Governor of RBI. Throughout his career spanning more than 33 years, Sanjay Malhotra has served across

diverse sectors, including power, finance, taxation, information technology, and mines. Currently he has been serving as secretary (revenue) in the ministry of finance, he previously held the position of secretary in the department of financial services under the ministry of finance, Government of India.

The governor heads the RBI and plays a central role in formulating, implementing and monitoring the monetary policy and banking regulations of India. Every note ever printed carries the signature of the RBI governor. The RBI Governor also monitors and facilitates the flow of credit to rural, agricultural and various MSME sectors. As the newly appointed governor holds good ties with the finance minister, he probably works in the betterment of the country's economy, inflation rate, CRR, SLR, GDP, etc.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur Nagar

END OF ASSAD RULE

Madam—The turn of political events in Syria raises fears of a new wave of regional instability, following the ouster of Bashar al-Assad by the militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), ending his family's despotic rule for over 13 years. It marks a turning point for Syria, shattered by years of civil war that has turned cities into rubble, killed hundreds of thousands of people, and forced millions to go abroad as refugees. Western governments, which have shunned the Assad-led state for years, must decide how to deal with a new administration in Syria in which HTS looks set to have greater influence. HTS, which spearheaded the rebel advances across western Syria, was formerly an al-Qaeda affiliate. The Syrians, therefore, will obviously remain fearful as this militant group will impose draconian Islamist rule or instigate reprisals. As Syria will go to polls, it would require a smooth transition in a country with complex competing interests.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

TIKTOK'S NEGATIVE EFFECTS

Madam — Tensions have been escalating in the US over the impact of TikTok. The US Court of Appeals has also cited a notice to China-based ByteDance to sell the social media app by January 19 or face an effective ban in the US. Banning TikTok is not the ultimate solution, as it will hit hard many businessmen for whom TikTok is a source of income generation. They use social media for promotion of their products or of their business, but we cannot forget its negative impact on the minds of children. There is a need to adopt such a solution that will be beneficial for both businessmen and society. Businessmen should create accounts in the name of their business, and e-verification of those accounts should also be done to maintain their originality, and accounts registered under the age of 16 should be banned so the app will be less harmful.

Shreyanshi Jain | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Childhood Wounds: The hidden force behind life's struggles

Whether it's self-doubt at work or struggles in relationships, the roots often trace back to unresolved childhood wounds

Have you ever wondered why life keeps pulling you back, no matter how hard you try to move forward? Maybe you find yourself repeating the same mistakes in relationships, doubting your abilities at work, or battling the constant ache of "not being enough."

It's easy to blame bad luck or personal failure. But often, these struggles run deeper—in unresolved childhood wounds. Childhood is when we learn how to love, trust and value ourselves. But not all childhoods are built on safety and support. Even seemingly small moments can leave deep scars.

A parent saying, "Stop crying, you're embarrassing me," or a teacher comparing you to someone else may seem insignificant at the time but can shape how we see ourselves for years to come. Take Radhika, for example. At 35, she thrived in her career but couldn't maintain a relationship. Every time someone got close, she would pull away, convinced they would leave her eventually. Therapy



revealed that her fear of abandonment stemmed from her father leaving when she was six. Her emotional walls weren't about keeping others out; they were about protecting herself from feeling that pain again. Then there's Arjun, 28, who struggled to hold a job. His pattern was predictable: procrastinate, miss deadlines and eventually lose the role. He believed he lacked discipline, but therapy uncovered a deeper truth. He had grown up under relentless criticism—nothing he did was ever good enough. That

internalised voice followed him into adulthood, leading him to self-sabotage before anyone else could judge him. These aren't isolated stories. Many of us carry invisible wounds from our childhood. A parent's absence, constant comparisons, or even a single harsh word can create emotional patterns—fear of intimacy, perfectionism, or shrinking ourselves to avoid rejection. Over time, these patterns create setbacks that seem external but are deeply internal. Therapy is where this cycle ends. It's not about

blaming our parents or reliving the past. It's about understanding why we feel stuck and learning how to let go of the pain. Imagine carrying a heavy bag for years, thinking it's just part of life—then discovering you can put it down. That's what healing feels like. One client described the process beautifully: "For the first time, I understand myself. I'm not broken. I've just been carrying pain I didn't know was there." Your setbacks aren't failures; they're signals that something inside you needs attention. Healing childhood wounds allows you to stop reacting from a place of fear and start living from a place of freedom. It's not an easy journey, but it's one worth taking. The truth is, you deserved love and safety as a child, and you still do now.

Healing isn't about erasing the past—it's about reclaiming your future. If this resonates, consider giving yourself the gift of therapy. You're not broken—you're healing. (The writer is a Life Coach; views are personal)



KAVITA KABIRA



FIRST COLUMN

TRANSFORMING ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOR

As technology reshapes the world at breakneck speed, organisations must evolve to stay relevant



RAVI VALLURI

It would be worthwhile to examine how organisations are structured and articulated. In the long haul organisations blessed with individuals willing to experiment, innovate and embrace technology will be the ones that survive. At the pace that technology with its variants is fashioning itself, numerous applications are unravelling virtually by the minute, and the level of obsolescence and attrition of equipment is becoming extraordinarily high. In such a scenario, humans and organisations will be subsumed by various products and their variants. The human mind can no longer remain in the typewriter mode. The garden of Organisational Theory and Behaviour is dotted with eminent scholars. Three pioneers, Adam Smith, Charles Babbage and Robert Owen provided the ballast and the basic groundwork.

Adam Smith advanced the argument that countries and organisations would profit by adopting the tenets of division of labour, what is now termed as specialisation. Charles Babbage in his seminal work postulated: Through the division of labour, the time required for learning a job or skill gets drastically reduced. Right at the stage of infancy wastage of material gets minimised and diminishes. The mind is propelled to take up serious tasks upon attaining superior skills. Way back in 1789, Robert Owen at 18 went on to acquire a factory. He was a utopian, way ahead of his times. In 1825, he promulgated regulated working



hours, child labour laws, public education and business involvement in various community projects – a precursor to CSR. In today's wired world, individuals work from their dwellings. Places with the latest technology and gizmos at their disposal. Over the last decade, the entire paradigm of organisational behaviour has metamorphosed. Technology stares at organisations with peering eyes, the complexity and dynamics of structures having undergone a complete metamorphosis. Let us look at the Indian Railways. There was a time when the operating and manufacturing departments held sway in the decision-making process. Today, it is the technical departments that are the game changers. The concept of fixed work hours is history.

The workforce must be alert 24x7. Thus, employees need to brush up on their skill sets to brace for the challenges of the virtual world. Let us examine the model of direct teaching through online classes – one-on-one, between the teacher and the tutee. The very paradigm may affect teaching techniques in schools and universities. Similarly, qualified doctors instruct their colleagues through Skype or other means during complex surgeries. Be it surgical strikes or wars, instructions are being disseminated to the foot soldiers through the latest technology, like the usage of GPS coordinates and Real-Time Imagery.

In such a scenario, scores of organisational structures, government or those in the private sector must adapt radically in order to survive. The workforce must continuously upgrade their skill set or face extinction. Perhaps emotions of warmth may be lost in the maze of technological evolution. The philosophy of an organisation, its goals and objectives and the behavioural pattern between the structure and the workforce have been stranded in a traffic jam of the kind one encounters in major cities of India like Gurugram. Stephen Hawking has in a rather depressing prognosis, predicted that life would be extinct on this planet on four grounds – nukes, global warming, man-made viruses or robots. Thus, the human mind should reinvent itself and current organisational behaviour and theories or prepare a blueprint to discover a sister planet to inhabit. Aristotle wrote, "We are what we repeatedly do." This paradigm will have to change for organisations to survive.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

A roadmap for modernising India's security framework



SUDHIR HINDWAN

A comprehensive approach to urban mobility, affordability and infrastructure is the need of the hour to reclaim Delhi's air and ensure a healthier, sustainable future



The recent 2 days 59th All India Conference of Director Generals of Police in Bhubaneswar augurs very well for drawing a future roadmap of policing in India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for a SMART way of policing has once again brought forward the need for modernisation of Indian Police and Security Agencies which can help India move on the path of high-powered police technology with the most efficient and latest technologies. Recent challenges to the security of India bring to light an important fact that India needs to diversify its strategies to counter the challenges it faces lately from digital frauds, artificial intelligence misuse and cyber crimes. Prime Minister emphasised the need to come together and closely cooperate in fighting the latest threats by developing strategies for the establishment of an extremely capable intelligence system to ensure such threats can be encountered at early stages.

SMART POLICING appears to be the only solution for protection against the multiple threats from diverse and very intense new waves of terror, cyber criminals, drug traffickers, economic offenders, smugglers, criminals, naxals, arms dealers and insurgents. It would provide a platform for multi-layered security cooperation that would deal with various issues related to terrorism – right from the funding of terrorist activities, policing cooperation, dealing with cyber threats, secrecy through enhancing technological innovations and tightening the border to maritime security information-gathering exercise.

Cooperation and coordination in communication capabilities and management of security arrangements to deal with any kind of threat are the main objectives of his call. Besides, a modernisation of the Police is also imperative given the possible threats from religiously motivated bands of distraught minds. The Prime Minister has called for a smart way of policing and usage of interoperable and transferable technologies such as drones that would open a new gateway to meet complex security chal-



THE POLICE NEED TO DIVERSIFY ITS ACTIVITIES BY BRINGING TOGETHER TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE BASED ON MANY DECADES OF EXPERIENCE IN MAINTAINING INTERNAL SECURITY. IT IS HIGH TIME WE REALISED THAT POLICE ALONE CANNOT STOP THE CRIME, THE ENTIRE SOCIETY SHOULD MAKE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORTS

lenges. Over the years a great deal of literature has appeared on India's police and the need for reforms. Policies are being made to enable the force to adapt to the challenging environment and efficiently implement recommendations suggested by the panels on reforms. As the threats today are more severe and enemies more organised than ever before, new concepts of safety and security need to be followed. Whereas globalisation has provided a concept of a global village deeply interwoven in a comprehensive view of society, market, freedom, choice, empowerment, peace, opportunities, linkages and politics, its impact has created a socio-political quagmire, particularly in developing societies. In this context, there is a growing global consensus on addressing critical issues in policing by focusing on the following key areas:

Bridging Theory and Practice: Linking traditional policing theories to the evolving challenges faced by law enforcement today.

Analyzing Pressures: Developing fresh insights into the various areas of concern and the mounting pressures on police forces.

Role of Police in Market Dynamics: Defining the role of police in navigating market forces while maintaining impartiality and fairness.

Implementing Reforms: Demonstrating how the reform models proposed by various commissions can be effectively applied in real-world scenarios, in alignment with democratic principles, environmental considerations, globalization, and governance.

Driving Change: Exploring innovative policing methods to foster cooperation and build public trust and confidence.

Global Knowledge Integration: Leveraging the latest global research and advancements in the field of policing to modernise and upgrade

law enforcement practices. Police being a State subject under Article 246, at times the force becomes a matter of battle of wits. Apart from undertaking counter-terrorist operations, police also have to play a crucial role as protector of the day-to-day law and order.

This has increased pressure on them to get quick results. Besides, the prevailing level of dissatisfaction among the subordinate level, police officers have adversely affected the attitude of police towards problems. Police are often asked to fight a low-cost war where the enemy is their countrymen. Calling the police to put down civil disturbances is a tedious job. Many scientific methods and modern changes have been introduced in policing in India ever since the police commission report was drafted many years ago. Police are an extremely vital source of security for the community.

