# Established 1865

'WE SHOULD TRY AGAIN': PUNJAB ASSEMBLY SPEAKER ON FAILED INDIA-PAK PEACE INITIATIVE

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: DELHI I LUCKNOW I BHOPAL I BHUBANESWAR I RANCHI I RAIPUR I CHANDIGARH I DEHRADUN I HYDERABAD I VIJAYWADA



ight rainfall lashed several parts of Delhi on Tuesday evening, temperatures are expected to drop further in the next two days

# **AQI under 400, Grap-III** invoked in Delhi NCR

he Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Tuesday assessed the situation and lifted the restrictions of Stage-IV under the Graded
Response Action Plan Poor') at 4 PM on December
(GRAP) in Delhi and the 24, down from a peak of 401 neighbouring region, following a decline in pollution levels. However, the restrictions under GRAP Stage I, II and III will continue including curbs on construction and industrial activities remain in place to control pollution levels. The Stage-IV was enforced on December 16 in Delhi and NCR when it breached the 400 mark.

The decision comes after Delhi's Air Quality Index guidelines issued by the (AQI) improved to 369 ('Very authorities to mitigate the

AQI MAX 20.8°C MIN

24, down from a peak of 401 ('Severe') recorded on 16. December improvement in air quality was attributed to favourable meteorological conditions, including improved wind speed, according to forecasts the India from Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). Residents are urged to remain cautious and adhere to

impact of air pollution on health and daily life. Under Stage-III, classes up to five are required to shift to hybrid mode. Parents and students have the option to choose online education, wherever available. Stage III bans on non-essential dieseloperated medium goods vehicles with BS-IV or older standards within Delhi. The restrictions also include on plying of BS-III petrol and BS IV diesel LMVs (4 wheelers)

Faridabad, Gurugram, Ghaziabad and Gautam Budh Persons Nagar. with Disabilities shall be permitted to ply BS-III Petrol / BS-IV Diesel LMVs, provided that these are specifically adopted for them and are run only for their personal use.

in Delhi and in the districts of

Continued on page 8 | President as well.

#### Rupee at fresh record low of 85.20 against US dollar

The rupee extended the slide for the second straight session and depreciated 9 paise to settle at a fresh all-time low of 85.20 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, dragged by a strong greenback against major crosses overseas and subdued

domestic equities.
According to analysts, increased demand of the dollar due to monthend payment obligations and the fear of an aggressive import tariff by the Donald Trump administration in the US strengthened the greenback. Besides, surging crude oil prices pushed the rupee down further, they

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.10 and touched

**Former Home** 

**Secy Bhalla is** 

PNS NEW DELHI

new Manipur Gov

**T**n a major reshuffle, former Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla has been appointed as

Manipur Governor amid ongoing trouble in the north eastern State. Some of the other States where change was effected according to a

Rashtrapati Bhawan communique

includes former Union Minister and

army chief Vijay Kumar Singh was appointed as Mizoram Governor,

while Arif Mohammed Khan was

moved to Bihar as Governor.

In a surprise move following the resignation of Raghubar Das as Odisha governor, Hari Babu Kambhampati was appointed as the new man for the State's gubernatorial

post. Das has served earlier as Chief

Minister of Jharkhand and State

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

moved to Bihar as Governor.

the lowest ever level of 85.21 against the greenback during intra-day. The unit finally ended the session at a fresh all-time low of 85.20 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 9 paise from its previous close. On Monday, the rupee settled 7 paise lower at 85.11 against the US dollar.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the rupee fell to a fresh all-time low on weak domestic markets and a strong US dollar due to increased demand from importers and surging crude oil prices. He said a hawkish tone of the US Federal Reserve and an improved US economy may further support the the rupee at lower levels. USD-INR dollar. "FII outflows may also weigh on the rupee. However, any intervention by the RBI may support spot price is ex range of Rs Choudhary said.

RUPEE ₹ VS DOLLAR \$ 1 USD = 85.20 INR\*

spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 85 to Rs 85.40,"

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was against a basket of six currencies, was trading higher by 0.11 per cent at 107.93, amid soaring US Treasury yields and the fear of delayed interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve.Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.69 per cent to USD 73.13 per barrel in futures trade.

In the domestic equity market, the 30share BSE Sensex closed lower by 67.30 points, or 0.09 per cent, at 78,472.87 points, while Nifty fell 25.80 points, or 0.11 per cent to close at 23,727.65 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Monday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 168.71 crore, according to exchange data.

### **MERRY CHRISTMAS**



Park street. Kolkata all decked up for Christmas eve

#### LoPs record dissent over **NHRC** postings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Leaders of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi had recorded their dissent over the selection of the Chairperson and Members of the National Human Rights Commission on the grounds that the process adopted was "fundamentally flawed" and a process 'predetermined" exercise that ignored mutual consultation and consensus. They had proposed the names of Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman and Justice KM Joseph for the position of chairperson. The Opposition leader's dissent note was released to the media a day after former Supreme Court judge V Ramasubramanian appointed as the Chairperson of the NH The Opposition leaders also suggested retired High Court judges Muralidhar and Akil Abdulhamid Qureshi as NHRC Members. The meeting of the Selection Committee for picking the Chairperson and Members of the NHRC was held on December 18 at the Parliament House. The Selection Committee is headed by the Prime Minister and the panel

Continued on page 8

Highways, this unique initiative is

#### Dalit boy dies by suicide after being forced to drink urine

BISWAJEET BANERJEE

In a horrifying incident from Uttar Pradesh's Basti district, a 17-year-old Dalit boy died by suicide after being subjected to brutal assault and humiliation during a birthday party. The boy was allegedly forced to strip, beaten, made to drink urine, and further humiliated by being forced to lick spit. The perpetrators also recorded the abuse. Traumatised by the ordeal, the boy hanged himself at his maternal uncle's house on Monday.

The victim, a Class 10 student living with his maternal uncle in Kaptanganj, was invited to a birthday party on December 20 by a local youth. According to the complaint filed by his uncle, the boy was ambushed at the gathering, where four to five individuals forced him to strip and assaulted him. They urinated in his mouth and recorded the incident.

When the boy later demanded the deletion of the video, the accused humiliated him further by forcing him to lick their spit. Unable to bear the trauma and humiliation, the boy returned home, narrated the incident to his family, and later took his life by hanging. The family approached the police soon after the incident, but the initial response was reportedly lackluster. Two suspects were detained briefly but were released the same evening. This inaction prompted the grieving family to take the boy's body to the Superintendent of Police (SP) office, demanding justice.

Amid public outrage, a case was registered against four individuals under charges of criminal assault. intimidation, and abetment of suicide. Three accused-Vinay Kumar, Akash, and Kaju Prasad-have been arrested, while efforts are ongoing to nab the fourth suspect, Sonal. The boy's family revealed that he had been facing harassment from the accused for some time.

### **Delhi Police bust gang settling** illegal migrants, 11 arrested



SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

 $E^{\text{ven as a high voltage}}_{\text{political drama has been underway over the issue of}}$ Rohingyas and Bangladeshi immigrants staying illegally in the National Capital, the murder of a man, who used to push women in prostitution, led to the Delhi Police in busting a gang involved in settling these immigrants in Delhi. Police have arrested 11 people including four Bangladeshi nationals.

The accused involve seven people who were allegedly involved in making forged documents including Aadhaar card, birth certificates, caste certificates, matriculation certificates, COVID certificates, and certificates, income at nominal prices starting from

Rs 7, Aadhaar operators and

tech experts. A woman in the intervening night of October 20 and 21 came to Sangam Vihar police station to report that her husband, Santu Sheikh alias Raja, has been murdered which led to the police tracking down four people involved in his murder and subsequently busting the

gang. The Bangladeshi nationals, 26 years old Midul Miyan alias Akash Ahmed and 24 years old Fardeen Ahmed alias Abhi Ahmed along with their wives, were arrested and interrogated in connection with the murder of Sentu Sheikh alias Raja.

Among the motives behind the murder, Raja used to push the wives of the accused into prostitution and also tried to make physical relations with

them while also bullying them for minor issues. They all lived in close proximity.
"However, the police learnt during interrogation that these accused had entered India illegally and had been residing in Sangam Vihar for several years," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankit Chauhan said. They were found in possession of Bangladeshi ID cards (chip-based NID cards) and birth certificates. Around 21 Aadhar cards, four voter ID cards, and eight PAN cards were also recovered from the victim's residence. Chauhan said, "Under the guidance of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, we formed a team to unearth the entire matter and conduct a thorough probe into the illegal immigration issue." These immigrants came to India through the jungle route and then took bikes and

taxis to reach the nearest town from where they took AC trains to travel to Delhi, he said.

Further questioning of the accused led to the arrest of 26 year old Sahil Sehgal who ran a 'Poonam Online Computer Centre' in Rohini Sector 5. Continued on page 8

#### **Accident in Poonch: Five** soldiers killed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

At least five Indian soldiers Awere killed and several others received injuries after the vehicle in which they were travelling rolled down in a deep gorge in the Balnoi sector of the frontier Poonch district on Tuesday.

The soldiers were on operational duty at the time of the mishap. Initial reports suggested the army vehicle skidded off the road and rolled down a deep gorge after the driver lost control of the vehicle.

Confirming the same Nagrotabased White Knight Corps in a post on X said, "All ranks of White Knight Corps extend their deepest condolences on the tragic loss of five brave soldiers in a vehicle accident during operational duty in the Poonch sector".

According to statement the vehicle, part of an army convoy, veered off the road near the Line of Control (LoC). At the time of filing the report, the rescue operations were going on, and the injured personnel were receiving medical care in a nearby

#### turnout normal: EC issues FAQs RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

clarified the misconception

Jump in Maharashtra voter

A mid concerns flagged by the Congress, the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday

regarding the jump in voting percentage in Maharashtra that occurred on polling day saying the increase in voter turnout from 5 pm to 11.45 pm is normal and there were no arbitrary additions or deletions of voters in the state. In its 66-page response to the Congress, the Commission said it would not be correct to compare 5 pm voter turnout data with final polling data. The poll body asserted that it is impossible to change actual voter turnout as statutory Form 17C giving details of voter turnout is available with authorised agents of candidates at the time of close

The Congress had approached the poll panel in November flagging various concerns related to the Maharashtra assembly polls. In a letter to the EC, the Congress said that there was an "inexplicable increase" in voter turnout between 5pm and the final voter percentage announced by the EC at 11.30pm on the day of polling.

of poll at the polling station

Coming out with a detailed



note and frequently asked questions (FAQs), the EC told the Congress that increase in voter turnout from 5 PM to 11:45 PM was normal, being part of the process of aggregation of voter turnout. It said there can be bona fide but inconsequential differences in votes polled and votes counted. It said rule-based process was followed with transparency in Maharashtra electoral roll preparation and there was no irregular pattern in voter deletions in the state. It told the Congress that due process was followed, including participation of Congress representatives in preparation of electoral rolls. The poll body said that its complaint of an average addition of 50,000 electors between July and November in 50 assembly seats, out of which 47 have been won by the Mahayuti, is factually incorrect and misleading.

Continued on page 8

#### **MERRY CHRISTMAS** The Pioneer wishes its Readers a Merry Christmas.

Speaker, Deputy Chairperson

of Rajya Sabha, Home Minister and Leaders of

Opposition from Lok Sabha

comprises Lok

and Rajya Sabha.

The offices of The Pioneer will remain closed on December 25, 2024 on account of Christmas. The next issue will appear on Friday, December 27, 2024.

### Cattle shelters along highways: Unique solution to a perennial problem

**DEEPAK KUMAR JHA** NEW DELHI

In a step to enhance road safety and address the challenge of stray cattle and to avoid animal-related accidents on the National Highways (NH), the central road making agency National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has taken a pilot project to provide cattle shelters along the NHs. The initiative aims to create a safer travel experience for commuters while ensuring care and management of stray cattle, and animals found along the National Highways.

With shelter areas ranging from 0.21 to 2.29 hectares, shelters under the pilot project will be strategically located to serve as safe spaces for stray cattle, reducing their presence on National Highways. The initiative will be implemented on National Highway various used for some time.

Continued on page 8

UP/Haryana Border to Rohna

section of NH-334B, where shelters will be set up along the Kharkhoda Bypass. Similarly, shelters will be constructed along Bhiwani - Hansi section of NH-148B at Hansi Bypass, Kiratpur-Nerchowk section of NH-21 and the Dangiyawas to Jajiwal section of the Jodhpur Ring Road on NH-The NHAI has been facing

challenges posted by stray cattle/animal movement on National Highway in several states across the country which is hazardous to road users' safety. Although several steps for removal of cattle from the National Highways were taken in the past but they could not get anticipated success due to several ancillary issues having social and sensitive angles, which included problems pertaining to unknown ownership/ transportation of cattle/ healthcare/ first aid treatment



during transportation of any injured animals, feeding the cattle till identification of owner or handing them over to the State Government agencies.

Several Courts in various states were also very keen in holistic resolution of the changes posted by movement of stray cattle on National Highways. Although control for the root cause of this

issue lies in the purview of various departments of respective State Governments, NHAI has taken this initiative to address this issue within its jurisdiction.

To implement this initiative, NHAI has signed an agreement with the existing concessionaire Gawar Construction Ltd. Under the contract they will build Cattle-Shelters on land provided by

the concessionaire under its CSR initiative will deploy cattle ambulances to transport and treat injured stray animals, set up firstaid centres and hospitals to cater 50 km on each side for timely medical care of these animals. Beyond the construction and

animals.

maintenance of shelters, the concessionaire will ensure safe transportation of stray cattle to these facilities, provide feed and enforce the provisions of the Cattle Trespass Act, 1871.