But this alone will not benefit unless people are sensitised about the achievements of positive policing. Some experts on policing are of the view that the values, attitudes, methods, aspirations commitment, etc. of these services need overhauling. Some are of the view that the quality and efficiency of the security forces largely depend on their service conditions, cooperation, training, practice, level of interaction with the general masses and strict methods of appointment. It is, therefore, in the interest of the Government to recruit and attract personnel of high integrity and great calibre.

For successful training of personnel of paramilitary and police forces, certain parameters of pre-recruitment education, experience, proportion of insiders and outsiders, methods of recruitment, postings, and length of service must be reviewed. There is also a need for more productive relation-

ships among paramilitary forces, Intelligence agencies, local police, the Army, and the local population. The Government has made all efforts towards sensitisation of police by inculcating a humane approach in policing and introducing the study of human rights legislation in training. Certain suggestions can go a long way in driving better results for policing: (a) There should be initiative in implementing development plans in consultation with experts from various other branches; (b) Development of capability to anticipate foreboding and security needs; (c) This is possible by conducting specialised courses for monitoring security situations. Globalisation and its negative implications are putting forward a challenging environment for policing.

Therefore, the police need to diversify its activities by bringing together technical and professional expertise based on many decades of experience in maintaining internal security. It is high time we realised that police alone cannot stop the crime, the entire society should make substantial efforts towards ensuring the safety and security of fellow citizens.

The police also need to play an important role as crime preventers and in this regard, developing qualities such as a high level of diligence, intelligence, dedication, determination and the ability to grasp complex situations is a must. It is high time we realised that the police alone cannot stop crime; the entire society should make substantial efforts towards it. The SMART Police and modernised ways of policing hold the key to the future of the security and safety of every individual.

(The writer is recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award, Professor, Head of Department and Expert on Strategic Affairs; views are personal)

India's sovereignty in the crosshairs: Navigating global challenges

Modi's administration combines diplomacy with strength to safeguard national independence and challenge Western-centric ideologies

As India rises as a global power, it faces a barrage of challenges and accusations of foreign interference, echoing the complexities of a world where sovereignty is contested. The ruling BJP has identified actors like the "American deep state," billionaire George Soros, and organisations such as the Rockefeller Foundation as orchestrators of campaigns aimed at destabilising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.



SANTHOSH MATHEW

Modi's approach combines diplomacy with firm resolve to safeguard India's sovereignty, particularly against those attempting to influence domestic politics. The BJP asserts that international networks target India for challenging the dominance of Western-centric ideologies

through policies like Atmanirbhar Bharat and calls for a multipolar world. The "American deep state," a nexus of the Pentagon, CIA, and corporate elites, according to the BJP, exemplifies hidden forces working to maintain global hegemony.

Allegations against prominent business figures and reports from groups like the OCCRP are seen as attempts to tarnish India's image and weaken Modi's leadership. Critics of these claims argue that they serve as distractions from domestic challenges, but the BJP cites historical precedents of covert interventions by such networks to justify its position. George Soros, often labelled a "dangerous" figure by Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, symbolises an ide-

ological assault on national sovereignty. His public criticism of Modi's policies and financial involvement in liberal causes worldwide add fuel to the BJP's assertion that foreign-funded campaigns aim to destabilise India's democratic fabric. Similarly, the Rockefeller Foundation is accused of furthering a neoliberal agenda at odds with India's self-reliance and policy independence. This dynamic reflects the larger struggle of emerging powers like India to navigate a world influenced by philanthropic and corporate entities wielding soft power. Modi's resistance to their influence positions his administration as a bulwark against globalist impositions, a stance that resonates with his nationalist electorate.



The return of Donald Trump to the US presidency adds another layer to India's geopolitical calculations. While Trump's "America First" policies and transactional diplomacy brought moments like "Howdy Modi" and "Namaste Trump," his administration's alignment with corporate

interests and erratic decision-making created tensions. Described by Noam Chomsky as "the most dangerous man in the world," Yet, his strategic deals, such as his outreach to India, underscored his unconventional but calculated foreign policy. Trump's presidency also invoked the Bush Doctrine's rhetoric of "You are either with us or against us," highlighting the stark divisions in global alliances. While Modi's government has maintained a deft balance, the BJP sees this dichotomy as emblematic of the pressures India faces from global powers demanding allegiance to specific blocs. India's geopolitical strategy involves rejecting the narrative of dependency that organisations like the Rockefeller

Foundation propagate. Blood may be thicker than water, but India's external relationships prioritise sovereignty over sentimentality. The BJP's framing of its sovereignty struggle as a broader battle for multipolarity reflects a vision of India not just as a rising power but as a protector of global balance. While domestic critics downplay the likelihood of coordinated foreign efforts against India, the BJP argues that history tells a different story. Examples abound of covert interventions justified under the banner of democracy or human rights. Modi's government, embodies the Rooseveltian ethos of combining tact with strength, ensuring that India's voice remains firm in the shifting

balance of global power. The allegations against figures like Soros, the American deep state, and philanthropic organisations symbolise the challenges India faces as it redefines its place on the world stage. Whether these claims represent genuine threats or political posturing, they underscore the complexities of a world where the boundaries of influence, power, and sovereignty remain contested. India's ascent highlights a fundamental truth: the struggle for sovereignty in a globalised world demands not only resilience but also an unwavering belief in one's capacity to walk softly while wielding the proverbial big stick. (The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)

Only 32 per cent Indian districts manual scavenging free: Government

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Despite the ban on manual scavenging, which involves manually cleaning and disposing of human excreta, only 249 out of 766 districts in India have so far declared themselves "manual scavenger-free" and uploaded their certificates on the official portal.

This information was shared by the government in the Parliament on Tuesday.

According to the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act), manual scavenging has been illegal since December 2013, following a Supreme Court ruling.



Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Ramdas Athawale, informed the Lok Sabha in response to a written question that in line with a Supreme Court order, 22 families of manual scavenging

death victims were provided Rs. 30 lakh in compensation last October. However, no incidents of disability due to manual scavenging have been reported. In compliance of the Supreme

Court order issued last year, in October, 22 families of death victims have been provided compensation of Rs. 30 lakhs, whereas, no incident of disability has been reported from the States/Union Territories.

As per the MS Act, 2013, no person or agency can engage or employ any person for manual scavenging from the above date. "Any person or agency who engages any person for manual scavenging in violation of the provisions of the MS Act, 2013 is punishable under Section 8 of the above Act, with imprisonment upto 2 years or fine upto Rs. one lakh or both," said the Union Minister.

No death has been reported

due to manual scavenging which is lifting of human excreta from insanitary latrines. Further, no report from States/UTs has been received about the inhuman practice of manual scavenging.

As directed by the Supreme Court, a fresh survey of manual scavengers as per the law, States/UTs were provided survey guidelines and requested to conduct surveys of manual scavengers after Constituting District Level Survey Committees and other Committees.

A mobile application and portal has also been developed to capture the data of Manual Scavengers and insanitary latrines in urban and rural areas, if any, said Athawale.

NIA nabs key accused in Laos human trafficking, cyber slavery case

From page 1

The NIA had chargesheeted Haider and four others in October, in the case relating to a well-organised network of traffickers and touts involved in various illegal activities, the NIA said. The four co-accused were identified as Manjoor Alam alias Guddu, Sahil, Ashish alias Akhil, and Pawan Yadav alias Afzal alias Afroz. All the accused were "actively involved" in sending vulnerable Indian youngsters to the Golden Triangle region in Lao PDR (Laos), where they were allegedly forced to commit cyber scams targeting European and US citizens, the NIA said. They operated through a consultancy firm, Ali International Services, which functioned as a front for human trafficking, NIA investigations have revealed. Besides facilitating the entire operation, Haider was also allegedly involved in extorting money through cryptocurrency wallets from victims who tried to escape the clutches of Chinese scammers. Haider was carrying a cash reward of Rs 2 lakh for information leading to his arrest and also had a non-bailable warrant issued against him by the Special NIA Court, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi, the agency said. The NIA investigation in the case is continuing, it added.

TN's contribution to Indian economy better: CAG

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With its per capita income far exceeding the national average, Tamil Nadu was faring better in its contribution to national economy and the state's industries and services sectors played a pivotal role in increasing the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) by 14 per cent in 2022-2023 amounting to Rs 23,64,514 crore, Principal Accountant General (Audit-I), Tamil Nadu, D Jaishankar said on Tuesday.

As regards the resources of the state government, he said the revenue receipts increased by 17.47 per cent during 2022-2023 when compared to the previous year because of an increase in both tax revenue and non-tax

revenue. Briefing reporters on the State Finances Audit report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended March 2023, tabled in the Assembly earlier in the day, he said the state GDP in 2022-2023 was Rs 23,64,514 crore, an increase by 14 per cent over the previous year. "Industries and services sectors were the main contributors and the per capita income of the state is nearly 56 per cent higher than the national average. TN's per capita income is Rs 3.08 lakh whereas the national average is Rs 1.96 lakh. We are doing a better contribution to the economy," he said. The increase in the state government's revenue by 17 per cent indicated that the collection mechanism was functioning better.

Iskon appeals to global orgs on Bangladesh violence

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The vice president of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKON Kolkata Chapter) Radha Raman Das on Tuesday appealed to the international human rights organisations to save the lives of Hindus in Bangladesh complaining "unbridled attacks" on minorities in that country. Uploading a latest video of how the house of an ISKON supporter was being attacked by the fundamentalists with the security forces doing nothing, Das said, "Time has come for the human rights leaders worldwide to stand up for the minority Hindus of Bengal. There is no respite on the attacks on the minorities, Hindus and ISKON

supporters their religious leaders are now openly instigating the people to chop the Hindus publicly they are preaching genocide."

Asking "when the world human rights organizations would wake up ... will they wake up after the genocide has started," Das said, "I appeal to all those world leaders of human rights and civilised people to kindly listen to our appeal at least on this International Human Rights Day so that the lives and properties of the minorities in Bangladesh is saved."

His statements came when videos showing how the properties of the minorities were being torched and the healthy cows belonging to the ISKON were being clubbed to death by the fundamentalist marauders.

Odisha prepares for Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As Odisha is gearing up to host the three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas from January 8 to be attended by around 7,000 NRIs, the state government is making homestay arrangements for the visitors apart from hotel accommodations. The homestay owners have been provided training in guest management and safety protocols. "It is a big opportunity for

the people of Odisha to host the NRIs. We will also make homestay arrangements for them apart from hotel accommodation," Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida said. Odisha's hospitality would be on the like of "Atithi Deva Bhavo" (Guest is God), she said. In order to facilitate the visitors to book their accommodation, Parida said the Odisha Tourism Department has blocked 200 hotels with more than 3,700 rooms in

Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri. The families owning homestays, who would host the visiting NRIs, have been provided basic training in guest management and safety protocols, a senior official said. The aim is to provide the Indian diaspora with the experience of Odisha's atmosphere as well as the culture and tradition in Odia homes, the official said. This apart, in view of cyber frauds in hotel bookings, the state government has advised the

delegates to book their accommodation through a dedicated website 'pbdindia.Gov.In.' The state tourism department has shared the names and other details of hotels with the Ministry of Home Affairs for the safety of delegates. The department has also identified as many as 30 tourist destinations in Bhubaneswar, Puri, Konark, Chilika-Satapada and Raghurajpur crafts village where the NRIs may pay visits, the official said.



AAP leader Manish Sisodia offers prayers at the Angoori Devi Mandir.

Ranjan Dhir

Sisodia Kicks Off Campaign in Jangpura with Hanuman Chalisa

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after leaving the Patparganj seat held by him since 2013, AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Tuesday launched his election campaign by attending a 'Hanuman Chalisa' recital with local residents in his new constituency Jangpura. The former deputy chief minister of Delhi has in the past claimed himself to be a devout "Hanuman bhakt". AAP has replaced Sisodia with coaching expert Avadh Ojha, who recently joined the party, from the Patparganj constituency. The elections for the 70-member Delhi Assembly are due in February next year. Incumbent AAP MLA from Jangpura, Praveen Kumar was also present during the visit. Sisodia said he received a lot of love from the people as the

education minister and deputy chief minister. "It does not matter which constituency one contests from. Even as the MLA from Patparganj and deputy CM, I did a lot of work for Jangpura and personally kept watch on building schools here. If I am elected as the MLA from Jangpura now, I will work for the whole Delhi. It does not make any difference," he told reporters.

In a post on X, Sisodia said he started campaigning in Jangpura with the recital of 'Hanuman Chalisa', seeking blessings of the deity at a temple in the Kilokari area of the constituency. "O Lord Hanuman, I beseech you to shower your blessings on us for whatever we endeavour. The light of humanity always flickers in our hearts, wherever we are, whatever we do, we do it with remembering the god,"

Sisodia said in his post. The former deputy CM earlier explained that the reason behind leaving the Patparganj seat for Ojha was the latter's "vision and devotion" towards education. However, the BJP has accused him of leaving the seat for a "safer" Jangpura, accusing he did nothing in Patparganj during his tenure as its MLA. In 2020, Sisodia pitted against a fresh face from the BJP Ravi Negi in Patparganj, barely managed to win with a thin margin of just over 3,500 votes. Sisodia said the BJP people seeking votes were being "silenced" by the people, citing grand schools and hospitals built by AAP and the zero electricity bills. Instead, people are asking them about the "poor" condition of law and order in the city but they do not have any answers to such queries, he claimed.

Two members of Neeraj Bawana gang arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Crime Branch arrested two gang members of Neeraj Bawana gang after a brief exchange of fire and recovered two pistols with 22 live cartridges and a police uniform, used for committing crimes. According to the police on Tuesday, the accused have been identified as Rahul alias Nakta and Kamaljeet. They said that these individuals were wanted in two-armed robbery cases in Delhi's Rani Bagh area and Hari Nagar area. "Additionally, with their arrest, a blind daylight armed robbery of Rajasthan has also been solved. A substantial recovery, including firearms, ammunition, and a police uniform, was made from their possession. Preliminary investigation reveals that the accused had been plotting to commit crime," a senior police official said.

He added that on Monday, a police team was constituted to nab the criminals and according to information team conducted vehicle checks near Khatu Shyam Mandir in Delhi. "At around 11:00 AM, a suspicious grey Hyundai i20 approached the barricade. When signalled to stop, the driver attempted to speed away, tried to flee and collided with the barricade and a road divider," he said. "After the crash, accused Rahul tried to flee, firing at the police team when warned to surrender. In response, the police fired a warning shot in the air, enabling the team to overpower him. Simultaneously, the second accused Kamaljeet emerged from the car, also firing at the police," another officer added. Two policemen fired additional warning shots, compelling Kamaljeet to drop his weapon and surrender, and was overpowered. Upon interrogation, it was

Seven dead in Mumbai bus accident

From page 1

He has extensive experience in finance and taxation at the state as well as the central government levels. As a part of his present assignment, he plays an instrumental role in tax policy formulation in respect of direct and indirect taxes. Das was appointed as the 25th Governor of the RBI on December 12, 2018, after the abrupt exit of Urjit Patel. He was granted an extension after completing three-year terms in office. His extended tenure ends on Tuesday.

Garam Dharam asked to come to Patiala...

From page 1

The police inquiry confirmed the execution of the letter of intent but stated the case was a civil dispute related to a breach of contract. The police noted that Kumar no longer wanted the franchise and instead sought a refund of his investment. As no cognisable offence was found, the police concluded that no action was required.

Officials flag 'delay' in postings of divisional heads, claim it impacts work

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With postings and transfer of dozens of heads of various rail divisions pending for over two months, a section of officials have stressed the need for timely rotation as such an uncertainty hampers work efficiency including taking up of new initiatives.

A divisional railway manager (DRM), appointed to look after the affairs of a rail division, has a two-year tenure after which the official gets transferred to an

equivalent or promotional post in zonal headquarters. The vacant posts are filled by fresh candidates who are selected based on well-laid-out guidelines. The Railway Board said that the postings and transfers of DRMs are under process and rejected suggestions that "delay" has anything to do with their work efficiency. "It is correct that we have a practice of transferring DRMs after two years of their services followed by fresh postings, however, it is not

sacrosanct," Dilip Kumar, Information and Publicity, Railway Board said. "Sometimes, it gets delayed as well because of various reasons. I believe a sincere officer is unaffected by such considerations. He or she continues to work with the same degree of professionalism," Kumar said. Sources, however, claimed the "delay" is due to the new guidelines, released by the Board in September, awaiting approval of the Department of Personnel and Training.

A section of DRMs as well as safety experts say that after completion of the two-year term, officers hesitate to take new initiatives and mentally go into a "relieving mode" due to "sense of uncertainty." "It is quite natural and normal for officers to slow down the pace of work or desist from taking any new initiatives when they near their two-year term because they start waiting for their new postings. A feeling of uncertainty grips them in the absence of a clear-cut posting

order," a DRM, who did not wish to be named, said. He added, "It impacts freight operations which give a huge revenue to the Railways." Another DRM requesting anonymity said that after Monsoon, a period during which freight operations suffer to some extent due to weather conditions, an aggressive approach is needed to recover the revenue loss and make the most of the good weather conditions till extreme winter sets in and fog starts playing a spoilsport.

No Confidence in Dhankar: Opposition

From page 1

Interestingly, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the floor leaders of various Opposition parties are not among the signatories to the notice. Similar notices for removal of the Speaker of Lok Sabha have been submitted in the past, but none against the Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman. Three motions have come in the past against Lok Sabha Speakers, against GV Mavalankar on December 18, 1954, against Hukam Singh on November 24, 1966 and against Balram Jakhar on April 15, 1987.

While the motions against Mavalankar and Jakhar were negated, that against Hukam Singh was rejected as less than 50 members rose in

the chair to take up the motion. Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said they were pained to move such a notice against the Chairman, but were "forced" to do so after he "crossed all limits" on Monday by allowing several members of the treasury benches to speak against top Congress leadership in the House.

"All parties belonging to the INDIA group have had no option but to formally submit a no-confidence motion against the learned Hon'ble Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for the extremely partisan manner in which he has been conducting the proceedings of the Council of States. It has been a very painful decision for the INDIA parties to take, but in the interests of parliamentary democracy they have had to take this

step," Ramesh shared on social media. According to Article 67(b) of the Constitution: "Vice-President may be removed from his office by a resolution of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) passed by a majority of all the then members of the Council and agreed to by the House of the People; but no resolution for the purpose of this clause shall be moved unless at least fourteen days' notice has been given of the intention to move the resolution." The motion submitted by Opposition MPs condemned the "partisan conduct" of the Rajya Sabha Chairman, and said it is "unbecoming of high-level Constitutional authorities that are expected to act in accordance with and in furtherance of the principles enshrined in the Constitution of India."

No mismatch in Maharashtra votes polled and VVPAT tally: ECI

From page 1

In Maharashtra's 288 Assembly constituencies, officials verified a total of 1,440 VVPAT machines. Representatives of candidates and EC observers randomly selected polling stations, the statement said.

"There was no discrepancy found between the candidate-wise vote counts recorded in EVMs and the corresponding counts from the VVPAT slips," the EC stated. Special enclosures were established at each counting centre, and the entire process

was recorded on CCTV, the footage of which has been preserved, it added. The counting of VVPAT slips from five polling stations in every constituency is mandatory under the Commission's guidelines. The counting process is considered

incomplete and no winner can be declared until this verification is concluded, the poll body said. The Bharatiya Janata Party-Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party alliance won 230 out of 288 Assembly seats in the elections.

What's in a name? Communal harmony

From page 1

Naushad further shared that his ancestors were originally from Azamgarh and belonged to the Dubey clan. "Seven generations ago, one of our forefathers, Lal Bahadur Dubey, converted to Islam and took the name Lal Mohammad," he said. After learning about his family's Hindu lineage, Naushad connected with a Hindu organization and now

lives in a spirit of religious harmony. "I have been using the Dubey surname for two years. If people reconnect with their roots, half the hatred in society will vanish," Naushad said. "I oppose titles like Sheikh, Mirza, or Syed. I even discovered my gotra - it is Vats. Our ancestors were Dubey. I am not discussing religion but promoting harmony." However, Naushad clarified that no other

member of his immediate family has adopted the surname yet. The trend is not limited to Naushad. Sheikh Abdullah has also added "Dubey" to his name after tracing his Hindu Brahmin lineage. Other residents, including Syed Shandilya, Irshad Pandey, Thakur Gufran, and Israr Ahmed Dubey, echoed similar sentiments. "We urge everyone to reconnect with their roots," they said

collectively. Another resident, Ehtesham Ahmed, acknowledged his Hindu roots but said he found no reason to change his surname. The villagers denied any external pressure behind their decision, dismissing speculations of coercion. The phenomenon has sparked interest and debate, especially in the context of recent comments by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat, who

has emphasised that Muslims in India are descendants of Hindus who converted to Islam generations ago. However, skeptics have raised questions about the timing of the ancestral search, noting that only one member from each family seems to have adopted a Hindu surname so far. Whether this is a personal journey or part of a broader socio-political narrative remains a topic of intense discussion in the region.

President Xi rebuffs Trump's threat of tariffs

PTI ■ BEIJING

Gearing up for Trump 2.0 era, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday cautioned there will be no winner in a tariff or tech war between China and the US and vowed that Beijing would firmly safeguard its interests.

"Tariff wars, trade wars and technology wars run counter to historical trends and economic laws, and there will be no winners," Xi said while meeting the heads of 10 major international organisations, including the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) here. During the meeting, Xi stressed on China's principles for engaging with the US.

"China will always insist on focusing on its own affairs and resolutely safeguard its sovereignty, security and development interests. Meanwhile, China's determination to promote high-level opening up will not change," he said, according to the official media reports here.

Xi's comments came in the backdrop of US President-elect Donald Trump's remarks in an NBC interview that he "got along very well" with Chinese President Xi Jinping and that the two leaders had "communication as recently as this week."

China did not confirm the conversations between Xi and Trump, who is set to take over power on January 20.

During his election campaign, Trump had

threatened to impose 60 per cent on Chinese exports to the US and also warned of imposing 10 per cent more tariffs if Beijing fails to curb fentanyl, the drug 50 times more potent than heroin and regarded as the root cause for addiction in the US.

On Monday, China announced an investigation into US chipmaker Nvidia over suspected violations of the country's anti-monopoly law. The investigation is widely seen as retaliation for Washington's latest curbs on the Chinese chip sector.

On China's economy which is facing headwinds of slowdown, Xi told the heads of major international economic organisations that he has full confidence to achieve this year's economic growth target of around five per cent and Beijing will continue to play its role as the biggest engine of world economic growth.

Xi said economies of all countries face their own difficulties. All countries should work together to build an open world economy, be innovation-driven, seize important opportunities such as the digital economy, artificial intelligence and low-carbon technologies, create new sources of economic growth and support cross-border flows of knowledge, technology and human resources.

He said after more than 40 years of sustained and rapid development, China's economy has entered a stage of high-quality development and contributed about 30 per cent to world economic growth.

Prioritise national security in border areas, Xi tells officials

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping has directed officials to enhance the governance and high-quality development in the country's border areas prioritising national security and social stability.

It is essential to prioritise national security and social stability as the bottom-line requirement for governance in border areas, Xi said while presiding over a group study session of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China on Monday.