NHAI. The concessionaire will

also maintain these shelters by

providing first aid, adequate fodder, water, and caretakers

throughout the concession period, ensuring the well-being of the

To further support this initiative,

NHAI Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav said by addressing the challenges posed by stray cattle/animals on the National

another step that furthers NHAI's commitment to not only to create safer National Highways for commuters by enhancing road safety but also fulfils a humane requirement of taking care of stray cattle/animals. "I am sure that this initiative will set a new benchmark for a holistic National Highway infrastructure development in the country," Yadav said.

Sharing his thoughts Dineshchandra Agrawal, President - National Highway Builders Federation said "We welcome this step from NHAI to develop shelters for stray cattle/animals along the National Highways and offer our support for this initiative. I would urge our members to come forward and partner in this path breaking initiative that will help spread this noble cause of rehabilitating stray animals and enhancing road safety."

## 'Yuva Kumbh' honours 2 accused gunned down in separate encounters ex-PM Atal's legacy



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the 'Atal Yuva Maha Kumbh'

PNS LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Tuesday that events like 'Yuva Kumbh' exemplify the nation's and state's profound respect and admiration for former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He credited public representatives for creating platforms that ensure Atal's legacy remains alive through collective efforts.

The chief minister further stated that 'Yuva Kumbh' serves to refresh the cherished memories associated with the Kumbh, a significant event rooted in the tradition of Sanatan Dharma in India.

CM Yogi made these remarks while inaugurating the 'Atal Yuva Maha Kumbh' at KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium along with Defence Minister and Lucknow MP Rajnath Singh on Tuesday.

The event, held on the occasion of the birth centenary of 'Bharat Ratna' Atal Bihari Vajpayee, gy of youth.

**NOTICE** 

It is inform to the general public that my

correct name is Vipendra Kumar s/o Dev

Sahay which is mentioned in my educational records due to blender my

name has been mention as Yogendra Singh in my Aadhar card number 2554

8154 9960 which is wrong. In future

would like to be known and recognised

by my correct name Vipendra Kumar s/o

Devi Sahay It is hereby certified that all

the legal formalities in relation to the

above have been completed by me. vipendra Kumar Nirkhi Dayal Nagar

**NOTICE** 

It is to inform general public that Original Allotment Letter, Possession Letter and Sale Deed executed by L.D.A in favour of Anil Kumar, regarding House No.S-49 Area 38,657 Sq. Mtrs., Situated at LDA Colony, Aishbagh, Lucknow, registered with Sub Registrar Fifth, Lucknow in Book No.1, Volume 2196, Pages 393-410 at Serial No. 9734 on 28.12.2004, now owned by Asha Agrawal Wyo Rakesh Agrawal at Engineering College Chauraha, Lucknow on 07.12.2023 at 5 PM-6 PM during getting its photocopy. Now owner Asha Arawal is mortgaging sat property with IciCliHC against loan. Use of this lost sale deed and other documents by any other person will be void. If any person or financial institution has find it kindly return or has any interest or objection in this regard, please contact to Advocate mentioned below with objection in writing and with relevant documents, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Mr. Amit Kumar Singh Rathaur Advocate, Chamber No.7, UGF, Krishna Tower, Chakbast Road, Quaiserbagh, Lucknow. Mobile No. 9559811119

आवश्यकता है

यशराज लॉ कालेज, बाघामऊ ( गोमती नगर विस्तार ), लखनऊ सम्बद्ध-लखनऊ विखविद्यातय, लखनऊ

प्राचार्य- योग्यता:- एल०एल०एम

55% व नेट/पी०एच०डी० तथा विधि

महाविद्यालय में 15 वर्ष का शिक्षण

एलं०एल०बी० (त्रिवर्षीय) हेतु सहायक

योग्यता:- एल०एल०एम० 55% व नेट

बी.ए.एल०एल०बी० (पंचवर्षीय) हेत्

विषय:– अंग्रेजी (०१ पद), अर्थशास्त्र (०१

पद), राजनीति विज्ञान (01 पद), इतिहास

योग्यताः-- सम्बन्धित विषय में परास्नातव

55% व नेट/पी०एच०डी० वेतनमान सेव

एवं शर्ते:– संवधन निकाय के मानकानसार

**नोट:**— इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी आवेदन पत्र के साथ

शैक्षणिक योग्यता से सम्बन्धित समस्त संलग्नकों सहित, विज्ञापन की तिथि से 15

देनों के अन्दर कार्यालय में जमा क

र्डे—मेलः— yashrajie@gmail.com पताः—वाघामऊ, गोमतीनगर, विस्तार-

मो0-9919931333, 8303700429

-मेल या पंजीकृत डाक से भेजें।

6, लखनऊ, उ०प्र०— 226010

फोटो, आधार कार्ड, पैन कार्ड तथा

(01 पद), समाजशास्त्र (01 पद)

आचार्य (पद-07)

पी०एच०डी०

सहायक आचार्य

Milakar Chalna Hoga.'

Both leaders interacted with the children and distributed chocolates. They also honoured the children who participated in the essay and speech competitions. CM Yogi emphasised that the Kumbh represents India's identity, embodying the fusion of Sanatan wisdom and spiritual energy. He noted that the spirit of the Maha Kumbh, scheduled to take place in Prayagraj from January 13 to February 26, 2025, is being reflected here today.

The chief minister also recited Atal's poem, 'Kadam Milakar Chalna Hoga, and noted that the 'Yuva Kumbh' has brought back cherished memories of India's former prime minister.

CM Yogi shared that he had contacted the organisers in the morning to confirm if the event would proceed and was assured it would be a grand celebration, embodying the spirit and ener-

**NOTICE** 

SHIVANSH SINGH.

**NOTICE** 

I, Namita Srivastava W/O Prakash

Narayan Srivastava, D-1/57 Sec-

F,Jankipuram,Lucknow,decleared

that in some of my documents my

name is mentioned as Namita

Prakash. This is to inform that

Namita Srivastava and Namita

Prakash both are my names only.

**NOTICE** 

Suryabhan Singh, F/o

JC-423774H, Rank- SUB

Rajendra Singh, R/o- Vill.-Rasulabad, Post- Behrampur,

Dist.- Fatehpur, hereby inform

that in my son's service record

my name is erroneously

mentioned as Suryabhan Singh

& DOB as 02.02.1952,

whereas the correct name is

Sorajbhan Yadav & DOB is

01.01.1953 vide affidavit No.

GV 355386 dtd. 23.12.2024

**NOTICE** 

My real name is Shivanandan.

By mistake in the Military

Documents of my son Pradeep

Kumar Tiwari, it has become Shivanandan Tiwari. In future,

I should be known and

recognized only by the name

of Shivanandan. Address-Tiwaripur, Bithoor Itara

**NOTICE** 

have chanaged my name

from Shree Chandra Ahuja to

Shri Chandra Ahuja Shri

Chandra Ahuja S/o Narain Das Ahuja add:-124A/214, Govind

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from RUKHSAR RAIN TO RUKHSAR W/O-ZEESHAN

AHMAD R/O -12/74 GWALTOLI KANPUR for

Nagar Kanpur Nagar

Kanpur-209217

Notary at Kanpur Court.

was themed 'Kadam Se Kadam Despite the weather conditions, the children participated wholeheartedly, honouring Atal's memories with enthusiasm. The chief minister said that Wednesday marks the birth centenary of Atal, and the event has been inaugurated with remarkable grandeur today. He congratulated the children

> all the participating children, saying, "If we walk together, we will achieve the goal." He expressed his gratitude to all the organisations involved in organising the event.

who secured positions in the

competitions and encouraged

Several prominent leaders were present, including Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Rajya Sabha MP Dr Dinesh Sharma, Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, MLC Dr Mahendra Singh, Avnish Singh, Pawan Singh Chauhan, MLA Dr Neeraj Bora, Yogesh Shukla, Amresh Kumar, OP Srivastava, Jai Devi, former minister Mohsin Raza, were present on the occasion.

#### Maha Kumbh: Railways sets up luxury tent city for devotees

Mahakumbh Nagar (PNS): To ensure ensure world-class facilities for the millions of I, VIRENDRA KUMAR S/o devotees expected to attend Siraste Lal, R/o. Triveniganj Badi Bazar, Billhaur, District next year's Maha Kumbh, Indian Railways is making luxury shelter arrangements for more than one lakh passengers Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-209202, have changed the name of my minor son ARAB, aged 09 years and he shall with tariff ranging from Rs 18,000-Rs 20,000 per day, offihereafter be known as cials said on Tuesday.

The Railways will also around 3,000 special fair trains for the mega event, they said. Held every 12 years, the Maha Kumbh will be organised in Prayagraj from January 13 to February 26.

IRCTC, the tourism and hospitality wing of Indian Railways, has completed the construction of a luxury tent city, Mahakumbh Gram, near the Triveni Sangam, an official

statement said. The rent for these tents will range from Rs 18,000 to Rs 20,000 per day, where guests can avail private bathrooms, hot and cold water, air blowers, bed linens, and food services, among other facilities.

Guests staying in the villas will have access to a private seating area and television. For the safety and comfort of the guests, the tent city will provide first-aid services and will be under constant surveillance by CCTV cameras. Ónline bookings for stays in

the tent city are open from January 10 to February 28, the statement said. Reservations can be made eas-

ily through the IRCTC website (www.irctctourism.com/mahak umbhgram).

were trying to escape the district via the Kisan Path and had been  $T^{\text{wo of the absconding}}_{\text{accused in connection with}}$ cornered near Jal Setu. The robbers were asked to surrender, bank robbery were gunned down in separate police encounbut they opened fire. In return, the police fired back, and one of the miscreants was injured," Joint Commissioner of Police ters that took place in Chinhat, Lucknow, and Ghazipur district around midnight on Monday. In Lucknow, the accused who (Law and Order) Amit Verma

According to Verma, at around 23:45 on December 23, a police team from Chinhat and the crime branch was conducting a checking drive near the Jal Setu police outpost when they spotted a car speeding at high speed, as described by informers. The police attempted to stop the car, but the driver fired several rounds at the officers.

In the retaliatory firing, one of the suspects was injured. The injured man was taken to the Chinhat CHC in critical condition and was later referred to RML Hospital, where he was declared dead.

The accused was identified as Sovind Kumar Bind, whose name appeared in a diary found

#### **CHINHAT BANK** ROBBERY

The two were cornered on a tipoff from police informers and were asked to surrender. but they chose to open fire on the police instead, officials said

Police reports show that several cases had been registered against Bind, who had a bounty of Rs 25,000 on his head for his involvement in the bank robbery.

A pistol, a large number of empty cartridges, and some cash and gold and silver items were recovered from the car. Authorities are continuing their search for the escaped suspect.

In another operation, a joint team of the SWAT/Surveillance team and Gahmar police station in Ghazipur district killed a wanted criminal with a bounty of Rs 25,000 during an encounter in the early hours of Tuesday. A .32 bore pistol, stolen white metal, and Rs 35,500 were recovered from his possession.

According to JCP Amit Verma. the police had received information about the robbers involved in the Chinhat bank robbery and pursued them. When the robbers did not sur-

render and fired at the police,

the officers returned fire. The criminal killed in the encounter was identified as Sunny Dayal, from Asargani, Munger district, Bihar, and was linked to the Indian Overseas Bank robbery in Chinhat," he

Ghazipur police said that during a routine check on December 24, a joint team from the Ghazipur district police and Bara outpost saw two masked suspicious individuals

said.

on a motorcycle. When the police attempted to stop them, the riders sped off towards the Bihar border, allegedly attempting to run over the officers.

After informing the SWAT/Surveillance team and the inspector-in-charge of Gahmar, the police set up a perimeter. The accused, attempting to escape, abandoned their bikes and began firing at the police. In self-defence, the police fired back, officials said. One of the accused was shot and injured, while the other fled into the darkness. The injured man was immediately transported to the Bhadaura CHC. He was later referred to the district hospital in Ghazipur, where he was declared dead.

The deceased was identified as Sunny Dayal of Asarganj, Munger, Bihar. A .32mm pistol, six empty .32mm cartridges, two live .32mm cartridges, stolen silver items, and Rs 35,500 in cash were recovered from his possession. He was implicated in the Chinhat bank robberv case.

### Govt committed to work with Japanese companies: Yogi

#### **MoU** signed with **Yamanashi Prefecture**

were killed were identified as

Sovind Kumar Bind and Sunny

Dayal, both from Munger dis-

The two were cornered on a tip-

off from police informers and

were asked to surrender, but

they chose to open fire on the

In retaliation, the police opened

fire, and the robbers were later

declared dead at the hospital,

"We had arrested three of the

robbers, including one who was shot during the police encounter, on Monday night

near Kisan Path (Jal Setu area)

in Chinhat. Their aides or boss-

es had fled the scene and were

being pursued. The police team

was informed that the robbers

police instead, officials said.

trict in Bihar.

they added.

PNS LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday evening welcomed the Governor of Japan's Yamanashi Prefecture, Kotaro Nagasaki, highlighting India and Japan's centuries-old friendship rooted in cultural, strategic, and economic cooperation.

He emphasised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's global message of peace inspired by Lord Buddha and the strong ties forged with former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe, elevating bilateral relations. CM Yogi reaffirmed the state's commitment to collaboration with Japanese companies, noting Japan's pivotal role as a partner in the Global Investors Summit 2023.

An MoU was signed between the Uttar Pradesh government and Yamanashi Prefecture (Japan) in the field of industrial cooperation, tourism, and vocational education in front of the chief minister at his official residence. On behalf of the state govern-

ment, Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh and Director General of the Governor's Policy Planning Bureau of Yamanash Prefecture, Junichi Ishidera, exchanged the MoU.

The chief minister highlighted that the MoU between Uttar Pradesh and Japan reflects PM Modi's commitment to fostering collaboration with Quad nations based on shared democratic values. Over 1,400 Japanese companies currently operate in India, including seven major firms active in Uttar Pradesh, such as Honda Motors, Yamaha Motors, and Mitsui Technologies.