He said it is essential to uphold the party's overall leadership in all aspects and throughout the entire governance process in border areas.

"No border area shall be left behind in advancing Chinese modernisation," he was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency Tuesday.

In recent years, China has been focussing on the development of

border areas in Tibet along India and Bhutan borders by establishing hundreds of well-developed villages.

Tibet had built more than 600 well-off, high-standard border villages, with accessible roads, according to recent official media reports.

The main power grid is extended to all border towns as well as postal services, mobile communication networks, and safe drinking water. At Monday's meeting, Xi also highlighted the necessity of comprehensively promoting standard spoken and written Chinese and the use of unified state-compiled textbooks.

He also called for accelerating the development of an independent Chinese knowledge system for borderland studies, and deepening research into major theoretical and practical issues related to governance in border areas, the Xinhua reported.

Americans realising Trump's tariffs on Canada make life expensive: Trudeau

AP ■ TORONTO

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Monday said Americans "are beginning to wake up to the real reality that tariffs on everything from Canada would make life a lot more expensive" and said he will retaliate if Donald Trump goes ahead with them.

Speaking at an event put on by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, Trudeau also said dealing with Trump will be "a little more challenging" than the last time because Trump's team is coming in with a much clearer set of ideas of what they want to do right away than after his first election win in 2016.

The US president-elect has threatened to impose a 25 per cent tax on all products entering the US from Canada and Mexico unless they stem the flow of migrants and drugs.

"Trump got elected on a commitment to make life better and more affordable for Americans, and I think people south of the border are beginning to wake up to the real reality that tariffs on everything from Canada would make life a lot more expensive," Trudeau said.

On the weekend, Trump appeared in an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press", where the president-elect said he can't guarantee that his promised tariffs on key US foreign trade partners won't raise prices for American consumers.

"Let's not kid ourselves in any way, shape or form, 25 per cent tariffs on everything going to the United States would be devastating for the Canadian economy," Trudeau said.

"It would also, however, mean real hardship for Americans as well. Americans import 65 per cent of their crude oil from Canada, significant amounts of electricity. Just about all the natural gas exported from Canada goes to the United States. They rely on us for steel and aluminum. They rely on us for a range of agriculture imports.

All of those things would get more expensive."

If Trump makes good on his threat to slap 25 per cent tariffs on everything imported from Mexico and Canada, the price increases that could follow will collide with his campaign promise to give American families a break from inflation.

Economists say companies would have little choice but to pass along the added costs, dramatically raising prices for food, clothing, automobiles, alcohol and other goods.

The Produce Distributors Association, a Washington trade group, has said tariffs will raise prices for fresh fruit and vegetables and hurt US farmers when the countries retaliate. "We will of course, as we did eight years ago, respond to unfair tariffs," Trudeau said.

Trudeau said his government is still mulling over "the right ways" to respond, referencing when Canada put billions of new duties in 2018 against the US in a tit-for-tat response to new taxes on Canadian steel and aluminum.

Many of the US products were chosen for their political rather than economic impact. For example, Canada imports just USD 3 million worth of yogurt from the US annually and most of it comes from one plant in Wisconsin, the home state of then-Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan. That product was hit with a 10 per cent duty. "It was the fact that we put tariffs on bourbon and Harley-Davidsons and playing cards and Heinz ketchup and cherries and a number of other things that were very carefully targeted because they were politically impactful to the president's party and colleagues," Trudeau said.

Trudeau said when Trump says things he means them but they also know Trump is trying to insert uncertainty and "a bit of chaos" into democracies. "One of the most important things for us to do is not fear

of not to panic," Trudeau said.

"Knowing these would be absolutely devastating means we have to take them seriously but it does mean we have to be thoughtful and strategic and not going around making our opponents arguments for him but making our arguments in a significant and united way."

Canadian officials have said it is unfair to lump Canada in with Mexico.

US customs agents seized 43 pounds of fentanyl at the Canadian border last fiscal year, compared with 21,100 pounds at the Mexican border.

Most of the fentanyl reaching the US — where it causes about 70,000 overdose deaths annually — is made by Mexican drug cartels using precursor chemicals smuggled from Asia.

On immigration, the US Border Patrol reported 1.53 million encounters with irregular migrants at the southwest border with Mexico between October 2023 and September 2024. That compares to 23,721 encounters at the Canadian border during that time.

Trump has also claimed the US is "subsidising Canada to the tune of over USD 100 billion a year". On America's trade deficit Canada's ambassador to Washington, Kirsten Hillman, told the AP US had a USD 75 billion trade deficit with Canada last year but noted a third of what Canada sells into the US are energy exports and prices have been high.

About 60 per cent of US crude oil imports are from Canada, and 85 per cent of US electricity imports as well.

Canada is also the largest foreign supplier of steel, aluminum and uranium to the US and has 34 critical minerals and metals that the Pentagon is eager for and investing for national security. Nearly USD 3.6 billion Canadian (USD 2.7 billion) worth of goods and services cross the border each day. Canada is the top export destination for 36 US states.

CEO's killing: Suspect faces weapons, forgery, other charges

AP ■ ALTOONA (US)

Authorities arrested a suspect and charged him with murder Monday in the brazen Manhattan killing of UnitedHealthcare's CEO after a quick-thinking McDonald's customer in Pennsylvania spotted a man who officers found with a gun, mask and writings linking him to the ambush.

The chance sighting at the restaurant in Altoona led to a dramatic break in a challenging but fast-moving investigation that captivated the public in the five days since the shooting that shook the business world.

Luigi Nicholas Mangione, a 26-year-old Ivy League graduate from a prominent Maryland real estate family, had a gun believed to be the one used in last Wednesday's shooting of Brian Thompson, as well as writings suggesting anger with corporate America, police said.

Late Monday, Manhattan prosecutors filed murder and other charges against Mangione, according to an online court docket. He remained jailed in Pennsylvania, where he was charged with possession of an unlicensed firearm, forgery and providing false identification to police.

Mangione was sitting in the rear of the McDonald's wearing a blue medical mask and looking at a laptop computer, court documents said. A customer saw him and an employee called 911, said Kaz Daughtry, an NYPD deputy commissioner. Altoona Police Officer Tyler Frye said he and his partner recognized the suspect immediately when he pulled down his mask. "We just didn't think twice about it. We knew that was our guy," he said.

When one of the officers asked if he'd been to New York recently, he "became quiet and started to shake," according to a

criminal complaint based on their accounts of the arrest.

In his backpack, police found a black, 3D-printed pistol and a 3D-printed black silencer, the complaint said. The pistol had a metal slide and plastic handle with a metal threaded barrel. He was taken into custody at about 9:15 a.m., police said. Mangione had clothing and a mask similar to those worn by the shooter and a fraudulent New Jersey ID matching one of the suspect used to check into a New York City hotel before the shooting, NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch said.

NYPD Chief of Detectives Joseph Kenny said Mangione was born and raised in Maryland, has ties to San Francisco and a last known address in Honolulu.

"Our family is shocked and devastated by Luigi's arrest," Mangione's family said in a statement posted on social media late Monday by his cousin, Maryland lawmaker Nino Mangione. "We offer our prayers to the family of Brian Thompson and we ask people to pray for all involved."

Mangione was arraigned and ordered held without bail during a brief court hearing. Asked if he needed a public defender, he asked if he could "answer that at a future date." He eventually will be extradited to New York to face charges in connection with Thompson's death, Kenny said.

Police found a three-page document with writings suggesting that Mangione had "ill will toward corporate America," Kenny said. The handwritten document "speaks to both his motivation and mindset," Tisch said.

Altoona Deputy Chief of Police Derek Swope would not characterize the writings except to say they were voluminous.

"They were very detailed, and everything we have is going to



This booking photo released Monday, by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections shows Luigi Mangione, a suspect in the fatal shooting of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson.

be turned over to NYPD," he told The Associated Press.

Mangione had a ghost gun, a type of weapon that can be assembled at home from parts without a serial number, making them difficult to trace, investigators said.

He also had a passport and \$10,000 in cash — \$2,000 of it in foreign currency, the local prosecutor said. Mangione, who said Hawaii was his most recent address, disputed the amount. Thompson, 50, was killed last Wednesday as he walked alone to a hotel, where UnitedHealthcare's parent company, UnitedHealth Group, was holding its annual investor conference, police said.

UnitedHealth Group thanked law enforcement in a statement. "Our hope is that today's apprehension brings some relief to Brian's family, friends, colleagues and the many others affected by this unspeakable tragedy," a company spokesperson said.

The shooting shook US businesses and the health insurance industry in particular, causing

companies to rethink security plans and delete photos of executives from their websites.

The shooter appeared to be "lying in wait for several minutes" before approaching the executive from behind and opening fire, police said.

Mangione attended an elite Baltimore prep school, graduating as valedictorian in 2016, according to the school's website. He went on to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees in computer science in 2020 from the University of Pennsylvania, a school spokesperson said.

One of his cousins is a Maryland state legislator and his family bought a country club north of Baltimore in the 1980s. On Monday, police blocked off an entrance to the property, which public records link to the suspect's parents. A swarm of reporters and photographers gathered outside.

Mangione went from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh after the shooting, and likely "was in a variety of locations across the state," said Lt. Col. George

Netanyahu takes to witness stand for first time in his trial for alleged corruption

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday took the stand for the first time in his trial for alleged corruption, setting off what will be weeks of testimony.

Netanyahu said "hello" to the judges. One judge told him he had the same privileges as other witnesses and could sit or stand as he chose.

Netanyahu will answer during his appearances to charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three separate cases. He is accused of promoting advantageous regulation for media moguls in exchange for favourable coverage of himself and his family. He is also accused of accepting tens of thousands of dollars worth of cigars and cham-



pagne from a billionaire Hollywood producer in exchange for assisting him with personal and business interests. He denies wrongdoing, saying the charges are a witch hunt orchestrated by a hostile media and a biased legal system that is out to topple his lengthy rule. The trial will be an inconvenient legal spectacle for the Israeli leader at a time that he is still fighting a war in Gaza with no end in sight and as he

faces with an international arrest warrant over Israel's conduct during that conflict.

It is the first time an Israeli prime minister will take the stand as a criminal defendant, an embarrassing milestone for a leader who has tried to cultivate an image as a sophisticated and respected statesman.

Netanyahu arrived at the packed courtroom ahead of his testimony, appearing at ease and shaking hands with members of his Likud party who were in attendance. Before taking the stand, Netanyahu's lawyer laid out the defense's case, and attempted to poke holes in the indictment.

Netanyahu will answer during his court appearances to charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three separate cases.

Ethnic armed group claims capture of strategic Myanmar town, control of border with B'desh

AP ■ BANGKOK

One of the most powerful ethnic minority armed groups battling Myanmar's army has claimed the capture of the last army outpost in the strategic western town of Maungdaw, gaining full control of the 271-kilometer (168-mile) -long border with Bangladesh.

The capture by the Arakan Army makes the group's control of the northern part of Rakhine state complete, and marks another advance in its bid for self-rule there.

Rakhine has become a focal point for Myanmar's nationwide civil war, in which pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic minority armed forces seeking autonomy battle the country's military rulers, who took power in 2021 after the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Khaing Thukha, a spokesperson for the Arakan Army, told The Associated Press by text message from an undisclosed location late Monday that his group had seized the last remaining military outpost in Maungdaw on Sunday.

Outpost commander Brig. Gen. Thurein Tun, was captured while attempting to flee the battle, Khaing Thukha said. The situation in Maungdaw could not be independently confirmed, with access to the internet and mobile phone services in the area mostly cut off.

Myanmar's military government did not immediately comment.