With bilateral trade reaching \$22.854 billion in FY 2023-24, including mutual exports worth US \$ 17.69 billion from Japan and US \$ 5.15 billion from India, economic cooperation between India and Japan remains robust. CM Yogi emphasised Uttar Pradesh's unlimited potential and expressed confidence that this MoU will further strengthen India-Japan relations.

The chief minister emphasised Uttar Pradesh's pivotal role as India's most populous state and the fourth largest by area. With 25 crore residents, the state

boasts the country's largest labour and consumer market. Over the past eight years, significant strides have been made to foster a conducive investment environment. supported by robust connectivity across rail, road, air, and waterways, enhancing logistics efficiency for global and domestic markets. Uttar Pradesh hosts India's largest railway network (16,000+ km) and major portions of the western (8.5%) and eastern (57%) dedicated freight corridors, converging at Dadri, Greater Noida. Known as the Expressway State, it features 13 ssways spanning 1,225 km. with six completed and seven under development, ensuring seamless connectivity to manufacturing hubs," Yogi stated. The chief minister informed the Japanese delegation that Uttar Pradesh is gaining recognition as the 'Expressway State' with a projected 55% share of the nation's total expressways following the completion of the 594 km Ganga Expressway between Meerut and Prayagraj.

Currently, five expressways spanning 1,130 km are operational, and three more, totalling 720 km, are under construction.

Uttar Pradesh is also set to become the only state in India with five international airports. with existing facilities in Avodhya, Lucknow, Varanasi, and Kushinagar, and Asia's largest international airport under construction in Jewar.

In total, 16 domestic and four international airports are operational in the state.

Drawing parallels between Yamanashi Prefecture and Uttar Pradesh, CM Yogi highlighted their shared landlocked status and the innovative solutions adopted, such as the development of dry ports and activation of inland waterways. Notably, the country's first water-

way connects Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal.

Yogi shared that India's first 'Freight Village' is being developed on 100 acres in Varanasi to serve as a trans-shipment hub, connecting export centres of eastern Uttar Pradesh to eastern Indian ports.

Contributing 9.2% to India's GDP Littar Pradesh is among the nation's largest economies and is recognised as the food basket of India, leading in the production of food grains, milk, and sugarcane. The state offers vast oppor-tunities in agriculture, food processing, and the dairy sector.

In a separate road hold-up

incident in Gomti Nagar on the

same night, five unidentified

miscreants riding in a car allegedly looted cash, gold jew-

ellery, and mobile phones from

The victims, Anil Mishra from

Rajajipuram and Vikas Soni

from Chhitwapur, Pajawa

(Lucknow), reported that

around 1:20 am, five men

attacked their car near Hotel

Dayal Paradise. They broke

the front glass of the car, threw

a bottle at Anil's head and

pushed the men to the ground.

The attackers then looted a

gold chain worth Rs 22,000, Rs

20,000 in cash, and two mobile

phones from the victims.

into the matter.

two men.

#### एनदीपीमी NTPC Limited (A Govt. of India Enterprise)

7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003 Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC). New Delhi for determination of tariff

The beneficiaries of the generating station are:

a) Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Ltd. (UPPCL), Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg Lucknow-226001. b) Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (RUVNL) (on behalf of DISCOMs of

Rajasthan), Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur-302005. c) Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd., Grid Substation, Hudson Road, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-110009.

d) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd., 2nd floor, B-Block, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019.

e) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd., Shakti Kiran Building, Karkardooma Delhi-110092 f) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (HPPC), Shakti Bhawan, Sector-VI,

Panchkula, Haryana-134109. g) Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd. (PSPCL), The Mall, Patiala-147001

h) Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. (UPCL), Urja Bhavan, Kanwali Road, Dehradun-248001.

Capacity of the generating station 2000 MW Approved capital cost of the project Rs. 1240.44 Crore Authority which has approved the Capital Cost CERC Scheduled date of commercial operation Not Applicable

Actual date of commercial operation of station : 01.05.1988 Capital cost on date of Commercial operation of Station: Not Applicable

Particulars	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined							
	Tariff for the previous year*	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29		
1. Capacity Charges (Rs. Lakh/ year)	129838.23	197218.64	176027.36	182548.46	161677.81	165130.65		
2. Energy Charges (Rs./kwh)			1.	55	Age post			

\*As per Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Singrauli Super Thermal Power Station (2000 MW) filed with Hon'ble CERC.

A copy of the petition made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely <u>www.ntpc.co.in</u> under the Tab "Notices".

10. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the petition may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the

Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice. Addl. General Manager (Cor Date: 28.11.2024 Leading the Power Sector

#### NTPC Limited (A Govt. of India Enterprise) एनदीपीसी NTPC

### Registered Office Address : NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex,

7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003 Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966 applicant above named has made an application before the Centra

Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), New Delhi for determination of tariff of Rihand Super Thermal Power Station, Stage-II (1000 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

1. The beneficiaries of the generating station are: a) Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Ltd., Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg,

Lucknow-226001. b) Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (on behalf of DISCOMs of Rajasthan),

Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur-302005.

c) Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd., Grid Substation, Hudson Road, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-110009.

d) BSES Raidhani Power Ltd., 2nd floor, B-Block, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place. New Delhi-110019.

e) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd., Shakti Kiran Building, Karkardooma

Delhi-110092 f) Haryana Power Purchase Centre, Shakti Bhawan, Sector-VI, Panchkula

Haryana-134109. g) Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd., The Mall, Patiala-147001.

h) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Ltd., Kumar Housing Complex Building-II, Vidyut Bhawan, Shimla-171004.

i) Power Development Department (J&K), Govt. of J&K, Civil Secretariat

j) Electricity Department (Chandigarh), Union Territory of Chandigarh,

Additional Office Building, Sector-9 D, Chandigarh.

k) Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd., Urja Bhavan, Kanwali Road

Dehradun Uttarakhand-248001.

: 1000 MW

2. Capacity of the generating station 3. Approved capital cost of the project : Rs. 3006.44 Crore

4. Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC 5. Scheduled date of commercial operation : Not Applicable

6. Actual date of commercial operation of station : 01.04.2006 7. Capital cost on date of Commercial operation of Station: Not Applicable 8. Details of tariff: Year-wise tariff sought to be determined Tariff

Particulars 2024-25 2025-26 2026-27 2027-28 2028-29 for the 67.644.99 69,622.99 71,594.73 73,766.33 76,244.74 . Capacity 68,288.21 year) 2. Energy 1.58

\*As per Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Rihand Super

Thermal Power Station, Stage-II (1000 MW) filed with Hon'ble CERC. 9. A copy of the petition made for determination of tariff is posted on the

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Addl. General Manager (Comml.)

Leading the Power Sector

#### Bizman, wife attacked, robbed a case and launched a probe

Tn a daring incident, carborne unidentified accused looted gold jewellery and injured a businessman and his wife in Gomti Nagar on the night of December 22. The victims, Amar Kesarwani and his wife, were returning home after attending a family function when the attack occurred. According to reports, their car was overtaken by a black Brezza, which stopped in front of them at the intersection of Neeraj Chowk in Vipul Khand, Gomti Nagar. Five youths emerged from the car, and began abusing the couple. One of the attackers smashed the front window of their car with a stick, while two others threw

stones at the car, breaking the glass on both sides. The miscreants then used the stones to hit both the husband and wife on their heads, caus-

ing serious injuries. In fear, the couple tried to reason with the attackers, but they were forced to remove their valuables, including a 100-gram gold bracelet, two gemstone-studded gold rings (topaz and manik), a gold mangalsutra, a chain, and both of the wife's bangles.

The attackers then threatened to kill them if they didn't leave quickly and advised them to drive away without making any further moves.

Before fleeing, one of the miscreants smashed the rear glass

of the car. The police registered

Ambedkar's statue in Ahmedabad and the lynching of "If that poor man is accused of stealing rice, then is he not one

such people," she added. There is anger in BSP over Home Minister Amit Shah's remark on Dr Ambedkar. Lucknow, BSP workers demonstrated at the Hazratgani inter-

state president Vishwanath Pal, staged a sit-in protest at Tikunia Park and asked Shah to apologise. Pal said that the home minister has insulted the God of Bahujan Samaj. "Mayawati has already asked the

ment has not responded," Pal

"This country is running with

#### BSP workers stage protest, demand Shah's resignation devotion and honesty for the In Ayodhya, BSP workers, led by

the workers and supporters, who staged a peaceful demonstration across the country to protest against the alleged disrespect shown to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister, however, claimed that the demonstration is not a permanent solution to the problem, but the Bahujans should come forward and hold the key to power to overcome their trauma. "Today, all the officials, workers of BSP, and all those followers of the most revered Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar across the country are deeply grateful and thankful to those who organised a peaceful and media platform X. are not taken back and repent-

Congress, or any other party, Hindustan will not tolerate the insult of Baba Saheb. In fact, it is necessary to implement Baba Saheb's Constitution with full

a Dalit in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh, is extremely sad and shameful. of the millions of people suffering from poverty and hunger? The government must support

section and demanded that Shah should tender an apology or resign from his post.

kome minister through X to apologise to the Bahujan Samaj. But, he has not apologised yet. Mayawati also asked him to apologise for his wrong comment by holding a press conference, but still, the BJP govern-

#### 'achche din' of the people, i.e, for tion at all the district headquarters against the disrespect of the creation of a country with Baba Saheb by Amit Shah," Mayawati posted on the social public interest and public welfare," she elaborated. In her last post, Mayawati said "If the anti-Baba Saheb remarks that the destruction of Dr

ed, then such demonstrations etc, organised on the call of BSP, are not a permanent solution to the problem. Rather, for this, the Bahujans will have to become capable of their own salvation by becoming the ruling class, by getting the master key of power; only then liberation and respect are possible," she further said. "Today's successful movement proves that whether it is BJP,

the Constitution made by Dr Ambedkar, but those who run the country are insulting Baba Saheb. If the home minister does not apologise, the Bahujan Samaj Party will protest across the country," Pal said.

# Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Tuesday hailed

# 'Cong has repeatedly insulted Ambedkar'

PNS LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the Congress as he accused the party of repeatedly disrespecting 'the architect of India's Constitution' BR Ambedkar during his lifetime and undermining his legacy after his death.

Adityanath also claimed that India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru was against Ambedkar's inclusion in the Drafting Committee of the Constitution.

He made the remarks in a press conference at his official residence 5 Kalidas Marg, amid ongoing controversy triggered since Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks on Ambedkar in Rajya Sabha last week.

He also attacked the Samajwadi Party, saying the same Congress approach of disrespect for Dalits and deprived was adopted by the SP.

The chief minister, however, did not mention the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which also organised country wide protests against Shah's statement demanding his resigna-tion. Flanked by ministers Swatantra Dev Singh and Asim Arun, Adityanath highlighted the press conference's purpose as an effort to expose what he described as the "unethical" and "unconstitutional" con-

duct of the Congress and other opposition parties against Ambedkar.

"Dr BR Ambedkar played a monumental role during Índia's freedom movement, the drafting of the Constitution and the early years of independent India. Despite facing numerous social hurdles, he earned the highest degrees in law, finance and economics.

"His contributions to the nation remain unparalleled. Every Indian holds deep respect and reverence for him," the chief minister said.

Adityanath contrasted the BJP's reverence for Ambedkar with the Congress' history of disrespect. He detailed the BJP's efforts to honour Ambedkar's memory, including creating memorials at significant locations tied to his life, such as in Mhow, Nagpur, Mumbai and in London where Ambedkar studied.

'Under the BJP leadership, whether it was Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government or Prime Minister Narendra Modi's, every effort has been made to respect Ambedkar's ideals. In contrast, the Congress has a long record of insulting him and marginalising his contributions," he asserted.
The chief minister cited

instances of the Congress' alleged apathy, including its initial reluctance to include Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly and the Drafting



UP Chief Minister addressing mediapersons in Lucknow on Tuesday

Committee. He credited Mahatma Gandhi's intervention for ensuring Ambedkar's position. "During the UPA regime, the Congress displayed its malice when a textbook portrayed a derogatory cartoon of Ambedkar being prodded by Pt Nehru. It was only after widespread protests that the book was withdrawn and the then HRD Minister, Kapil Sibal, had to apologise," Adityanath stated.

He also accused the Congress of working to defeat Ambedkar in elections, including the 1952 general elections from Mumbai North and the 1954 byelections. "Even Pt Nehru campaigned against Ambedkar to ensure his defeat. The Congress consistently worked to keep him out of Parliament and to silence the voice of Dalits and marginalised communities,"

the chief minister claimed. Adityanath also criticised the Congress for refusing to bestow national honours upon Ambedkar during his lifetime. "It was only during a government with BJP support that Ambedkar was finally award-ed the Bharat Ratna," he said. Adityanath further highlighted the BJP's efforts under Modi's leadership to fulfil Ambedkar's vision through initiatives benefiting Dalits and marginalised

# Rajnath, Yogi inaugurate Atal Health Fair

PNS LUCKNOW

 $T^{\text{o}}$  commemorate the birth centenary of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the two-day Atal Health Fair at Dilkusha Lawn

here on Tuesday.
They also inaugurated and laid the foundation for 181 projects worth Rs 662 crore on the occa-

Speaking at the event, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said former prime minister Vajpayee, who represented Lucknow as an MP five times, revolutionised Indian politics by steering it from instability to

stability.
"He also brought Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay's vision of Antyodaya to life. Inspired by his legacy, the Atal Health Fair continues to deliver healthcare services to the underprivileged and needy," the CM

Adityanath recalled that health fairs were first launched during Vaipayee's leadership in 1998-99, but were discontinued in later years.

"Reviving this tradition, the Atal Health Fair has been organised consistently over the last five years, benefiting more than 50,000 people between 2020 and 2023," he said.

Describing Vajpayee as the 'Ajatshatru' of Indian politics, the CM praised his spontaneity and simplicity, which endeared him to people across all sections of the society.

He also commended Défence Minister Singh's role in Lucknow's all-around development and acknowledged the contribution of projects worth Rs 662 crore that were inaugurated and launched during the event.

Singh has been a Lok Sabha MP from Lucknow since 2019. The chief minister further highlighted the distribution of assistive devices like prosthetic limbs, tricvcles, wheelchairs, and blind sticks at the health



Fair', in Lucknow on Tuesday

Referring to initiatives for empowering the differentlyabled under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, Adityanath emphasised the increase in their annual pension to Rs 12,000 and highlighted ongoing programmes for equipment distribution to support their needs.

Singh said that in the battle against encephalitis, Adityanath has accomplished what he could not during his tenure as Uttar Pradesh's chief minister due to the lack of effective remedies at that time.

After inaugurating the 'Atal Health Fair' along with CM Adityanath, the defence minister recalled seeing parents carrying the bodies of children in front of the hospital during his student days at the Gorakhpur University.

"When the BJP's double-engine government was formed in

2017, the government led by CM Yogi worked tirelessly to eliminate encephalitis, with Yogi ji personally overseeing the efforts. Today, the number of children dying from encephalitis in Purvanchal, across Uttar Pradesh and parts of Bihar has become negligible," Singh said.

Singh also shared fond memories of Vajpayee, reflecting on his leadership and contribu-tions. He recalled a moment during the tenure of former prime minister Narasimha Rao when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the leader of opposition in Parliament.

"During that time, India had to present its position at a United Nations forum in Geneva, and Rao entrusted the task to Atal ji, believing that only he could carry out the responsibility effectively," he added. Singh highlighted Vajpayee's unique personality, emphasising that leaders like him engaged in politics not for personal gain or to enhance their stature, but to build the nation and the society.

Singh also mentioned that

since the current government came to power, 22 AIIMS have been approved under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, with more than 12 already completed and construction ongoing at four more locations. Furthermore, the number of medical colleges in the country has increased from 387 in 2014 to 780 and MBBS seats have risen from 50,000 to 1.20 lakh, he said.

The defence minister further said that on Wednesday (Dec 25), the nation would celebrate Vaipavee's birth centenary year and Indians living in many countries around the world would also celebrate it.

#### **SP to launch** 'PDA Charcha' in all assembly constituencies

#### BJP running 'double blunder' government, says Akhilesh

PNS LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav took a jibe at the BJP-led governments at even derailed the country's the Centre and in Uttar engine onto the wrong track.

Pradesh on Tuesday, calling them a "double blunder" instead of a "double engine" government. The former Uttar

Pradesh chief minister shared a post on his official social media account on 'X' with a news item on the

"Rasta bhatak gayi Vande Bharat' - jana tha Ġoa, nikal gayi Kalyan" (Vande Bharat lost its way - (was supposed to image of the train's news, Yadav wrote, "The BJP is not the Kalyan route.

a 'double engine' govern-ment, but a 'double blunder' government." In the same post, he remarked, "BJP has

> CSMT-The Madgaon Vande Bharat express train deviated from its regular route on Monday morning due to a technical snag at Diva station in Thane district of

Maharashtra, Vande Bharat train incident: delaying its onward journey to Goa by 90 minutes, officials said.

Instead of proceeding towards Panvel station on go to Goa but ended up in the Diva-Panvel railway line Kalyan). Along with the used by Konkan-bound trains, the express train took



Regional Office, Kanpur Metro Region: 118/330, 1st Floor, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpuri, Kanpur - 12 Possession Notice Branch : D.I. Office, Kanpur

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/guarantor 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 property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules.

The borrower/quarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets

Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property & O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand Notice Date & Possession Notice Date

Borrower: Shri Ashish Mishra S/o Shri Girish Chandra Mishra, Address: L/Comm. 19-20, Awas Vikas-1, Keshavpuram, Kanpur Nagar & 8/569, Awas Vikas, Scheme No. 3, Ambedkarpuram. Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar and also at 853, Sarai Maswanpur, Panki Road, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar. Demand Notice Date: 09-09-2024 • Demand Notice Publication Date: 23-09-2024 Date of Constructive Possession: 20-12-2024

Property: Plot No. 8/569, Awas Vikas, Scheme No. 3, Ambedkarpuram, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Shri Ashish Mishra S/o Shri Girish Chandra Mishra, Area: 75.72 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: Plot No. 8/614, South: 9 Mtr. Road, East: Plot No. 8/570, West: Plot No. 8/568 Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice: Rs. 29,52,014.05 + Intt. +Others Charges

Total Dues Amount as on Dated 20-12-2024: Rs. 30,20,921.06 + Intt. + Others Charges **Authorised Officer** Date: 20-12-2024 Place : Kanpur



#### E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE **UNDER SECTION SARFAESI ACT 2002**

128/24 Om Laxmi Tower, H-Block, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur-208011, Tel: 0512-2985004

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcem of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with rule proviso to 8 (6) of the security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of India, Secured Creditor will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on below mentioned date for recovery of mentioned amount in demand notice issued due to the Bank of India, secured creditor from below mentioned borrowers / guarantors The details of the property as given below, reserve price and EMD amount are marked against all the properties.