Maungdaw, about 400 kilometers (250 miles) southwest of Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, has been the target of an Arakan Army offensive since June. The group captured Paletwa and Buthidaung, two other towns on the border with Bangladesh, earlier this year. Since November 2023, the Arakan Army has gained control of 11 of Rakhine's 17 townships, along with one in neighboring Chin state.

Ann, a town in Rakhine that hosts the strategically important military headquarters overseeing the western part of the country, appears to be on the verge of falling entirely to the Arakan Army.

The group posted on the Telegram messaging app late

Friday that it had taken more than 30 military outposts, except the army's western command, which controls Rakhine and the southern part of neighboring Chin state, as well as the country's territorial waters in the Bay of Bengal.

Recent fighting in Rakhine has raised fears of a revival of organised violence against members of the Muslim Rohingya minority, similar to that which drove at least 740,000 members of their community in 2017 to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh for safety.

The Arakan Army, which is the military wing of the Buddhist Rakhine ethnic group in Rakhine state, where they are the majority and seek autonomy from Myanmar's central government, denies the allegations, though witnesses have described the group's actions to the AP and other media.

Rohingya have lived in Myanmar for generations, but they are widely regarded by many in the country's Buddhist majority, including members of the Rakhine minority, as having illegally

migrated from Bangladesh. The Rohingya face a great amount of prejudice and are generally denied citizenship and other basic rights.

The border between Myanmar and Bangladesh extends from land to the Naf River and offshore to the Bay of Bengal.

The Arakan Army said Sunday it had ordered the suspension of transport across the Naf River because police and local Muslims affiliated with the army were attempting to escape by boat to Bangladesh.

The rebel group has been accused of major human rights violations, particularly involving its capture of the town of Buthidaung in mid-May, when it was accused of forcing an estimated 200,000 residents, largely Rohingyas, to leave, and then setting fire to most of the buildings. It was accused of attacking Rohingya civilians fleeing fighting in Maungdaw in August.

The Arakan Army is also part of an armed ethnic alliance that launched an offensive in northeastern Myanmar last year and gained strategic territory along the border with China.

South Korean prosecutors seek to arrest ex-defence minister over martial law

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korean prosecutors are seeking to formally arrest the former defence minister alleged to have colluded with President Yoon Suk Yeol in imposing martial law last week, as both men are being investigated on rebellion and other charges.

Martial law lasted only about six hours but was the first of its kind in more than 40 years and has caused a domestic firestorm and large street protests.

Yoon and his associates face criminal investigations and impeachment attempts. The Justice Ministry has banned Yoon and eight others from leaving the country as authorities see them as key suspects in the martial law case. It's the first time that a sitting president in South Korea has received such a travel ban.

The Seoul Central District Court said Tuesday it'll review prosecutors' request for a warrant to arrest former Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun, who has been accused of recommending martial law to Yoon and sending troops to the National Assembly to block lawmakers from voting on it.

Enough lawmakers eventually managed to enter a parliament chamber to unanimously reject Yoon's decree, forcing the Cabinet to lift it before daybreak Dec. 4.

Kim released a statement through his law firm, saying that he "deeply apologizes for causing significant anxiety and inconvenience." He said that all responsibility over the martial law enforcement rests solely with him and pleaded for leniency for soldiers deployed to enforce martial law, saying they were only following orders.

If the arrest warrant is issued, Kim would be the first person arrested over the martial law case. Prosecutors would have up to 20 days to investigate Kim and determine whether to indict him. A conviction on the charge of rebellion would carry up to the death penalty.

Prosecutors reportedly accuse Kim of working with Yoon and other military and police officers of staging a riot to disrupt the constitution. Prosecutors' offices in Seoul couldn't immediately confirm the reports.

During a parliamentary hearing Tuesday, Kwak Jong-keun, commander of the Army Special Warfare Command

whose troops were sent to parliament, testified that he received direct instructions from Kim Yong Hyun, to obstruct lawmakers from entering the National Assembly's main chamber.

Kwak said the purpose of Kim's instructions was to prevent the assembly from gathering the required 150 votes necessary to overturn Yoon's martial law order.

Kwak is among those who face opposition-raised rebellion charges along with Yoon and Kim, and the Defense Ministry suspended him last week.

Opposition parties and many experts say the martial law decree was unconstitutional. They say a president is by law allowed to declare martial law only during "wartime, war-like situations or other comparable national emergency states" but South Korea wasn't in such a situation. They argue that deploying troops to seal the National Assembly to suspend its political activities amounted to rebellion because the South Korean constitution doesn't allow a president to use the military to suspend parliament in any situation.

In his martial law announcement, the conservative Yoon stressed the need to rebuild the

country by eliminating "shameless North Korea followers and anti-state forces" in a reference to his liberal rival rivals who control parliament.

Since taking office in 2022, Yoon has been on a near-constant collision course with the main liberal opposition Democratic Party, which has introduced motions seeking to impeach some of his top officials and launched a fierce political offensive against Yoon over a spate of scandals involving him and his wife. The focus of attention is how authorities could investigate Yoon and whether they can detain him.

South Korean law gives a president immunity from prosecution while in office, except for allegations of rebellion or treason. This means that Yoon can be questioned and detained by investigative agencies over his martial law decree, but many observers doubt that authorities will forcefully detain him because of the potential for clashes with his presidential security service.

They also say the security service won't likely permit searches of Yoon's office, citing a law that prohibits searches on sites with state secrets without approval from those in charge of those areas.

Equity MFs inflow drops 14% in Nov; SIP figure remains flat at Rs 25,320-cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Equity mutual funds witnessed an inflow of Rs 35,943 crore in November, marking a drop of 14 per cent on a month-on-month basis, amid heightened volatility in stock markets driven by various macroeconomic factors, geopolitical events and US election results.

Despite this, it marked the 45th consecutive month of net inflows into equity-oriented funds, reflecting the growing popularity of mutual funds among investors, according to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) released on Tuesday.

Moreover, monthly contributions from the Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) remained flat at Rs 25,320 crore last month against Rs 25,323 crore in October.

"There was heightened volatility due to various macroeconomic factors, geopolitical events and the US election results. This resulted in investors opting for a wait & watch approach while allo-

ating larger amounts and thus decline in lumpsum flows including flattish SIP numbers for November 2024," Akhil Chaturvedi, CBO, Motilal Oswal AMC, said.

Overall, the mutual fund industry experienced an inflow of Rs 60,295 crore in the month under review, which was way lower than Rs 2.4 lakh crore in October. This could be due to a huge decline in inflows in debt funds to Rs 12,915 crore in November from Rs 1.57 lakh crore in the preceding month.

Despite the decline, the industry's net assets under management rose to Rs 68.08 lakh crore last month from Rs 67.25 lakh crore in October.

"Defying a tumultuous month in the equity market, the mutual fund industry's assets reached a new pinnacle of Rs 68.08 lakh crore, driven primarily by robust inflows into growth-/equity-oriented schemes. The unwavering monthly SIP inflows remained above Rs 25,000 crore in November, showcasing the investors' long-term vision and commitment to



their financial goals, despite the short-term market fluctuations," Venkat Chalasani, Chief Executive, AMFI, said.

As per the data, equity-oriented schemes witnessed an inflow of Rs 35,943 crore in November as compared to record inflow of Rs 41,887 crore in October.

"Weak global cues, China's recent economic stimulus, and escalating tensions between Ukraine and Russia impacted Indian equity markets in November 2024, which witnessed relentless selling by foreign portfolio investors. The impact of this was seen on the Indian mutual fund

industry as well, which witnessed 14.19 per cent drop in equity inflows in November on a month-on-month basis," Ashwini Kumar, Senior Vice President and Head Market Data, ICRA Analytics, said.

Within the equity schemes, sectoral or thematic category attracted investors with the

highest net inflow of Rs 7,658 crore during the month under review. However, flow in the segment was less compared to Rs 12,279 crore in October and Rs 13,255 crore in September. This was followed by flexi cap funds which saw inflow of Rs 5,084 crore last month.

Inflows into large-cap funds declined 26 per cent to Rs 2,548 crore in November from Rs 3,452 crore in the preceding month, while mid and small cap funds registered month-on-month growth of 4.3 per cent to Rs 4,883 crore and 9 per cent to Rs 4,112 crore, respectively.

The month saw 18 new fund offerings (NFOs) collecting Rs 4,052 crore while October saw 29 NFOs garnering Rs 6,078 crore. Of this, new index funds launched in November were 10 as compared to 17 launched in October, Mayukh Datta, Chief Business Officer, IIT Mutual Fund, said.

There has been a shift from low-risk categories like large-cap and hybrid funds to higher-risk options like small-cap

funds, while NFO activity slowed down last month.

With regards to debt-oriented funds, Deepak Ramaraju, Senior Fund Manager, Shriram AMC, said that the category saw a 92 per cent month-on-month plunge in inflow to Rs 12,916 crore in November on the back of withdrawal from liquid funds due to tighter liquidity conditions and possible tax payments.

Overall, 9 out of 16 debt mutual fund categories recorded net inflows in November. Liquid funds experienced the highest outflows, amounting to Rs 1,779 crore.

"Meanwhile, investors showed a strong preference for categories like low-duration funds, ultra-short-duration funds, money market funds, corporate bond funds, and overnight funds. Together, these categories accounted for about 85 per cent of the inflows across nine categories that recorded positive figures, highlighting a strong preference for low-risk, highly liquid investment options," Nehal Meshram,

Senior Analyst - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Further, investor interest in active duration strategies, such as Gilt Funds, led to inflow of Rs 1,803 crore. This can be attributed to rising expectations of interest rate cuts in the near future, she added.

Gold continues to glitter with investors showing their affinity towards yellow metal in November as well. Gold ETF category witnessed a net inflow of Rs 1,257 crore in November, which was lower than Rs 1,961 crore seen in the preceding month. "While the fund mobilized was less compared to October, the redemption number was higher. This signifies that investors would have chosen to book profits with gold trading at elevated levels and impending marriage season, where the demand for physical gold is high," Himanshu Srivastava - Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Sensex, Nifty end on flat note amid volatile trade

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed on a flat note on Tuesday amid a lacklustre trade, as investors preferred to stay on the sidelines in the absence of any fresh trigger.

Besides, a weak trend in European markets also impacted investors' sentiment, according to traders.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rises 1.59 points to close flat at 81,510.05. During the day, it climbed 217.88 points or 0.27 per cent to hit an intraday high of 81,726.34.

The NSE Nifty fell 8.95 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 24,610.05. In the intraday trade, it slipped 108.35 points or 0.44 per cent to hit a low of 24,510.65. "The domestic market concluded on a flat note, a rebound from the lows suggests buy-on-dip strategy... The broader market outperformed, maintaining its positive trend led by mid & small-caps. The IT index reached new highs in anticipation of improvement in US IT spending.

"Upcoming inflation data from the US and India are critical for insights into potential future rate cuts.



India's CPI will serve as a key indicator of underlying earnings growth, which has been downgraded in H1FY25," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30-share pack, Bajaj Finserv, HCL Technologies, Infosys, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance, ICICI Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Titan were among the gainers.

Bharti Airtel, Adani Ports, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, Larsen & Toubro were the laggards. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Seoul settled higher, while Hong Kong

ended in negative territory. European markets were trading lower. The US markets closed in the red in overnight deals on Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude fell 0.17 per cent to USD 72.02 a barrel.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 724.27 crore on Monday, while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) offloaded shares worth Rs 1,648.07 crore, according to exchange data. On Monday, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 200.66 points to settle at 81,508.46, while NSE Nifty dropped 58.80 points to close at 24,619.

Bihar Ambassadors' meet strengthens global investment ties

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Head of the second edition of the Bihar Business Connect 2024 summit, the Department of Industries of the Bihar government showcased the state's strategic initiatives, reforms and investment opportunities to select diplomats.