the BJP's efforts under Modi's leadership to fulfil Ambedkar's vision through initiatives benefiting Dalits and marginalised communities.  He reiterated the BJP's dedication to preserving Ambedkar's legacy and ideals while accusing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	1.	Possession Date/Type of Possession  traiya Branch: Vinayak Plaza Kanpur Road Au Borrower: Mr. Vipin Kumar s/o Lakhan Lal Co-Borrower: Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Guarantor: Mr. Lal Girish Chandra s/o Ramnath Demand Notice Date: 01.08.2022 Amt.: Rs. 4,02,467.91 + Interest w.e.f. 01.08.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	EOM of Property situated at Survey no 718, Kakhavatoo Pargana Auriya UP admeansuring area: 966.00 Sqft in the name of Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Boundries of Premises: East:- Road 20 Feet, West: Plot Seller, North:- Land Digar, South: Plot Om Prakash  Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Earnest Money Deposit (in Lakh) Incremental Bid Ami Rs. 26.10 Rs. 25,000/- Rs. 36.21 Rs. 36.21
leadership to fulfil Ambedkar's vision through initiatives benefiting Dalits and marginalised communities.  He reiterated the BJP's dedication to preserving Ambedkar's legacy and ideals while accusing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	1.	Borrower: Mr. Vipin Kumar s/o Lakhan Lal Co-Borrower: Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Guarantor: Mr. Lal Girish Chandra s/o Ramnath Demand Notice Date: 01.08.2022 Amt.: Rs. 4,02,467.91 + Interest w.e.f. 01.08.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	EOM of Property situated at Survey no 718, Kakhavatoo Pargana Auriya UP admeansuring area: 966.00 Sqft in the name of Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Boundries of Premises: East:- Road 20 Feet, West: Plot Seller, North:- Land Digar, South: Plot Om Prakash  Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Rs. 26.10 Rs. 2.61 Rs. 25,000/-
efiting Dalits and marginalised communities. He reiterated the BJP's dedication to preserving Ambedkar's legacy and ideals while accusing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	Kii	Co-Borrower: Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Guarantor: Mr. Lal Girish Chandra s/o Ramnath Demand Notice Date: 01.08.2022 Amt.: Rs. 4,02,467.91 + Interest w.e.f. 01.08.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	Kakhavatoo Pargana Auriya UP admeansuring area: 966.00 Sqft in the name of Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Boundries of Premises: East:- Road 20 Feet, West: Plot Seller, North:- Land Digar, South: Plot Om Prakash Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Rs. 2.61 Rs. 25,000/-
He reiterated the BJP's dedication to preserving Ambedkar's legacy and ideals while accusing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	_	Guarantor: Mr. Lal Girish Chandra s/o Ramnath Demand Notice Date: 01.08.2022 Amt.: Rs. 4,02,467.91 + Interest w.e.f. 01.08.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	admeansuring area: 966.00 Sqft in the name of Mrs. Pooja w/o Vipin Kumar Boundries of Premises: East:- Road 20 Feet, West: Plot Seller, North:- Land Digar, South: Plot Om Prakash Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Rs. 25,000/-
tion to preserving Ambedkar's legacy and ideals while accusing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	_	Amt.: Rs. 4,02,467.91 + Interest w.e.f. 01.08.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	Boundries of Premises: East:- Road 20 Feet, West: Plot Seller, North:- Land Digar, South: Plot Om Prakash Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Rs. 36.21
ing the Congress of continued disrespect and divisive politics. Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	_	Possession Notice: 04.12.2023/Symbolic dwal Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwal Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	Om Prakash Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011 All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	
Attacking the SP, he said, "In 2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	_	dwai Nagar Branch: 133/128 M Block Kidwai Co-Borrower: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	Nagar, District-Kanpur U.P-20011  All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	
2012, the then SP chief minister talked about demolishing memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties	2.	Shailendra Kurnar Gupta 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kurnar Gupta Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kurnar	Flat No. SF-2 Situated Over H. No. 1232 Block Y Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	
memorials. In Kannauj the name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Mr. Siddharth Gupta S/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta     Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar	Scheme-2 Kidwai Nagar Kanpur U.P.	Rs. 3.62
name of Dr Ambedkar was removed from the medical college and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Borrower: Legal Heirs of Mr. Shailendra Kumar		Rs. 25,000/-
lege and the same was done in Saharanpur medical college. Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties			Owner: Mrs Ritambhara Gupta w/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta	ns. 25,000/-
Names of districts were changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Gupta: 1. Mrs. Ritambhara Gupta W/o Late Shailendra Kumar Gupta, 2. Mr. Siddharth Gupta	Area: 83.36 sq. Mtr. Undivided Share of Land 37.20 Sq. Mtr.	
changed showing SP's hatred for Dalits and deprived sections," he added. Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		S/o Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta, 3. Ms. Kamakhsi	Boundries of Premises: East: Plot/Premises No.	
tions," he added.  Defending Union Minister Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Gupta D/o Late Mr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta  Demand Notice Date: 03.08.2024	1233, <b>West</b> : Gallery thereafter Premises No.1231, <b>North</b> : Flat No. SF-1 thereafter 40 Feet Wide Road,	
Amit Shah, Adityanath said a portion of his statement was shown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Amt.: Rs. 27,91,299.65 + Interest w.e.f. 03.08.2024 + other charges	South: Open Land Thereafter Premises No. 1175	
portion of his statement was hown and hue and cry has been created by these parties		Possession Notice: 26.11.2024/Symbolic		
een created by these parties	3.	anch: 2A/157 Hasting Ave azad Nagar Nawab Borrower: Mr. Anil Maurya S/O Ram Milan	oganj, Kanpur U.P-208002 EQM of Property situated at E-371/EWS, Phase 7,	Rs. 18.54
2	٥.	Maurya	Swarn Nagari, Swarn Jayanti Vihar, Kanpur Nagar -	Rs. 1.85
Congress and SP) to hide heir misdeeds. He asked the		Demand Notice Date: 02.03.2023 Amt.: Rs. 19,03,184.44 + Interest w.e.f.	208027 Owner: Mr. Anil Maurya	Rs. 25,000/-
Congress whether the attack on		02.03.2023 + other charges Possession Notice: 23.05.2023/Symbolic	Built up Area: 39.240 Sq mtr Boundaries of Premises: East: Premises No E-	
BJP MPs was constitutional. Was pushing away an elderly		Toosassian House. Lo. ov. Loza, Oyinbono	362, West: Premises No E-372, North: Premises	
MP) constitutional? Was tear-	4	Borrower: Mr. Dinesh Sharma s/o Mr. Ganga	No E-361, <b>South:</b> Path  EQM of Property situated at H.No.J-47, Block J	Rs. 20.33
ng bills on SC/ST and women's nterest constitutional?"	4.	Charan Sharma	Yojana EWS-3 Gujaini ( KUDP ) Kanpur Nagar U.P	Rs. 2.04
He said the Congress and the P should apologise to the		Co-Borrower: Mr. Ankit Sharma S/o Dinesh Sharma	208022 Owner: Mr.Dinesh Sharma	Rs. 25,000/-
people of the country for, what		Demand Notice Date: 26.12.2023 Amt.: Rs. 25,25,860.00 + Interest w.e.f.	Built up Area: 36.75 Sq mtr Boundaries of Premises: East: House No.646,	
te said, creating schism of attred in the country.		26.12.2023 + other charges	West: House No.648, North: 3.50 Mtr Wide Road,	
	Gi	Possession Notice: 21.06.2024/Symbolic Iru Teg Bahadur Branch: 120/567 Shivaji Nag	South: House No.630	_
SP to launch $\Box$	_	Borrower: M/s Guruji Products (Prop: Mr.	Land and Building situated Plot No. D-3 situated	Rs. 37.67
_		Gurupratap Singh) Guarantor: Mrs. Shubhy Bindra W/o Mr. Sheenu	within the Industrial Area at Rania, Site-I, Pargana Tehsil and District Kanpur Dehat.	Rs. 3.80
PDA Charcha'		Pahwa Legal Heir: 1. Mr. Sheenu Pahwa S/o Mr.	Owner: Mr. Gurpratap Singh Area: 491.00 Sg mtr	Rs. 25,000/-
n all assembly		Gurupratap Singh	Boundries of Premises: East: Plot No. D-4, West:	
constituencies		Mrs. Jatinder Kaur W/o Mr. Gurupratap Singh     Mr. Harmeet Singh S/o Mr. Gurupratap Singh	Plot No D-2, North: Open Land, South: 18.0 mt wide road no. 2	
		Demand Notice Date: 28.03.2024 Amt.: Rs. 66,10,356.95 + Interest w.e.f.		
ucknow (PTI): The amajwadi Party on Tuesday		28.03.2024 + other charges		
aid it will organise 'PDA	6.	Possession Notice: 08.08.2024/Symbolic Borrower: Smt.Raju Devi Sharma W/o Chandra	Land and Building situated entire Ground Floor G	Rs. 59.94
cross all assembly constituen-		Bhan Sharma Co-Borrower: Mr. Chandra Bhan Sharma	over Premises No-A 297 Scheme No.2 Awas Vikash Hanspuram Kanpur Nagar	Rs. 6.00
ies in Uttar Pradesh from December 26 to January 25.		Guarantor: Mr. Anuragh Panday s/o Shyam	Owner: Mrs Raju Devi Sharma	Rs. 50,000/-
The initiative aims to safe-		Narayan  Demand Notice Date: 31.12.2022	Area: 207.55 Sq mtr along with undivided proportionate share of land 53.75 Sq mtr	
uard the Constitution and propagate the ideals of Dr BR		Amt.: Rs. 51,96,589.81 + Interest w.e.f. 31.12.2022 + other charges	Boundries of Premises: East: 9.0 Mtr wide Road, West: Plot No A-296, North: 24.00 Mtr wide Road,	
Ambedkar, party chief pokesperson Rajendra		Possession Notice: 03.05.2023/Symbolic	South: Plot No. A271 & 272	
Chaudhary said.	C.	P. Mission Compound Branch: Plot No. 803/6 Borrower: Mr. Jagat Singh S/O Nattu Singh	, Gwalior Road, P&T Colony, Jhansi (U. P.) - 28 All land and building situated at Plot of Arazi No.	4003 Rs. 19.20
DA is the term coined by SP hief Akhilesh Yadav during	1.	Co-Borrower: Mr. Ashok Singh S/o Mr. Jagat	1145, Mauja Leharid Abadi /Mohalla Deen Dyal	Rs. 1.92
022 assembly polls for 'pich- da' (backwards), Dalits and		Singh Guarantor: Mrs. Mamta Devi W/o Ashok Singh	Nagar Tehsil and Distt Jhansi Area: 70.84 Sq mtr	Rs. 25,000/-
lpsankhyak' (minorities).		Demand Notice Date: 08.06.2024 Amt.: Rs. 9,59,266.50 + Interest w.e.f.	Boundaries of Premises: East: Plot of Seller Smt. Manju Datta, West: House OF Smt. Gomti, North:	
hese programs will be con- ucted sector-wise within each		08.06.2024 + other charges	Way 15 Ft. Wide, South: Plot of Verma ji & Bhagwati	
ssembly constituency and will itness active participation	8.	Possession Notice: 20.09.2024/Symbolic Borrower: Mr. Jai Prakash S/O Ashok	Prasad  All land and building situated at Arazi No. 1755,	Rs. 9.21
om party representatives,		Co-Borrower: Mrs. Geet W/O Ashok	Mauja Lahar Gird, Brahm Nagar, Jhansi Area: 900 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 1.00
rganisational leaders, and lembers of its frontal units,		Guarantor: Mr. Neeraj Shrivastav S/O Vishan Swaroop	Boundaries of Premises: East: Plot of Mr. Mukesh,	Rs. 25,000/-
haudhary said. he discussions will focus on		Demand Notice Date: 04.05.2019 Amt.: Rs. 8,19,144.80 + Interest w.e.f.	West: House of Mr. Ram Pal, North: Plot of Mrs. Najma and Others, South: Way 4.57 Mtrs.	
y issues like social justice,		04.05.2019 + other charges Possession Notice: 02.08.2019/Symbolic		
servations, unemployment, flation, and caste-based sur-	9.	Borrower: Mr. Santosh Vishwakarma S/O Pukhu	All land and building situated at Dadiyapura I,	Rs. 12.92
y.	50	Lal Co-Borrower: Mrs. Kiran Vishwakarma W/O	Madrasi Colony, Tehsil & Distt. Jhansi Area: 795 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 1.30
he overarching goal is to raise ter awareness and unite mar-		Santosh Kumar	Boundaries of Premises: East: House of Mrs.	Rs. 25,000/-
nalised communities by edu-		Guarantor: Mr. Moti Lal Kushwha S/O Lt. Ram Prasad Kushwaha	Kalawati Mishra & Others, West: House of Makkhan Lal Vishwakarma, North: Boundry Wall	
ting them about their rights and ensuring their active par-		Demand Notice Date: 10.05.2019 Amt.: Rs. 7,87,553.56 + Interest w.e.f.	Mahakaleshwar Mandir, South: Rasta 15 Ft.	
cipation in the democratic cocess, Chaudhary said.		10.05.2019 + other charges		
he statement made by the	M	Possession Notice: 02.08.2019/Symbolic anik Chowk Branch: Dr. Dayasagar Compound	J. Manik Chowk Jhansi (U. P.)- 284002	
nion home minister in rliament was 'disrespectful' to	_	Borrower: 1. Mr. Narendra Chaurasiya S/O	EQM of All Residential Plot Situated at Arazi No. 319	Rs. 16.00
		Balmukund Chaurasiya 2. Mrs. Pushpa Chaurasiya W/O Mr. Narendra	M, Mouja Nayagaon, Near Church ITI College, Tehsil, City & Distt Jhansi	Rs. 1.60
r BR Ambedkar, the architect		Chaurasiya	Area: 62.45 Sq mtr	Rs. 25,000/-
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," e party said in a statement.		Demand Notice Date: 08.05.2024	Boundaries of Premises: East: House of Dwivedi,	
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," e party said in a statement. ne Samajwadi Party contends		Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f.	West: House of Sharma Ji, North: House of	
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," e party said in a statement. he Samajwadi Party contends at dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed			Mukesh Sen, <b>South:</b> Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide	
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," e party said in a statement. ne Samajwadi Party contends at dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed mbedkar's principles of equalments, as these challenged their tra-	Ka	<b>Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02</b> + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges	Mukesh Sen, <b>South:</b> Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide	
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," e party said in a statement. ne Samajwadi Party contends at dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed mbedkar's principles of equalty, as these challenged their trational authority and sought to	$\overline{}$	Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 25.07.2024/Symbolic Inpur Main Branch: LIC Building Mall Road, D Borrower: Mrs. Shashi Bala Singh W/o Mr. Arvind	Mukesh Sen, <b>South:</b> Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide  istt Kanpur (U. P.)- 208001  All land and building situated at House No. 1775,	Rs. 96.50
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," he party said in a statement. The Samajwadi Party contends hat dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed mbedkar's principles of equality, as these challenged their trational authority and sought to inpower oppressed and underivileged communities, it said.	$\overline{}$	Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 25.07.2024/Symbolic Inpur Main Branch: LIC Building Mall Road, D Borrower: Mrs. Shashi Bala Singh W/o Mr. Arvind Singh Co-Borrower: Mr. Arvind Singh S/O Danku	Mukesh Sen, <b>South</b> : Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide  listt Kanpur (U. P.)- 208001  All land and building situated at House No. 1775, HIG Scheme no-2, Hanspuram Kanpur Uttar Pradesh Pin Code 208021 Admeasuring 181.35	Rs. 9.65
r BR Ambedkar, the architect the Indian Constitution," the party said in a statement. The Samajwadi Party contends that dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed mbedkar's principles of equality, as these challenged their trational authority and sought to impower oppressed and undertivileged communities, it said, mbedkar's work in framing	$\overline{}$	Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 25.07.2024/Symbolic Inpur Main Branch: LIC Building Mall Road, D Borrower: Mrs. Shashi Bala Singh W/o Mr. Arvind Singh Co-Borrower: Mr. Arvind Singh S/O Danku Demand Notice Date: 15.07.2024	Mukesh Sen, <b>South</b> : Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide  listt Kanpur (U. P.)- 208001  All land and building situated at House No. 1775, HIG Scheme no-2, Hanspuram Kanpur Uttar	
or BR Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution," the party said in a statement. The Samajwadi Party contends the Samajwadi	$\overline{}$	Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 25.07.2024/Symbolic Inpur Main Branch: LIC Building Mall Road, D Borrower: Mrs. Shashi Bala Singh W/o Mr. Arvind Singh Co-Borrower: Mr. Arvind Singh S/O Danku Demand Notice Date: 15.07.2024 Amt.: Rs. 55,39,386.16 + Interest w.e.f. 15.07.2024 + other charges	Mukesh Sen, South: Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide  listt Kanpur (U. P.)- 208001  All land and building situated at House No. 1775, HIG Scheme no-2, Hanspuram Kanpur Uttar Pradesh Pin Code 208021 Admeasuring 181.35 Sq. Mtr. In the name of Shashi Bala Singh w/o Mr. Arvind Singh Area: 181.35 Sq. Mtr.	Rs. 9.65
or BR Ambedkar, the architect f the Indian Constitution," he party said in a statement. The Samajwadi Party contends hat dominant, feudal forces ave historically opposed umbedkar's principles of equaly, as these challenged their tra-	$\overline{}$	Amt.: Rs. 14,61,022.02 + Interest w.e.f. 08.05.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 25.07.2024/Symbolic Inpur Main Branch: LIC Building Mall Road, D Borrower: Mrs. Shashi Bala Singh W/o Mr. Arvind Singh Co-Borrower: Mr. Arvind Singh S/O Danku Demand Notice Date: 15.07.2024 Amt.: Rs. 55,39,386.16 + Interest w.e.f.	Mukesh Sen, <b>South:</b> Way of 6.10Mtr. Wide <b>Istt Kanpur (U. P.)- 208001</b> All land and building situated at House No. 1775, HIG Scheme no-2, Hanspuram Kanpur Uttar Pradesh Pin Code 208021 Admeasuring 181.35 Sq. Mtr. In the name of Shashi Bala Singh w/o Mr. Arvind Singh	Rs. 9.65

Last date for submission of EMD for all the above properties is 27.01.2025 by 04.00 PM E-Auction of above mentioned properties will be held on Date 27.01.2025 Time at Morning 11 AM to 5.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 5 min. interval

Terms and Conditions of Sale: -1. This e-Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER IT IS" basis. 2. The property being auctioned by the Authorized Officer is free of charge till the maximum information and belief, yet the intending tenderer should independently enquire all the encumbrances, title claim statutory dues (Customs and Excise Tax / Income Tax) before participating in the e-auction and or any other government agency etc. All assets are being sold with all current and future encumbrances known or unknown. The Authorized Officer will not be liable for any claim rights and liabilities of any third / third party. 3. It is the responsibility of the tenderers to inspect the property and satisfy itself completely before participating in the eauction. You can contact the concerned branch of Bank of India for property inspection. 4. Interested tenderers will be able to get their User ID and Password free of cost by registering on the web portal https://www.BAANKNET.com and EMD can be deposited through this portal. 5. After registration in the web portal, the interested bidders should upload the following documents in the web portal before submitting the tender. 1. Copy of PAN Card 2. ID Proof (KYC) like Self Attested Aadhar Card Noter ID - Card / Driving License / Passport etc. 6. Only tenderers having valid User ID, Password will be able to participate in the e-auction process. 7. Only those interested bidders who have made EMD payment by 27.01.2025 within the stipulated time will be able to participate in the e auction process. 8. If the reserve price of the property is up to Rs. 50 lakh the incremental value bid will be in multiple of 25000 and i reserve price is above 50 lakh it will be Rs. 50000. 9. The highest bidder shall be declared the successful bidder with the permission of the authorized officer. The information of which will be given - to him by electric mode on his email address. 10. The Authorized Officer will not be bound to accept the highest bid and the Authorized Officer will have the right to accept/reject any bid. 11. EMD amount of successful bidder will remain in BAANKNET Wallet and all unsuccessful bidder's amount can be withdrawn from BAANKNET. No interest will be payable by BAANKNET on the EMD amount. 12. The successful bidder will have to deposit 25% (including EMD amount) of the selling price (i.e. maximum bid amount) immediately. He has to deposit the remaining balance amount within 15 days. In case successful bidder failed to deposit bid amount in prescribe time the amount deposited will be forfeited without any prior notice. 13. Bidders are advised to go through the detailed terms and condition at https://www.bankofindia.co.in, https://www.BAANKNET.com before submitting the tender. 14. TDS tax will be payable by the successful bidder on the maximum sale price under Income Tax Act 1941 (A), if the selling price exceeds Rs. 50 lakhs or more and additional GST will be payable (wherever applicable) on the sale price as per Government rules, 15. The intending tenderer should have proper resources related to the bid, no objection will be accepted in this regard. 16. Bids above reserve price will be accepted.

#### 30 days sale notice to borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors

The above mentioned borrower / depositor / mortgagor is informed to pay the amount mentioned in section 13(2) before the date of auction. In case of failure to deposit the amount, the property will be auctioned and the balance amount along with interest and cost will be recovered from you or the borrower can also participate in the auction organized by the bank on the above date to recover the amount due in his account

Date: 25.12.2024 Authorised Officer: Bank of India Place: Kanpur

#### MLAs lay emphasis on solving **Cong demands Shah's resignation** problems of public on priority

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Several local MLAs laid emphasis on resolving the problems of basic facilities of the general public on priority in the monthly coordination meeting of the public represen-tatives and administrative officers of the district held at Circuit House here. MLA (Pindra) Dr Awadhesh Singh said action should be taken against those responsible for covering the sewer and drinking water pipelines during road construction and asked the officials concerned to take immediate action on the information given by the public representatives. MLA (Varanasi Cantt) Saurabh Srivastava said where the Phulwaria 4-lane is

even after three months of information about the damaged road and manhole lids, the repair work was not done till now. The PWD engineer assured him to get the work done soon.

MLA (Ajgara) T Ram expressed his displeasure over the Irrigation department not operating Sharda Sahayak and other canals smoothly and not cleaning the canals properly. The salary of the Executive Engineer of Bandhi block was stopped for being absent in the meeting. On the information that the road was not repaired during the installation of tube wells by the Jal Nigam, instructions were given to get the road construction work done on priority after the work at such descending towards Lahartara, places. On the information

Patel that there is no electrification in Gosaipur of Rohania till date, the department assured that electrification will be done soon. DM S Rajalingam stressed that

no activity will be carried out by anyone on the ghats without the permission of the Varanasi Municipal Corporation (VMC). Instructions were given to prepare a proposal for acquiring the land near Samaneghat Judge Guest House, to clear the encroachment done on 300 acres of government land in Bhagwanpur and ensure government possession on it. On receiving information about illegal occupation of the land of Jai Narayan Inter College by some people, instructions were given to get it measured on the spot, mark it and secure it. Along with getting the

encroachment done on the land of Dev Pokhari was asked to be cleared. ZP Chairperson Poonam Maurya, Mayor Ashok Tiwari, Commissioner of Police Mohit Agarwal, Vice-Chairman of Varanasi Development Authority Pulkit Garg, Municipal Commissioner Akshay Verma, CDO Himanshu Nagpal and many officers of different depart-ments were also present.

Laxmi Kund pond repaired, the



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

National president of Congress (Scheduled Caste Cell) Rajesh Lilothia and Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) chief Ajay Raiji demanded resignation from Union Home Minister Amit Shah for 'insulting' Constitution maker Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. Talking to the reporters here on Tuesday. they said that though the major opposition parties, including Congress, have demanded Shah's resignation the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not ready to accept the insult of 'Dr Ambedkar as a crime. They

Varanasi (PNS): The National

Dentists' Day was celebrated at

Faculty of Dental Science

(FDS), Institute of Medical

Sciences, Banaras Hindu

University (IMS-BHU) here

on Tuesday for creating aware-

ness about dental and oral dis-

eases. Its theme was 'optimum

said that the Congress is firm on its demand for resignation of Shah for insulting Baba Saheb and our protest will continue from the road to the Parliament. They said the government constantly tried to stop the opposition parties from speaking on the Constitution. "Not only this, Union Home Minister exposed the 'Manuwadi' mentality of the Rashtriva Swavamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) by insulting Dr Ambedkar", they said, adding that insulting of Dr Ambedkar has now become a fashion for the BJP. "The sad thing is that instead of teaching a lesson to Amit Shah, the PM has inten-

National Dentists' Day celebrated

oral health for all. The day is

observed on the birth anniver-

sary of Prof R Ahmed by

Indian Dental Association

(IDA). President of UP State

Indian Dental Association and

former Dean of FDS, IMS-

BHU, Prof TP Chaturvedi said

the first dental college in the

and counter-allegations", the Congress leaders said. According to them, the Constitution of India is not just a constitution but the biggest a constitution but the biggest watchdog of the identity and unity and integrity of this great country. "The Indian Constitution gave shape to the feelings and hopes of crores of people of India by giving them protection. It is our Constitution that gave women poor formers." that gave women, poor, farmers, labourers, oppressed, Dalits, backward and minorities the opportunity to move forward with pride, to realise their dreams, to become socially, politically and economically empowered",they stated. They further said that the great people of India have always shown their faith in the Constitution of India with full determination and commitment. The parliamentary history of the country has been tainted by the insult of the Constitution and Dr Ambedkar by the ruling BJP in the winter session of the 18th Lok Sabha.

country R Ahmed Dental

College, Kolkata, was established in 1920. On the occa-

sion, Prof Chaturvedi told

the dental students about var-

ious changes in the field of

dentistry. He said at present,

there are 323 dental colleges in

sified the politics of allegations

#### Prof Sangeeta Shukla reappointed CCSU V-C for three years



**CORRESPONDENT** ■ MEERUT

Vice-Chancellor (V-C) of Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), Meerut, Professor Sangeeta Shukla has been reappointed as full-time V-C for the next three years by Uttar Pradesh Governor and Chancellor Anandiben Patel. The teachers, staff, officers and students congratulated her and wished for continued progress of the university under her

leadership.
On the occasion Professor Sangeeta Shukla said she is committed to making every possible effort for the prosperity and progress of the university and to take it to new heights in the field of education, research and innovation.

Under the leadership of Prof Shukla, the university achieved many significant accomplishments, including academic reforms, advancement in research and steps taken towards providing employment-oriented education to the students. Under her leadership, the university paid special attention to green campus, digital learning system and community development projects. Her farsightedness and administrative skills have played an important role in giving CCSU a prominent place among the state universities of Uttar Pradesh and it is hoped that during her next three years of tenure the university

will set new records in the field of education and research.

#### NOTICE Registered Office Address : NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex.

NTPC Limited

7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003 Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

The applicant above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), New Delhi for determination of tariff of Feroze Gandhi Unchahar Thermal Power Station Stage-I (420 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

- 1. The beneficiaries of the generating station are:
- a) Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Ltd. (UPPCL), Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg,
- b) Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. (UPCL), Urja Bhavan, Kanwali Road Dehradun-248001.
- c) Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd. (TPDDL), Grid Substation, Hudson Road, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-110009.
- d) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. (BRPL), BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019.
- e) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd. (BYPL), Shakti Kiran Building, Karkardooma Delhi-110092.
- f) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (HPPC), Shakti Bhawan, Sector-VI
- Panchkula, Haryana-134109. g) Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd.(GUVNL), Vidyut Bhavan, Race Course
- Vadodara-390007. h) Electricity Department (Chandigarh), Union Territory of Chandigarh, Add
- Office Building, Sector-9 D, Chandigarh.

Year-wise tariff sought to be determined

- i) Power Development Department (PDD-J&K) Govt., of J&K, Civil Secretariat, Srinagar
- 2. Capacity of the generating station : 420 MW : Rs. 962.65 Crore 3. Approved capital cost of the project
- 4. Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC 5. Scheduled date of commercial operation : Not Applicable
- 6. Actual date of commercial operation of station : 13.02.1992 7. Capital cost on date of Commercial operation of Station: Not Applicable B. Details of tariff:
- 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 for the

. Capacity 4.45

\*As per Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Feroze Gandhi Unchahar Thermal Power Station Stage-I filed with Hon'ble CERC.

- 9. A copy of the petition made for determination of tariff is posted on the
- website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices". 10. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the

Addl. General Manager (Comml.) Leading the Power Sector

# NTPC Limited (A Govt. of India Enterprise)

NOTICE

Registered Office Address: NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex 7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

The applicant above named has made an application before the Centra Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), New Delhi for determination of tariff of Rihand Super Thermal Power Station, Stage-I (1000 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

1. The beneficiaries of the generating station are: a) Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Ltd., Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg,

- b) Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (on behalf of DISCOMs of Rajasthan)
- Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur-302005. c) Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd., Grid Substation, Hudson Road,
- Kingsway Camp, Delhi-110009.
- d) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd., 2nd floor, B-Block, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019.
- e) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd., Shakti Kiran Building, Karkardooma Delhi-110092
- f) Haryana Power Purchase Centre, Shakti Bhawan, Sector-VI, Panchkula,
- g) Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd., The Mall, Patiala-147001 h) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Ltd., Kumar Housing Complex Building-II, Vidyut Bhawan, Shimla-171004.
- i) Power Development Department (J&K), Govt. of J&K, Civil Secretariat Srinagar.
- j) Electricity Department (Chandigarh), Union Territory of Chandigarh, Additional Office Building, Sector-9 D, Chandigarh.

: Not Applicable

:01.01.1991

k) Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd., Urja Bhavan, Kanwali Road Dehradun, Uttarakhand-248001.

5. Scheduled date of commercial operation

6. Actual date of commercial operation of station

- 2. Capacity of the generating station : 1000 MW 3. Approved capital cost of the project : Rs. 2516.99 Crore 4. Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC
- 7. Capital cost on date of Commercial operation of Station: Not Applicable 8. Details of tariff:

Particulars	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined							
	Tariff for the revious year*	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29		
1. Capacity Charges (Rs. Lakh/ year)	69,363.63	72,834.13	77,779.11	78,890.32	74,897.92	76,718.64		
2. Energy Charges (Rs. /kwh)			1.5	59				

\* As per Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Rihand Supe

- Thermal Power Station, Stage-I (1000 MW) filed with Hon'ble CERC. 9. A copy of the petition made for determination of tariff is posted on the
- website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices". 10. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the petition may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the

Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Addl. General Manager (Comml. Leading the Power Sector

BJP to celebrate 'Good Governance Day' today cuss the achievements of Vajpayee's gov-PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will L celebrate Bharat Ratna former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary on December 25 as 'Good Governance Day'. As this is the birth centenary year of Vajpayee, many programmes will be organided on this occasion, said the regional BJP president (Kashi) Dilip Patel here on Tuesday. He said on the occasion, the BJP will organise programmes at the booth level in the entire Kashi region. "At the booth level, party office-bearers and workers will discuss the personality and work of Atal Bihari Vajpayee along with local citizens by paying floral tribute to his portrait. On the occasion, Atal's poems will also be recited. Along with this, senior workers who have worked with Atal will also be honoured", he said.

He further said that in various districts of Kashi region, party workers will dis-

ernment and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and public welfare schemes and development works by organising Sushasan Yatra and chaupals. Patel said a seminar will also be organised on 'Good Governance Day' at the regional office in Rohania on Wednesday from 11 am in which Atal's personality and work will be discussed in detail. He said at the district level, an exhibition will also be organided on Atal's life and his dedication and contribution towards the

Region media in charge Navratan Rathi said that state government ministers, party office-bearers, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs, MLAs, MLCs, zila panchayat presidents, members, mayors, corporators, Nagar Palika and Nagar Panchayat presidents, block pramukhs and other public representatives including prominent leaders and party workers will participate in the programmes

### **Nagaland CM invited to Maha Kumbh**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

On the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh Minister of State for AYUSH (Independent Charge) Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' and UP Minister of State for Energy and Additional Sources of Energy Somendra Tomar invited Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio to attend Maha Kumbh-2025.

During the courtesy visit in Kohima, the ministers said this Maha Kumbh to be held in Prayagraj is not only a symbol of India's cultural diversity, but will also highlight spiritual and religious importance at the global level. The ministers also met Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton and invited him to attend the Mahakumbh. After this, the people of Nagaland

were informed about the importance and preparations of the Maha Kumbh through a press conference and road show organised in the park of Dimapur. Dayalu said Maha Kumbh-2025

will be the world's largest religious event, in which lakhs of devotees will take a dip in the Sangam and attain spiritual peace. He said that this time the Maha Kumbh will be a wonderful example of the digital age, in which excellent arrangements have been made for bathing, meditation, travel, security and accommodation. He described the cultural unity of India and the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' as the main objective of this event. Tomar said the Maha Kumbh

serves to weave the diversity of our society into one thread. He said that preparations for the Maha

Friendly cricket match held

Kumbh are being done on a war footing under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. As this holy moment is drawing closer, the Maha Kumbh event is taking shape in its divine form. Maha Kumbh-2025 is being organised in Prayagraj after 12 years. The purpose of this event is not only to strengthen religious faith, but also to present India's cultural heritage and unity to the world.

Relations Officer (PRO) Gaurav Rathi said that during his two-day visit to Nagaland, the minister also had a courtesy meeting with the BJP state president of Nagaland and invited him to attend the Maha Kumbh. From there, the minister will come directly to Varanasi on Wednesday.

Military Hospital, Prayagraj, to

AYUSH minister's Public

### Mishap claims two lives

**Kanpur (PNS):** Two youths for their commendable efforts when an unidentified vehicle hit their bike from behind on Jajmau Ganga bridge late on Monday night. Jajmau Ganga Kotwali police rushed to the spot and took both the youths to Kashiram Hospital where they were declared dead by the doctors. The bodies were sent for autopsy after informing the kin of the deceased. SHO Ajay Prakash Mishra said around 1.30 am two youths were going towards Unnao when the unidentified vehicle hit them from behind. The youths, identified as Saurabh (20) and Ankit (19) of Khannapurwa, Achalganj, Unnao, were lying on the road when police rushed to the spot and took them to hospital where they were declared as brought dead.

COMPETITION: Under the aegis of National Sugar Institute (NSI), Kanpur and NLK Academy, Mandhana, a painting competition for children was organised at NA Ramaiyya Stadium, New Colony of the Institute, in which a large number of children and their parents were present. Around 51 children up to 17 years of age participated in the programme and presented beautiful paintings. NLK Academy, Mandhana provided drawing sheets and colours for painting. Children were given certificates

going towards Unnao were and to boost their enthusiasm. The competition was divided into four categories: Nursery to UKG, grade 1 to 5, grade 6 to 8 and grade 9 to 10. The winners of different categories were : Jyotsna, Shashwat Dwivedi, Arpita Savita and Kajal Pathak. Shields were awarded to the winning children of different categories. Vishal Chandra, Manish Yaday, Ritu Chaturvedi, Himanshu Tiwari and Deepika Nishad of NLK Academy, Mandhana, expressed gratitude to the NSI for cooperation in organising the programme. NSI's Mallika Dwivedi, Assistant Director (Rajbhasha), Daya Shankar Mishra, Santosh Kumar Tripathi, Akhilesh Kumar Pandey, Umesh Chandra Pandey made a special contribution. Sanjay Chauhan, Anoop Kumar Kanojia, Ramesh Kumar Pandey, Girja Shankar Dubey, Rakesh Kumar Katiyar, Arvind Kumar Savita, Atul Sonkar, Dhoom Singh, Jairaj Singh, Sunil Kumar Dwidedi and Achin Achin Srivastava were present.

MEMORANDUM: A delegation of Pensioners' Forum, led by its vice-president Rajesh Kumar Shukla, met MP Ramesh Awasthi and handed over a memorandum, addressed to the PM, containing 14 demands to him. The members also felicitated the MP with a memento.