The Bihar Business Connect 2024 - Ambassadors' Meet presented the policies and initiatives of the state government to the global audience as a precursor to the Summit scheduled for December 19-20, 2024, in Patna, according to an official statement.

The event had Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Samrat Chaudhary, Industry and Tourism Minister Nitish Mishra, State Chief Secretary Amrit Lal Meena, and Bandana Preyashi, Secretary of the Industries Department.

The roadshow saw diplomats from around 30 foreign missions in India as also international trade associations and trade promotion bodies participate.

Foreign guests present at the event included Nguyen Thanh Hai, Ambassador, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; Mariano Agustín Caucino, Ambassador, Embassy of the Argentine Republic; and José Francisco Ignacio, Ambassador, Embassy



of the Philippines. David Pasquini, Commercial Officer of the US Embassy, alongside prominent trade bodies such as the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce, TPCCI, FIEO, AEPC, US-India Business Council, and UK-India Business Council.

Speaking at the event, Chaudhary highlighted Bihar's rapid strides in industrial development and sustainability and said, "Policy, population, and water make Bihar special. Here we are working on policies which are sector-specific like leather, IT, start-up, etc. Our demographic dividend is our strength. This not only makes Bihar a big market but also an epicentre for human resources.

"Abundance of water makes the land of Bihar superior in terms of production. In the coming

days, more positive changes will be seen in Bihar, which will definitely make the state more favourable for investment."

Industry and Tourism Minister Nitish Mishra emphasised the state's untapped potential, saying, "All the facilities required for investment anywhere are present on a large scale in Bihar. Here land, infrastructure, connectivity, electricity, water, human resources and market are all available, which makes Bihar investment-friendly. Today, as we are working to achieve the goal of Viksit Bharat in 2047, it becomes necessary that we take advantage of the immense opportunities available in Bihar."

Meena emphasised the statistics that define Bihar as the hub of investors and said, "Bihar is a complete turnaround story. The ease of doing business is

the focal point of Bihar. There is massive focus on agriculture where production has gone up exponentially.

"Our CAGR of per capita power consumption is 16 per cent, which is the highest in the country, and now there's complete focus on renewable energy. Data consumption has gone up by 200 per cent, which talks about the growing economy. With aspiring youth, Bihar is clearly the future."

Reaffirming Bihar as a premier global investment destination, Preyashi said, "Bihar is fast emerging as an industrial land, where both small and big investors are investing. Almost 100 per cent electricity, huge market, abundant water, friendly policies and better infrastructure are some of the aspects that make Bihar investment-friendly and attract investors.

"We are continuously working to improvise and bring sector-specific policies. We are also making the path easier for investors by providing various types of incentives, such as capital investment subsidy, export subsidy, and interest subvention."

Highlighting the strategic investment opportunities in Bihar in his opening remarks, Jaideep Ahuja, Chairman, CII Delhi Chapter, stated, "We stand on the threshold of tremendous opportunity, a

vision to foster partnerships and open new doors for investments in the vibrant dynamic state of Bihar. Bihar growth story is one of resilience, transformation and promise. The state has established itself as a promising hub for investments and industries, and I am delighted to witness the momentum that is building in the collaborative spirit that defines today's economic environment."

Rajneet Kohli, CEO, Britannia Industries, which has two manufacturing plants in Bihar, said, "Bihar, with its growing population of 140 million, offers a captive market for our products. The state's robust GDP growth, the second-highest in the nation, further fuels our expansion. We've created over 3,000 jobs and reached 7,500 villages, establishing 1,000+ rural outlets and 55,000+ urban outlets."

Kamal Oswal, Managing Director, Nahar Group, mentioned while addressing the other dignitaries, "We're starting our new Logistics Park in Bihar, a massive 1 million square foot facility. This USD 15 million investment will generate 4,000 jobs, making it one of India's largest logistics hubs. Our experience in Bihar has been exceptional, with all approvals processed swiftly and efficiently, unlike any other state we've invested in."

Rupee settles on a flat note near all-time low at 84.85 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee settled for the day on a flat note higher by just 1 paisa at 84.85 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, a tad above its all-time low level, as change of guard at the Reserve Bank of India raised expectations of a shift in the central bank's monetary policy.

The government on Monday appointed Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

Forex traders said markets now expect a rate cut in the

upcoming monetary policy in February. While a weak tone in the domestic markets and a surge in the US dollar index further pressurised the rupee.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.80 and touched the lowest level of 84.86 against the greenback during intra-day trade. The unit ended the session at 84.85 (provisional) against the dollar, higher by just 1 paisa from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee saw its steepest fall in over a month and plunged 20 paise to settle at lowest-ever level of



84.86 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias on strength in the US dollar and overnight gains in crude oil prices. However, recent FII inflows may support the rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan.

Choudhary further said that any intervention by the RBI may also support the rupee.

"Investors may remain cautious ahead of US inflation data on Wednesday. Inflation is expected to be higher than the previous month. USD-

INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 84.65 to 85.10," he said.

Shaktikanta Das, who will demit office as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday, was the key man behind the planning and execution of the demonetisation drive and roll-out of the land-mark goods and services tax (GST). At the RBI, he steered India's monetary policy response during the challenging period of the pandemic.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six

currencies, was trading higher by 0.13 per cent at 106.28.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.36 per cent to USD 71.88 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share benchmark index Sensex closed on a flat note at 81,510.05, higher by just 1.59 points. The Nifty fell 8.95 points, or 0.04 per cent, to 24,610.05 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Monday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 724.27 crore, according to exchange data.

IGL announces 1:1 bonus share issue

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indraprastha Gas Ltd on Tuesday announced a 1:1 bonus share - one free share for every share held by shareholders as India's biggest city gas retailer looks to increase retail investor participation and reward shareholders.

This is IGL's maiden bonus issue.

The Board of Directors of IGL in a meeting on Tuesday approved "issuance of bonus shares to the shareholders of the company in the ratio of 1:1, i.e. 1 (one bonus equity Shares of face value of Rs 2 each fully paid up for every 1 (one) existing equity shares of face value of Rs 2 each fully paid up, to the eligible shareholders of the company as on the record date," the firm said in a stock exchange filing.

The share capital of the company will increase from Rs 140 crore to Rs 280 crore post-bonus issue. Rs 140 crore



would be capitalized from free reserves to implement the bonus issue.

"The company has a total balance of Rs 8,411.74 crore as free reserves for capitalization," IGL said.

The bonus share is likely to be credited within two months.

IGL retailers CNG to automobiles and pipes natural gas to household kitchens and industries Delhi and its adjoining cities of Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurugram. It also retails in few

growth trajectory," IGL later said in a statement.

The record date for determining eligible shareholders will be decided later.

"This announcement aligns with IGL's enduring philosophy of rewarding its shareholders, underpinned by strong financial fundamentals and consistent growth," the firm said.

The bonus issuance not only reflects the company's healthy reserves but also its optimism in sustaining its leadership position in India's clean energy ecosystem, IGL said.

Commenting on the issue, Kamal Kishore Chaitwal, Managing Director, IGL, said, "The bonus share issue is a testament to our continued focus on creating long-term shareholder value. I reinforce our confidence in the company's potential to scale new heights while reinforcing investor confidence in IGL's robust financial performance and future

IoT, AI, and Blockchain to Transform Indian Farming

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2nd edition of the Agriculture and Rural Communication Summit 2024, held at Pride Plaza Hotel, New Delhi, spotlighted transformative strategies for advancing Indian agriculture. Organized by Snail Integral Pvt. Ltd, the summit unveiled key insights into technology-driven solutions that promise to boost crop yields by up to 20% while empowering farmers.

During the event, a knowledge paper titled "Rural Communication and Agriculture in India: Pathways to a Viksit Bharat 2047" was released by Synergy Technofin and Snailintegral. The report emphasized the role of cutting-edge technologies like IoT, AI, and Blockchain in revolutionizing agriculture. These tools are set to provide precise insights into crop health, optimize irrigation, and enable

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

data-driven farming, stated Sunil Sihag, MD, Synergy Technofin.

Dr. P.K. Singh, Agriculture Commissioner, highlighted the government's focus on sustainability through Integrated Pest Management and innovative seed varieties. Panel discussions explored themes such as sustainability, communication strategies, and technology adoption. The summit underscored the critical need for digital literacy, strategic partnerships, and inclusive communication to transform rural India and achieve the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.



ALUCAST® 2024 Attracts 8,000 Visitors, 200 Exhibitors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 10th edition of ALUCAST® EXPO, India's premier biennial international conference and exhibition on die casting technology, commenced on December 5, 2024, at Yashobhoomi, India International Convention & Expo Center, Dwarka, Delhi. Spanning three days, the event hosted over 200 exhibitors and 300+ brands from nations such as Germany, the USA, Japan, and Spain, drawing more than 8,000 visitors from 20+ countries.

Organized by the Aluminium Casters' Association (ALUCAST®) and NürnbergMesse India, the event highlighted India's emerging leadership in aluminum die casting. Keynote speeches by industry leaders, including Mr. Prasan Firodia, President of



ALUCAST, showcased India's advanced manufacturing capabilities, such as its 4,400-ton aluminum die-casting machine.

Ms. Sonia Prashar, Managing Director of NürnbergMesse India, emphasized the sector's growth beyond automotive applications to include aerospace, consumer electronics, and electrical equipment. The conference featured over 2.5 days of technical sessions on innovations like semi-solid casting, AI integration, and workforce reskilling.

World Chess Championship: Nerves to play crucial role as Gukesh, Liren head for close finish

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

A handy lead has slipped through his grip but Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh will rely on his steely resolve to bounce back when he takes on enigmatic defending champion Ding Liren in the 13th game of the World Chess Championship that has been quite a roller-coaster ride for the players. The 18-year-old Gukesh, who is the youngest challenger to the title, and the 32-year-old defending champion from China have been locked in an intriguing battle in which both have held leads for not too long. They will resume on Wednesday after a day of rest.

The scores are currently tied at 6-6 with the first to reach 7.5 assured of the coveted crown.

After squandering away a full point lead with just three games to go, the 12th round loss was heartbreaking for the young Indian and many experts believe that he will go for an aggressive approach in his last game with white pieces under Classical time control.

It won't be off the mark to say that nerves are likely to play a crucial role in the final stretch. The scores were tied 5-5 after game



10 but the last two decisive games thereafter have breathed new life into an otherwise well-contested match in which both players have had their chances.

After what he described as a see-saw victory in the 11th game, Gukesh was simply not himself in the 12th game and his idea to play a new position for

the first time backfired spectacularly. If the scores are still tied in the USD 2.5 million championship, tie-break games of shorter duration will be played to determine the winner.

Generally a smooth operator, Liren looked a pale shadow of himself after the 11th game and the case was no different for Gukesh when he was

completely outplayed for the first time here on Monday.

To regain composure is the name of the game here and Gukesh has shown resolve in the past.

Liren, on the other hand, was in a similar situation in the last world championships match against Ian Nepomniachtchi that he won,

rallying as many as three times before eventually clinching the tiebreaker. Liren's precision was simply immaculate in the 12th game.

Gukesh did not look the same player and the Chinese took advantage of the situation right from the word go to earn high praise from many in the elite chess circles.

Five-time world champion across formats, Viswanathan Anand, called it a "very impressive game" while Liren himself said, "it was the best game that I have played in recent times."

While the mind games will go on in the last two games and a potential tiebreaker, American Hikaru Nakamura and world number one Magnus Carlsen feel that the balance had tilted slightly in Liren's favour. "Ding did not have to calculate a single line in this whole game, he is being able to play the game based on positional understanding where he is very good," said Carlsen on his new youtube channel.

It might be a tightrope walk for Gukesh but the young Indian is likely to go out there and give his best in the penultimate game.

In case of another draw, there is a decent chance that the chess buffs will get to see the tie-break games.



Chennaiyin, Hyderabad desperate for a win revive campaign

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Struggling at the bottom-half of the table both Chennaiyin FC and Hyderabad FC will look to revive their campaign when they clash in the Indian Super League here on Wednesday.

The two teams are in an urgent need for a shift in momentum, with two-time former champions Chennaiyin FC dropping to ninth in the standings following one draw and three defeats on the trot. A win can take them to the seventh spot.

Hyderabad FC have also suffered three losses in a row to be one place ahead of the laggards Mohammedan Sporting with seven points from 10 games.

The Owen Coyle-coached Marina Machans have endured a challenging run, going three games without a goal, a streak they'll aim to break in front of their home crowd.

Despite scoring 16 goals in 11 matches this season, Chennaiyin's attack has faltered recently, and they have failed to score in their last two meetings with Hyderabad.

Head coach Owen Coyle, on the verge of completing 50 ISL matches in charge, will be eager to mark the milestone with a victory.

Connor Shields will have to play a key role in the midfield as his delivery from the flanks will be crucial in supplying chances to forwards like Daniel Chima Chukwu, who has a strong record against Hyderabad, including five goals in previous encounters. Hyderabad FC has also

struggled for consistency, conceding 11 first-half goals this season -- more than any other team.

Their defensive frailty often force them into catch-up mode, disrupting their rhythm.

On the attacking front, Hyderabad have failed to score in four of their last six games. Their only wins in this stretch came when they found the net, underscoring the importance of converting chances.

Their English-born Japanese midfielder Cy Goddard has been the bright spot, contributing a goal and an assist this season while creating 15 goal-scoring opportunities.

Hyderabad will count on his ability to unlock Chennaiyin's defense and deliver in the final third.

"Hyderabad FC have some very good players and some talented Indian players. A lot of them have done well. We are very respectful of the game tomorrow night. We will be very positive and try to win the game from the very first minute," Coyle said.

Hyderabad FC assistant coach Shabeeb Chembakath hoped that his team will be storming back into form, mentioning that they are working well on the areas that need improvement.

"When the results are disappointing, we are fully aware of the areas we need to improve upon. Football is a game of ups and downs. Training is going well. We are taking this challenge positively and we will be bouncing back," Chembakath said.

Afghanistan extend Trott's contract by one year ahead of Champions Trophy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jonathan Trott will continue as Afghanistan's head coach for another year after the country's cricket board extended his contract through 2025.

The announcement comes a few months ahead of next year's Champions Trophy, where Afghanistan will make their maiden appearance.

The 43-year-old former England batter has been Afghanistan's head coach since July 2022, and under his guidance, the team has made impressive strides in international cricket.

"The Afghanistan Cricket Board wishes Trott the best of luck for his next year's stint with Afghan Atalan as he strives to elevate Afghanistan cricket further on the global

stage," the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) said in a statement.

Under Trott, the team has achieved significant milestones, including reaching their first-ever T20 World Cup semi-final this year with stunning victories over Australia and New Zealand.

Afghanistan also enjoyed a memorable ODI World Cup last year in India, where they stunned England, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, finishing among the top eight teams to secure their maiden appearance in the Champions Trophy.

Additionally, Afghanistan recently triumphed in bilateral ODI series against South Africa and Bangladesh in Sharjah, winning both by 2-1 margins.

West Ham show support for injured teammate Antonio

AP ■ LONDON

West Ham players showed their support for seriously injured teammate Michail Antonio before and during their Premier League home win against Wolverhampton, two days after his car crash.

The players warmed up in "Antonio 9" jerseys and walked on to the field in tops adorned with his name. The club will put the walk-out tops up for auction along with every match jersey worn against Wolves, with the proceeds going to medical charities and matched by the club's board.

West Ham fans stood in London Stadium and applauded for Antonio in the ninth, and when captain Jarrod Bowen scored the 2-1 winner in the second half, he



approached supporters behind the goal carrying an Antonio jersey. "To share that moment, he's not here with us but I'm sure (Antonio) was watching and the fans, you heard them," Bowen told broadcaster Sky Sports. "An emotional couple of days."

Before the game, Bowen said, "Everyone loves Mic, he is a big character."

"He is not just a teammate, he is a friend and has been for many years. A dad as well to beautiful children. It is one of those things where life is bigger than football. The main thing is Mic is safe and

well and here to tell the story. Saturday was a really difficult time. He is a warrior and a fighter, he always has been, and I know he will be back stronger for this."

Antonio, a 34-year-old Jamaica international, was recovering in hospital after undergoing surgery on what West Ham described as a "lower limb fracture." He was involved in a one-car incident outside London on Saturday, after which he was hospitalized and kept under close supervision.

He wished the team well by video before the match.

Antonio has made more than 300 appearances for West Ham since joining the club from Nottingham Forest in 2015, and played in all 14 games this season before the incident.

Record number of participants to turn up for National Shooting Championship Competition

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A record 13,522 shooters are set to participate in the 67th National Shooting Championship Competition (NSCC), starting here on Thursday with the shotgun events.

While the shotgun (December 11, 2024-January 19, 2025) and pistol (December 13, 2024-January 5, 2025) competitions will be held at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range here, Bhopal's MP State Shooting Academy ranges will hold the rifle nationals from December 15 to 31.

The official pre-event training for skeet shooters belonging to Group 2 and Group 3 will be held on Wednesday, with the



qualification rounds beginning on Thursday. Group 1 shooters take to the ranges from December 21.

Both defending champions Anant Jeet Singh Naruka, in men's skeet, and Ganemat Sekhon, in the women's skeet,

will compete.

A total of 837 shotgun shooters across skeet, trap and double trap events will be competing in five classifications which include master, senior master and super master, besides the

senior and junior.

Rifle competition has seen the maximum entries with 7013 participants across classifications while the pistol nationals will have 5672 competitors vying for the honours.

A total of 40 teams will be represented at the nationals. These include almost all states and union territories as well as those representing the armed forces of the country and public institutions like the ONGC and the Railways.

"All top shooters of the country will be participating in the nationals, whose scores will be counted when the Indian team for the 2025 international season is declared," the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) said in a release.

It is important sports be part of education as it teaches value of losing: Andre Agassi

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Tennis legend Andre Agassi on Tuesday emphasised the importance of keeping sports as a part of education, stating that sports teach children the value of losing.

Agassi was discussing the future of sports and education as a foundation for excellence at the TiE Global Summit 2024 in Bengaluru.

"Even when you have a failure, you have to get up and play again the next day. So, what sports is teaching you is that focusing on winning and losing is really a distraction from what we need to be thinking about. We need to be thinking about how to get better," he said.

Agassi, who has been investing in education for the "disadvantaged" since 2001, shared that he has helped build 130 schools for about 80,000 kids in the United States, a feat he attributes to pushing himself to stay ahead of challenges.

He credited his ability to stay on



course—and course-correct when needed—to his gruelling tennis career. "Sports is all about problem-solving. Tennis taught me how to navigate a very intense environment and maintain my objectivity and problem-solving abilities. It forces me to be present, but also to understand the context of what I'm doing," Agassi said.

Speaking about his rebellious phase, Agassi said it was something he had to go through to reach where he is today.

"Vulnerability is essential for growth, and I think vulnerability eventually leads to humility," he added.

The session, called Marathon Mindset, also featured Aakash Chaudhry, Co-Founder and Chief Mentor of Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), who discussed the future of EdTech in India.

Agassi agreed that technology in education will play a significant role in filling the huge gap in personalised learning that every child deserves. He said this belief is part of the reason why he invested in the Indian EdTech firm, Square Panda.

"I think technology can play an essential role, not just in scalability, but also in optimising personalised learning. That's why I got involved with Square Panda. We are here because of the sheer scale of impact the technology will bring to education," he said.

World Cup hosting decisions set to kick off a decade of scrutiny on Saudi Arabia and FIFA

AP ■ GENEVA

The inevitable result has been clear since last year: Saudi Arabia will be confirmed by FIFA as the 2034 World Cup host on Wednesday.

The 2030 World Cup also will be awarded to a six-nation, three-continent project led by co-hosts Spain, Portugal Morocco. It gives a single game each at South American neighbors Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, the first host in 1930.

Two men's World Cups, one candidate for each, both a shoo-in to win.

The outcome will be as FIFA and its president Gianni Infantino intended in October last year. Then, on the same day, the 2030 race was effectively decided and the 2034 one surprisingly opened. FIFA is sending one of the biggest prizes in world sports toward the state modernizing project of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin

Salman. A decade of global scrutiny will follow.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON WEDNESDAY?

FIFA hosts a special congress in Zurich from 3 p.m. Local time (1300 GMT) and its 211 member federations will attend remotely online. The closed-doors meeting at FIFA headquarters should be streamed live on its website.

The 37-member FIFA council, including Saudi federation president Yasser al Missehal, meets on Tuesday and should advise to approve both bids.

Confirming the 2030 and 2034 hosts should be done in a combined decision by acclamation rather than a registered vote. FIFA published each member's choice in June 2018 in Moscow when the United States, Canada and Mexico won the 2026 World Cup hosting vote 134-65 against Morocco.

The Saudi bid team said in a statement "as a nation that loves



football it is expected that fans across the entire kingdom will naturally take to the streets and celebrate this historic moment if their country is confirmed as hosts."

WHAT WAS THE FIFA PROCESS TO BID AND WIN? These World Cup hosting contests

happened gradually and then suddenly.

In June 2018, days after losing to the financially strong North American bid, Morocco King Mohammed VI announced his nation would seek the 2030 World Cup. Most expected it would be Europe's turn.

Soon, Spain's government invited Morocco — separated by about 14 kilometers (10 miles) of sea — into its expected bid with Portugal. The project has survived a brief flirtation in 2022 with war-torn Ukraine.

Saudi Arabia worked in 2022, with what seemed to be Infantino's diplomatic help, on an unlikely 2030 co-hosting bid with Egypt and Greece or Italy that was unacceptable to European soccer body UEFA.

When FIFA's council eventually met to discuss World Cup bidding, the Spain-led bid now had South American partners. The bigger picture deal was letting Infantino open a 2034 contest only Asia and Oceania members could enter within four weeks.

The Asian soccer body quickly backed Saudi Arabia, and Australia's interest was soon quashed.

HOW HAVE THE PROJECTS BEEN EXPLAINED?

Hardly at all, apart from mandatory documents published by FIFA and basic campaignwebsites.

There was no launch event in Zurich. No project exhibitions at the FIFA congress in May in Thailand. Bid plans were handed to FIFA behind closed doors in Paris during the Olympics.

FIFA's Infantino has held no press conference and taken no questions during the 15-month process.

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin also has not spoken publicly about the double-award agreement.

An era of blockbuster bid contests, globe-trotting campaigns and dramatic votes to host a World Cup or Olympics has ended.

WHAT DOES THE 2030 BID PROPOSE?

The world's biggest soccer venue — the planned 115,000-seat King Hassan II Stadium in Casablanca — is among 24 stadiums offered including 11 in Spain, three in

Portugal and six in Morocco. Morocco wants to host the July 21 final. Spain offers the home stadiums of Barcelona and Real Madrid.

The longest World Cup should start with the three games in South America on June 8-9. The tournament would resume on June 13.

WHAT DOES THE 2034 BID PROPOSE?

Saudi Arabia offers 15 stadiums — eight still on paper — in five cities: Eight venues in Jeddah, four in Riyadh, plus Abha, Al Khobar and Neom, the planned futuristic mega-project.

The opening game and final are set for a 92,000-seat venue planned in Riyadh.

Saudi Arabia aims to host all 104 games, though it could yet become a World Cup for the Middle East region. The diplomatic coup for FIFA and Saudi Arabia would be involving Israel one day.

Indian batters start preparations for Brisbane Test

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Reeling from their humiliating 10-wicket defeat in the pink-ball Test, the under-fire Indian batters, led by Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, turned their attention to red-ball preparations with an intensive net session here on Tuesday, aiming to bounce back in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

While Australia moved to Brisbane for the third Test from Saturday, the Indian team chose to stay back, focusing on honing their red-ball skills, particularly their defensive techniques and judgment in leaving deliveries.

"It's time to look ahead. Preparations for the Brisbane Test starts right here in Adelaide," the BCCI posted on X, sharing a video of Team India's practice. Struggling with poor form, having scored just 142 runs with only one fifty (52) in his last 12 innings, the Indian skipper, who rejoined the team after the birth of his son, aimed to quickly regain



his rhythm as he faced both Indian spinners and pacers. Dropped himself to No 6, Rohit capped scores of three and six in Adelaide; first, he

was adjudged LBW to a fuller delivery that nipped back, while in the second essay he was cleaned up a by length ball from his Aussie

counterpart Pat Cummins that held its line and clipped the off stump. Kohli, who ended his 16-month century drought with

a hundred in Perth, fell victim to edging two deliveries – first to second slip and then to wicketkeeper in the pink ball

Test.

The star Indian batter looked full of intent as had a watchful start to his net session before slowly finding his flow.

KL Rahul looked more subdued, focusing more on his defence, while Rishabh Pant played a few pick up shots.

Young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, who starred with a 161 in India's massive 295-run win in the opening Test, was the aggressor among the all, displaying his cheeky shots and even stepped out to the Indian bowlers.

The bowling unit consisted the likes of Harshit Rana, Akash Deep, Yash Dayal and the spin trio of Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin and Washington Sundar, while there were a few throwdown specialists as well.

The key Indian pace duo of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj along with seam-bowling allrounder Nitish Kumar Reddy looked to have a lean day. India are scheduled to reach Brisbane on Wednesday.

Mark Taylor urges senior India teammates to address Siraj's premature celebrations

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Former Australian captain Mark Taylor believes Mohammed Siraj has a tendency of celebrating wickets prematurely without waiting for the umpire's decision and his senior India teammates should have a word with the pacer to address this as it is giving him a "bad look".

Taylor said Siraj charges down the wicket towards his teammates, without checking the umpire's decision when he thinks that he has got a batter out.

"I think with Mohammed Siraj, I'd like to see some of the Indian players have a chat with him, not so much what happened with Travis Head but how when he thinks he's got a batter out he doesn't turn around and actually acknowledge the umpire whether he's given it out or not," Taylor told Nine News. "I think that's the bad look for him and the game."

"I love his exuberance, I love his competitive nature, I love the fact we've got a really good series going on but there is also the respect of the game that needs to be upheld. I think a little word from one of the senior players would go a long way." Siraj has become a topic of discussion after his brief showdown with Travis Head on day two of the Adelaide Test, which Australia won by 10 wickets to level the series 1-1.

Head had struck a splendid 141-ball knock of 140 before being castled by Siraj, who went on to give him an aggressive send-off following



an exchange of words. The Indian endured boos from the Adelaide crowd following the confrontation.

Both players were handed one demerit point each on their disciplinary records with Siraj also receiving a fine of 20 per cent of his match fee.

"I love the combative nature of Head and Siraj, but it has to be kept in check because the last thing we want to see in this game is that developing into a batsman maybe whacking a bowler."

"They get close together in that sort of situation and you don't want to see that. So the administrators need to keep a check on that, and so do the two captains," Taylor added.

Former Australia batter Simon Katich felt Siraj had a "brain fade" moment, which the Indian regretted later.

"It's a shame that Siraj had a bit of a brain fade... There's no need for that in the game," Katich said SEN Radio.

"He would regret that Siraj... It was all spur of the moment and when he got Mitchell Starc out not long after that he was pretty sheepish. "You don't know what head space some of the players are in at times... he was probably disappointed with his performance and something like this can happen," he added.

Gilchrist says Australia were 'stung' by criticism post Perth loss

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Legendary wicketkeeper-batter Adam Gilchrist believes Australia were "stung" by the criticism following their loss in Perth, but have returned to their best, driven by captain Pat Cummins' controlled aggression.

Australia, who had drawn a lot of flak for the 295-run loss in the opening Perth Test, bounced back by registering an emphatic 10-wicket win in the second game to level the five match series 1-1.



"You could see just through his (Cummins) celebrations that... every wicket that he took he was more aggressive in his celebration," Gilchrist said on Fox Cricket.

"Not in that lose control extent but you could just see that clearly they'd been stung by a bit of criticism around after their performance (in Perth) and they internally would have been so disappointed with the way they played in Perth.

"So it (Adelaide celebrations) showed you what it meant to them and they knew that they

were back at the level they want to play their cricket," Gilchrist added. The former wicketkeeper-batter said it felt the captain had "a grease and oil change" after the lacklustre performance at Perth.

"Cummins was outstanding, he looked like if there needed a bit of a grease and oil change after Perth and a tune up, he was purring by the end of it, so that was terrific to watch." In the pink ball Test, the pace

trioka of Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Scott Boland took all 20 Indian wickets with spinner Nathan Lyon bowling just one over.

"They were just a unit, the three bowlers, Nathan Lyon only had one over (in the match) and Mitch Marsh four, but other than that the big three, Starc, Boland, Cummins hunted as a pack and bowled as a unit and that was really fun to watch," Gilchrist added.

Tickets for day one of Boxing Day Test between India and Australia sold out

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Tickets for the opening day of the fourth Test of the between India and Australia at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground have sold out, highlighting the public's strong interest in the prestigious Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

The strong demand for tickets comes a couple of days after hosts Australia made a stunning comeback, handing India a 10-wicket defeat in Adelaide to level the five-match series 1-1. The two rivals will head to the MCG for the Boxing Day Test, starting December 26 after the third Test in Brisbane starting Saturday.

"All available public tickets for Day 1 of the NRMA Insurance Boxing Day Test have been sold," Cricket Australia posted on their 'X' account on Tuesday.

"There will be a possible final release of a small number of public tickets on December 24 for non-members to get their seats," CA added. The pink ball Test in Adelaide drew a crowd of 135,012 across three days, setting a record turnout during a five-day game featuring the two sides.

As many as 36,225 fans went to the Adelaide Oval on the first day of the second India-



Australia Test, exceeding the previous record of 113,009 for a Test against India, which was set over five days in 2014-15.

The single-day attendance record for a Test against India in Adelaide was also shattered on the opening two days with over 50,000 fans attending the game.

Fans had also turned up in record numbers at the Optus Stadium in Perth for the first Test, which the visitors won by 295 runs for their biggest victory on Australia soil.

Sunny Dhillon banned by ICC

PTI ■ DUBAI

Sunny Dhillon, a former Assistant coach of an Abu Dhabi T10 League franchise, was on Tuesday banned from all forms of cricket for six years by the sport's governing body for "attempting" to fix matches. Dhillon was charged last year. The ban has been back dated to September 13, 2023, the date Dhillon was provisionally suspended.

"Sunny Dhillon has been found to have breached the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) Anti-Corruption Code and has been banned from all cricket for a period of six years," said the ICC in a statement. Dhillon, a former assistant coach of a franchise team, was one of eight individuals charged last year for breaching the Anti-Corruption Code.

India aim to avoid clean sweep against Australia ahead of World Cup at home

PTI ■ PERTH

Battered and bruised India will look to avoid a clean sweep and address some glaring issues ahead of next year's 50-over World Cup at home when they face Australia in the third and final women's ODI here on Wednesday.

The three-match series against the seven-time defending world champions has served as a harsh reality check for India, who have faltered in batting, bowling and fielding, with each area contributing to their struggles. A record 122-run defeat in the second ODI highlighted India's vulnerability. Even though the batters shone in patches, they never truly looked to chase down Australia's 371/8.

In batting, the biggest disappointment has come from India's two big stars – skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and her deputy Smriti Mandhana.

Mandhana has capped scores of 8 and 9 in Australia following her century in India's 2-1 home series win over New Zealand in October. The flamboyant opener had been in fine form earlier this year, scoring 450-plus runs at a 70-plus average and she would look to regain her form. Harmanpreet, on the other hand, failed to convert her starts with 57 runs from two matches as her captaincy and batting both have come under scrutiny following India's early exit from the T20 World Cup earlier this year.

In absence of out-of-form opener Shafali Verma, India tried out some different combination and the bright spot has been the promising return of Richa Ghosh, who slammed a spirited fifty at the top in the last ODI.

Richa's 54 has been the highest score by an Indian batter in the series, in stark contrast to the two centuries and two fifties scored by Australian batters, highlighting the Amol

Muzumdar-coached side's batting struggles.

In the opening ODI, only four Indian batters could reach double digits.

The bowlers have also been off the mark, conceding eight runs in wides in the second ODI. The Indians were also guilty of dropping several crucial catches, allowing Australia to amass their third-highest ODI total of all time.

"We need to bat a bit longer and bat a full 50 overs moving forward. In bowling, we need to go back and think about plans," Harmanpreet said after the last game.

Australia's next generation has stepped up in style in the series, with the Tahlia McGrath-led side delivering a dominant performance despite missing regular skipper Alyssa Healy.


Uncapped 21-year-old Georgia Voll, handed the opener's role in Healy's absence, has been a revelation. On her debut in the first ODI, she displayed remarkable

composure, anchoring a modest 101-run chase with an unbeaten 46.

Voll followed it up with a stunning maiden century, forming a formidable partnership with veteran Ellyse Perry as the duo dismantled India's struggling bowling attack.

Squads India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Priya Punia, Jemimah Rodrigues, Harleen Deol, Uma Chetry, Richa Ghosh (wk), Tejal Hasabnis, Deepti Sharma, Minnu Mami, Priya Mishra, Radha Yadav, Titas Sadhu, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh Thakur and Saima Thakor.

Australia: Tahlia McGrath (c), Ashleigh Gardner (vc), Darcie Brown, Kim Garth, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Sophie Molineux, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Voll and Georgia Wareham.

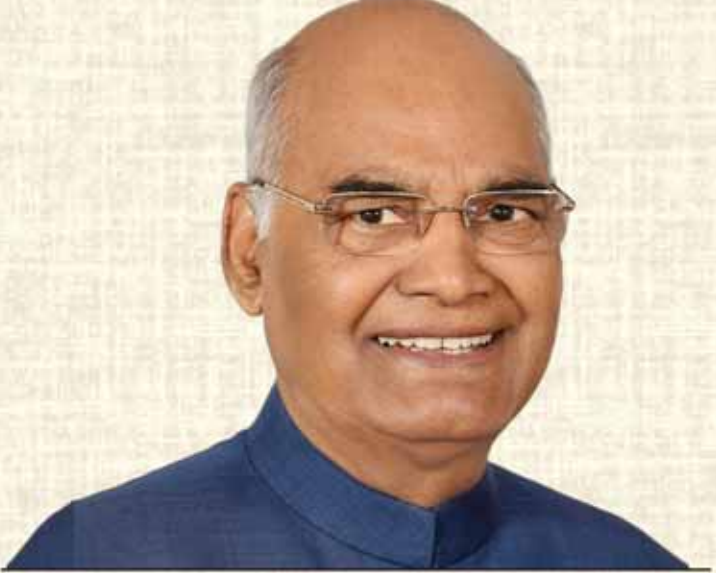


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