#### Youth killed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

Ahis friend over a trivial issue in Ghurpur area. Reports said that Sachin Kumar Bind of Sukhu Ka Pura village under Ghurpur police station area of Koundhiyara, had gone to his sister's house in Majra Khadiyan of Ekouni in Koundhiyara on Monday with his friend Mangal on a bike. In the evening both were returning home. Sachin and Mangal were found injured near Naugwa village under Ghurpur police station. The villagers informed their familieswho sent them to the SRN Hospital where Sachin was declared

dead on arrival. On Tuesday the body was brought to Sukhupura. The police reached the house of the deceased, took the body in possession and sent it for postmortem. The father of the deceased filed a complaint against Mangal. On the basis of the allegations, a case was registered against Mangal and he was interrogated. SHO Koundhivara police station, Shanker Pandev said the accused Mangal confessed his crime. He asked Sachin to let him talk to his fiancée, which he refused. Infuriated by this, he hit Sachin on the head with a sharp stone lying nearby as a result of which he died on the spot. He also hit himself in order to make it look like an accident.

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A friendly cricket match was organised at Krishnan Stadium, IFFCO Phulpur, to mark Farmers' Day in which teams from Polices Line Prayagraj and IFFCO Phulpur participated. This event was organised with the aim of encouraging sportsmanship and community relations.

Police Lines Prayagraj team captain Anurag Yadav won the toss and decided to bat first and performed brilliantly and scored 174 runs in the stipulated overs. IFFCO Phulpur team also played with enthusiasm, but could not reach the target due to excellent bowling of Police Lines and fielders ultimately being restricted to 115 runs. IFFCO Phulpur team captain Robin Ranjan praised the efforts of the players and expressed hope for better performance in future. Police Lines Prayagraj team

won the match by 59 runs. The players of both the teams displayed excellent performance and entertained the audience. Player of the match was Ranveer Singh who played a brilliant innings of 80 runs in 51 balls. Chief guest Deputy General Manager (Personnel

Administration) Shambhu Shekhar congratulated the players and described such events as a means of increasing social harmony.

MEDICAL SUPPORT SYS-**TEM:** In a continued effort to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pilgrims attending the Maha Kumbh-2025, the Indian Army has established a comprehensive medical support system to assist civil authorities and provide timely medical aid. The Indian Army has set up the following facili-ties for the benefit of the pilgrims:- A dedicated 50-bed hospital is operational at

address the healthcare needs of medical attention. In case of medical emergencies, an additional 45-bed facility has been established at Old Cantonment to augment crisis response capabilities. Specialist doctors from the Indian Army are assisting the civil administration in handling infectious diseases, ensuring effective management and control during the congregation. A 24x7 mobile evacuation team is stationed at OD Fort, equipped with five beds, including two ventilator-equipped beds. The team is supported by a medical specialist to provide immediate assistance to pilgrims in critical need. A fully equipped Medical Aid Post (MAP) Class 1 has been established at the Mela Ground to offer on-site medical assistance to pilgrims. The Indian Army remains committed to serving the nation and ensuring the successful conduct of Maha Kumbh-2025. The initiative underscores the Army's dedication to public welfare and its capability to support civil administration during largescale events.

This information was given by Group Captain Samir Gangakhedkar Public Relations Officer, Ministry of Defence, Prayagraj through a press communiqué.

# hristmas: Living the spirit of manger

PRAYAGRAJ: Christmas is more than a celebration it is an invitation to embody the profound message of the manger a symbol of humility, compassion and selflessness. The birth of Jesus Christ in a humble stable challenges us to reflect on what it means to truly live the

spirit of Christmas in our daily

lives.

The manger, a simple trough meant for feeding animals, became the cradle of the Savior of the world. It stands as a testament to God's decision to dwell among the poorest and the lowliest. By choosing such a setting, Jesus highlighted the values of simplicity and solidarity with those on the margins of society. This profound act urges us to embrace the same spirit in our interactions with others, particularly those who are less fortunate.

Living the spirit of the manger begins with humility—acknowl-edging that greatness lies not in material wealth or status but in service and love for others. It challenges the consumerism often associated with

modern Christmas celebrations, calling us instead to focus on sharing our resources and time with those in need.

True greatness lies in embody-

ing the spirit of the manger—

serving others with humility and open hearts. Bill Gates is admired not just for his wealth but for using it to care for AIDS patients and address

social injustices. Similarly, those who carry the spirit of the manger—those who go out of their way to help others—earn respect and love. In India, this spirit can be

seen in numerous ways. Providing shelter and education for street children, supporting farmers and dailywage workers and advocating for marginalised communities reflect the values the

manger represents. During natural disasters, when families lose everything, relief efforts become acts of living the manger's message. Offering healthcare to the underserved, creating oppor-tunities for education and fostering interfaith harmony are ways we can transform society with the spirit of Christmas. The manger also invites us to

look within. Do we open our hearts to the struggles of others or do we turn them away, like the innkeeper who had no room for Mary and Joseph? True celebration lies in carrying the manger in our hearts—a space filled with

humility, compassion and openness to the needs of others. As we celebrate Christmas, let us move beyond decorations and festivities to embody the values of the manger. Whether it is sharing with the less fortunate, standing in solidarity with the oppressed or simply spreading kindness, living the spirit of the manger transforms Christmas into a celebration of love, humility and renewal. This season, let the light of the manger guide us to make a difference in the lives of others and in our own

> --Sr Dona CSN Christ Jyoti School, Mandermod

#### **Book exhibition** inaugurated Varanasi (PNS): The five-day

book exhibition was inaugurat-

ed during Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Jayanti celebrations at the Sayajirao Gaikwad Central Library, BHU by Dean of Sanskrit Vidya Dharma-Vigyan Faculty, BHU, Prof Rajaram Shukla here on Tuesday. He said through the exhibition, the students and visitors of the university will get an opportunity to get acquainted with the thoughts and works of Mahamana and to get information about history of the formation of the university. Librarian of Central Library Dr DK Singh gave information about the displayed books, magazines etc.

# Congress approaches Supreme Court against new Election Commission rules

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Congress on Tuesday filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court challenging the recent amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 and expressed hope that the apex court will help restore the "fast eroding" integrity of the electoral process. The Government has tweaked an election rule to prevent public inspection of certain electronic documents such as CCTV camera and webcasting footage as well as video recordings of candidates to prevent their misuse.

general secretary Jairam Ramesh, who filed the petition, said, "The integrity of the electoral process is fast



eroding. Hopefully Supreme Court will help "A writ has just restore it." been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the recent

the amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961," he said in a post on X. Ramesh said the Election

Commission, a Constitutional

Based

body charged with the conduct of free and fair elections cannot be allowed to unilaterally, and without public consultation, amend such a vital law in such a brazen manner. "This is especially true when that amendment does away with public access to essential information that makes the electoral process more transparent and accountable," he said.

recommendation of the Election Commission of India, the Union law ministry on Friday amended Rule 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, to restrict the type of "papers" or documents open to public

on

#### Home Minister Shah stresses use of biometrics | Congress to to identify unidentified bodies, persons

Shah asserted.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Union Home Minster Amit Shah on Tuesday stressed the need for using biometrics technology to identify uniden-tified bodies and unidentified "found persons".

Chairing a review meeting on the implementation of the three new criminal laws with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) here, Shah also emphasised the use of technology in all criminal investigation matters.

He said alerts should be generated for all the cases at predefined stages and timelines should be fixed from the registration to disposal of the case - for the benefit of victims and complainants.

Biometrics technology should be adopted to identify unidentified bodies and unidentified found persons,

According to an official statement, Shah said regular dispatch of alerts to

investigating officers as well as senior officers as per predefined timelines will help expedite the process of investigation. The meeting reviewed the implementation and

integration of Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) 2.0 and Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS), the New Criminal Laws and National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), prisons, courts, prosecution and forensics with ICJS 2.0 at all

During the discussion, the home minister asked the NCRB to facilitate the complete implementation of the new criminal laws in the ICJS 2.0, the statement said.

India level.

He emphasised the use of applications like eSakshva, Nyaya Shruti, eSign and eSummons in every state and Union Territory.

Shah said a team of officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs, NCRB should visit the states and Union Territories to increase the adoption of technical projects and assist them in all possible ways. He emphasised regular interaction with senior police formations of states and

Union Territories to monitor

the progress of CCTNS and ICJS regularly and provide impetus to the project. The NCRB should create a data rich platform to benefit the investigation officers and other stakeholder of criminal

justice system, he said. Shah appreciated the efforts of the NCRB in the technical implementation of the three new criminal laws and the

#### commemorate 100th anniversary of Belgaum session

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW

ongress will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Belgaum session of the party that was presided over by Mahatma Gandhi with an extended session of the CWC which will decide on an action plan for the next year.

The opposition party asserted that the "insult" to B R Ambedkar by Home Minister Amit Shah will be strongly taken up at Belagavi and deliberated upon.

Addressing a joint Press

conference along with Congress general secretary organisation K C Venugopal and AICC media and publicity department head Pawan Khera, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Iairam Ramesh said the extended Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on December 26 has been named 'Nav

Satyagraha Baithak. He said two resolutions will be passed at the meeting.

Congress has been marking Ambedkar Samman Saptah against the "insult" of B R Ambedkar by Home Minister Amit Shah, Ramesh said.

He said there is only one solution that the home minister be sacked and must apologise for his remarks.

Ramesh said on December 27, a 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan' rally will be held in Belagavi. Vénugopal said the Congress has strongly taken up the issue of the "insult" of Ambedkar by the home minister and has been demanding the sacking of Shah as well as an apology from him. He said the issue would be strongly taken up in Belagavi and ways to take it forward in the future will also be deliberated upon, he said.

## Tragedy repeats: despite SC Guidelines, abandoned borewell accidents continue to claim lives

fter over 14 years the A Supreme Court framed guidelines to prevent accidents involving abandoned borewells, the frequent spate of such incidents highlight the gaps in enforcement and creating awareness of the top court's order.

The issue has come to the forefront again following the spate of such accidents leading to desperate and dramatic rescue operations. Most recently, a minor, Chetna, aged around three years fell into a borewell in the Kotputli-Behror district of Rajasthan, and the NDRF and SDRF were deployed to rescue her from the 150feet-deep borewell with efforts still underway at the time of filing this report.



borewell in Rajasthan's Dausa while playing and after a 55-hour rescue operation, he was pulled out unconscious and was declared dead on arrival in a hospital. These instances On December 9, Aryan, 5, occurred despite the top motu (on its own) fell into a 150-foot-deep court's comprehensive cognisance of a letter

guidelines issued February 11, 2010, aimed to prevent such tragedies. The guidelines were issued after the bench led by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan, took a suo February 13, 2009.

The guidelines included setting up barbed-wire fencing around the well during construction, using a steel plate cover fixed with bolts over the well assembly and filling up of borewells from the bottom to the ground level among others. The top court had also asked the authorities to give wide publicity to its order. "It has been brought to the notice of this court that in a number of cases, children had been trapped and fallen into borewells and tube wells or abandoned wells. These reports have been coming from various states. Accordingly, we took suo motu initiative and issued notice to the various states to take immediate measures

petition bringing to its to prevent such kinds of drilling agency at the time abandoned borewells by notice a spate of such incidents," the top court of construction or clay/sand/boulders/pebbles accidents in the country on said in its order dated rehabilitation of well, (b) /drill cuttings, etc., from

February 11, 2010. Further, the owner of the land or the premises, before taking any steps to construct borewells or tube wells, was directed to intimate in writing to the authorities concerned district collector or district magistrate or sarpanch - or department officials of ground water or public health or municipal corporations at least 15 days in advance. It was directed that registration of all drilling agencies, government, semigovernment or private, should be mandatory. "Erection of a signboard at the time of construction near the well with the following details: (a) Complete address of the

Complete address of the user agency or owner of the well," the apex court had said. The top court also directed the barbed-wire fencing or any other suitable barrier be erected around the well during construction, a cement or platform 0.5x0.5x0.6 concrete measuring 0.5x0.5x0.6 metre (0.30 metre above ground level and 0.30 metre below ground) built around the well casing and the well assembly capped using welded steel plates or a similar cover fixed with bolts. It had said in case of a pump repair, the tube well should not be left uncovered and mud pits and channels should be filled after completion of the work. "Fill up

clay/sand/boulders/pebbles /drill cuttings, etc., from bottom to ground level," said the top court, adding on completion of the drilling operations at a particular location, the ground conditions would be restored to its original form. 'The guidelines above mentioned shall be given wide publicity through national television channels. A copy of this order be sent to the chief secretaries of all the states/union territories who shall forward the same to the district collectors of all districts of their respective state," the bench said. On August 6, 2010, a threejudge bench led by former CJI S H Kapadia slightly modified the February 11, 2010 order and disposed of

#### President Murmu to confer Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children on December 26



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI** 

President Droupadi Murmu will on Thursday confer the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children from 14 states and Union ter-

ritories. The Union Ministry of Ćhild Women and Development said in a statement that it would celebrate Veer Bal Diwas and Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar with nationwide activities, highlighting achievements and potential

of India's youngsters.
This year, 17 children from 14 states and Union territories will be conferred with the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Puraskar by Presi by President

award recognises exceptional achievements in seven categories - art and culture; bravery; innovation; science and technology; social service; sports; and environment.

The honourees - seven boys and 10 girls - will receive a medal, certificate and a citation booklet as part of the recognition. The centerpiece of the celebration, the national programme for Veer Bal Diwas, will take place at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be present on the occasion, inaugurating the Suposhit Panchayat scheme that aims to bolster nutritional security at the grassroots. The event will also feature a march-past led by children, representing diverse cultures. Union Droupadi Murmu, it added. Minister of Women and

Development Annapurna Devi will deliver the opening address, setting the tone for a day dedicated to nurturing young minds and fostering creativity, the ministry said in its statement. Approximately 3,500 children, including the will partic oate in the event, which will feature cultural performances showcasing India's rich heritage. Educational and creative activities will engage children around the country. childcare Schools, institutions and Anganwadi centres will host storytelling sessions, creative writing competitions, poster-making events, essay writing, poetry recitals and quizzes. Online platforms such as MyGov and MYBharat will also facilitate participation. Veer Bal Diwas is dedicated to inspiring young Indians to contribute to the nation's progress by upholding the values of courage, innovation and service. Through programmes such as the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar and Suposhit Panchayat, the government reaffirms its commitment to empowering the next generation and fostering a culture of excellence, the ministry said.

#### Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar calls removal notice a 'rusted tool'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday said one should not use a vegetable-cutting knife for bypass surgery and asserted that the notice for his removal from the post was actually a "rusted" tool.

In his first reaction on the notice submitted by the opposition INDIA bloc, Dhankhar said, "Just look at the notice against the vice president. Just look at the six links they have given. "You'll be shocked. Chandra Shekhar ji once said, 'Never use a vegetable-cutting knife for bypass surgery. The notice wasn't even a vegetable-cutting knife; it was rusted. There was haste." The notice was rejected by Rajya Sabha "When I read it, I was astonished. But what surprised me more was that

Deputy Chair Harivansh. none of you read it. If you had, you wouldn't have been able to sleep for days," he told a group of women journalists. Dhankhar said constitutional position has to vindicated

commitment to sublimity, sterling qualities constitutionalism.

"We are not in a position to settle scores. Because for the success of democracy, two are inalienable: things expression and dialogue," he said, according to an official statement. Cautioning against orchestrated efforts to harm

national interests, the vice president said these are fuelled in an orchestrated manner by forces that are determined to be inimical to the interest of the country. Their objective is to destroy, brick by brick, our constitutional institutions, slur the presidency, and mind

you, who is the president? The first tribal woman to become president of this country," he remarked. Referring to parliamentary debates, Dhankhar said the two Houses are in the news for the wrong reasons. "Accountability must be enforced by media, the only conveyance to the people at large. Media can strike a chord with the people and generate pressure on public representatives," he said.

#### Hospitals must treat victims of sexual violence and acid attacks: Delhi HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

In a significant ruling, the Delhi High Court recently said state-run and private hospitals cannot turn away survivors of sexual crimes, among others, and should treat them for free or face criminal action A bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Amit Sharma said a medical establishment should not insist on identity proofs when such survivors are brought in an emergency and any medical professional refusing to provide necessary treatment would attract a complaint to be immediately registered by the police being a pun-

ishable offence. The court passed the directions in relation to survivors of rape, gang rape, acid attack and minor survivors of sexual offences, among others, and said despite the legal mandate, they faced difficulties in availing free medical treatment. "Whenever any victim/survivor of any of the said offences approaches a medical facility, diagnostic facility, diagnostic lab, nursing home, hospital, health clinic, etc., whether private and public/government, such victim/survivor shall not be



providing free medical treatment," said the bench in its judgment made available on December 21.

The High Court said denying requisite treatment to survivors was a criminal offence and all doctors, administration, officers, paramedical nurses, personnel, etc., should be informed about the same. ruling allowed The immediate examination of a survivor, who would be treated for sexually transmitted conditions such as HIV, if situation demands. The treatment would not only include first aid but also diagnosis, in-patient admission, continued outin-patient patient assistance, diagnostic tests, lab tests, surgery,

and counselling, psychological help, family counselling among other things.

The court clarified availing of free medical treatment by such victims/survivors from either government or private hospitals was not dependent upon a referral by the state or district legal services authority as it was a statutory right under Section 357C of CrPC, Section 397 of BNSS and Rule 6 (4) of POCSO Rules, 2020. Notably, every medical facility was directed to put up a board at the entrance, reception, counters and all prominent places, in both English and vernacular, declaring the availability of free out-patient and inpatient medical treatment for such survivors.

### Atal Bihari Vajpayee's vision blooms: BJP's rise to power marks fruition of 1980 prediction

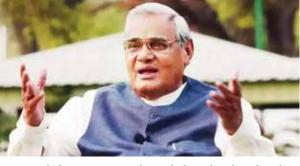
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delivering one of his more famous speeches at the BJP's inaugural convention at Shivaji Park in Mumbai, Atal Bihari Vajpayee predicted on December 30, 1980 with his signature flourish: 'Andhera chhatega, suraj niklega, kamal khilega (darkness will end, the sun will rise, lotus will bloom).

As his birth centenary arrives, his words have aged well, with the BJP returning to power for a third straight term at the centre and lotus in full bloom.

If Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the BJP's cultural agenda the centre of national politics, Vajpayee helped the party occupy this centre when its cultural agenda was

considered an anathema.



political aisle and stood tall with his innate democratic spirit, honed through decades in opposition, in a politics crowded with powerful satraps.

The three-time prime minister was the original builder of coalition politics at national level. A statesman politician and a successfully running an peerless orator, India's first alliance government for a full non-Congress prime minister term while navigating some standing ensured that he to have served a full term of the biggest national crises, faced no political threat or

commanded respect and including the plane hijack in affection from across the 1999 and the terror attack on Parliament in 2001, both with direct links to Pakistan. His government's measured

handling of the two incidents drew criticism from some quarters, including right organisations wing considered ideologically affiliated to the BJP but less than friendly to him for not pushing their cultural and economic agenda, but his

popular backlash. And even as he was still smarting from the fall of his government by one vote in the Lok Sabha in April 1999, his firm military and deft diplomatic response to Pakistan's intrusion into Kargil as the head of a caretaker government earned him plaudits and powered the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance to a more stable majority, ensuring him a full term at the helm.

Ashok Tandon, media adviser to Vajpayee during his six-year stint as PM, said besides being an outstanding parliamentarian who did his bit in "strengthening the roots of parliamentary democracy" after entering the Lok Sabha for the first time in 1957, he brought "good governance" at the centre of agenda as the head

of government. "Good governance was his landmark contribution. He

parties and kept them together, while pursuing policies which helped the country in every field," he told PTI, citing the launch of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, PM Gramin Sadak Yojna and the Quadrilateral Golden highway project under his stewardship. It was his boost to reforms, disinvestment and infra projects that made the idea of seven to eight per cent growth rate possible and his government legislated fiscal prudence through the FRBM Act in 2003.

However, the fruits of reforms came a little too late and this coupled with the BJP's political missteps, especially in the crucial state of Uttar Pradesh, and the Congress-led UPA's harnessing of rural distress delivered a shock defeat to Vajpayee in 2004 amid a decline in his health. His public appearances were his public airing of views,

headed a diverse coalition of limited, he campaigned last including his ill-fated praise parties and kept them for his party in the 2007 of M A Jinnah, that were assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh before slowly fading away from the public eye as dementia hit him. He died in 2018. The Modi government began observing his birth anniversary as "Good Governance Day" and bestowed Bharat Ratna on him in 2015. An impressive mix

tradition and modernity in his world view, Vajpayee, a full-time RSS worker before being sent by the Hindutva organisation to the Jana Sangh in 1951 when the party was founded, maintained a lifelong adherence to the Sangh's values even though he at times resented its methods. Unlike his lifelong companion L K Advani, who despite being an ideological hardliner and more invested organisational leader fell

from the RSS's grace due to

bound to antagonise the organisation, Hindutva Vajpayee used his cultivated ambivalence and gifted articulation to shape his image of a moderate while never crossing swords with it. The only time he openly denounced a polarising Hindutva cause was when the mosque Babri demolished in 1992, but his stand was considered an act

of political pragmatism necessary for the BJP to realise its political ambitions after fetching merely two seats in the 1984 polls. With the moderate, poet-at-

heart and statesman-like Vajpayee as the BJP's prime ministerial face and the party agreeing to put a moratorium on its contentious ideological planks of the Rem temple construction, Article 370 repeal and the Uniform Civil Code, regional parties from

across the country were drawn as he led them to poll wins. His passionate moves to improve ties with Pakistan resulted in his spectacular journey to Lahore in a bus in February 1999 and then hosting the Agra Summit with Pakistan's president Pervez Musharraf in 2001 but they met with little success. As the army chief before he deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Musharraf was behind his country's misadventure in Kargil, which followed months after Vajpayee's bus journey.

However, Vajpayee's famous invocation of 'Insanivat, Jamhuriyat, Kashmiriyat' to resolve the issues afflicting Jammu and Kashmir won him lifelong admirers in the Muslim-majority Prime Minister Narendra Modi too recalled the phrase in his Independence Day speech in 2018 to reach out to people there.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

### **Adieu Shyam Benegal**

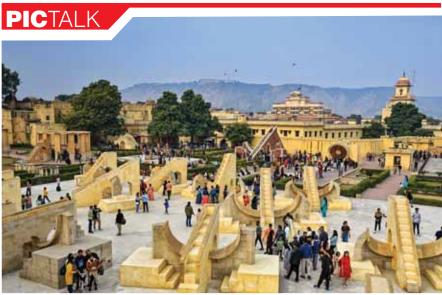
With passing of Shyam Benegal, Indian cinema has lost a luminary, but his films will continue to illuminate and educate

The curtains have fallen on one of the most illustrious chapters in Indian cinema. Shyam Benegal, the pioneering filmmaker who redefined storytelling in Indian cinema, passed away at the age of 90 on December 23, 2024. He succumbed to chronic kidney disease at Wockhardt Hospital in Bombay Central. Known as the father of Indian parallel cinema, Benegal's legacy remains etched in the heart of Indian filmmaking, his films celebrated for their realism, depth, and transformative impact on society. Born on December 14, 1934, Benegal celebrated his milestone 90th birthday just days ago, surrounded by close family and friends. Yet, even in his twilight years, the veteran filmmaker remained deeply connected to his art. Benegal's career was marked by his groundbreaking contribution to the Indian New Wave movement in the 1970s and 1980s. With films like 'Ankur' (1974), 'Nishant' (1975), 'Manthan' (1976), and 'Bhumika' (1977), he charted a new cinematic course that delved into realism and social

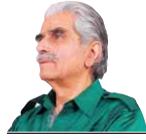
commentary, a stark contrast to the formulaic escapism of mainstream Bollywood.

His films gave voice to the marginalised and explored themes of gender, class struggles, and rural India, bringing to light the unseen facets of Indian society. 'Nishant', a harrowing tale of oppression and resistance, and 'Manthan', inspired by Dr. Verghese Kurien's milk cooperative movement, became cult classics. The latter, crowdfunded by 500,000 farmers, stands as a testament to Benegal's ability to connect with grassroots realities. The film, India's official entry for the 1976 Academy Awards, exemplified his commitment to blending art with advocacy. Benegal's films also

became a platform for some of India's finest acting talents. Actors like Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, Smita Patil, and Om Puri found their early footing in his films. Azmi, who debuted in Benegal's 'Ankur', recently shared a poignant moment from his 90th birthday celebrations, underscoring the indelible bond they shared. His collaboration with screenwriter Vijay Tendulkar produced narratives that were both poignant and thoughtprovoking, winning multiple National Awards. From 'Junoon' to 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero', Benegal's oeuvre showcased an unmatched versatility, spanning historical dramas, rural sagas, and contemporary commentaries. Earlier this year, 'Manthan' was restored and screened at the Cannes Film Festival under the Cannes Classics segment, reiterating the timeless relevance of Benegal's vision. Despite his declining health, the event underscored his enduring influence on global cinema. Benegal's storytelling was never confined to entertainment. His films were instruments of change, questioning societal norms and sparking dialogues. His pioneering approach laid the foundation for generations of filmmakers who sought to marry art with social responsibility. Rest in peace, Shyam Benegal, the maestro who showed us the soul of India through his lens.



# India recalibrates Myanmar strategy



The stakes are high for India, balancing its Act East policy, border security and competition with China, all against the backdrop of a fractured Myanmar

fter four years of civil war in Myanmar, India has quietly changed its policy towards the Junta from one of total and unfailing support following its coup against democracy to one of nuanced support. Junta leader General Min Aung Hlaing has been advo-cating holding elections for the last four years but only now with China's assistance, they are slated for 2025. China is playing with both sides: supporting the Junta as well as some EAOs (Ethnic Armed Organisations) especially in the north contiguous with its Yunan province. India too has shifted the goalposts but less perceptibly and engaging some EAOs and the National Unity Government (NUG) after the Junta lost its control in the Rakhine and Chin territories along India and Bangladesh bor-

Last week the Junta's control of the ground began crumbling further with the loss of Ann, Headquarters Western Military Command, the second military command to fall to resistance groups. Junta has lost two airports Thandwe (Rakhine) and

Lashio and 75 towns and cities out of some 340 of them. It has also lost control of six border trading posts. 40 of 70 towns in Rakhine have been captured by the Arakan Army which is part of the Three Brotherhood Alliance, the other two being MNDAA and TNLA.

Two critical seaports on the west coast - India-operated Sittwe and Chinese-owned Kyaukphyu - are on AA's target list next year unless Beijing can dissuade it from attacking Kyaukphu though the loss of Ann has opened the gates to it. Magaung is the other target in Rakhine.

On the Thailand border, the Karen National Union took Manerplaw, the Junta losing possession after 30 years. A humanitarian corridor with Thailand has existed with the help of the Junta In the North, TBA has been persuaded by China to go slow against the Junta, and not support NUG and the People's Defence Force. The Kachin Independence Army has seized Bemo and Mansi, popular tourist areas in the



He was invited to meet PM Li Qiang after attending the Greater Mekong Subregional Summit at Kunming last month. China is replenishing the Junta's military arsenal – so is Russia - including three fighter jets with assured ammunition supply. It wants to locate a private security company (like in Pakistan) for the protection of its strategic assets like China Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) containing oil and gas pipelines along with a railway nk from Kunming to Kyaukphyu.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is a frequent visitor to Myanmar though most people resent Chinese support for the Junta and its presence. The Chinese consulate in



JUNTA'S CONTROL OF THE GROUND BEGAN CRUMBLING FURTHER WITH THE LOSS OF ANN, **HEADQUARTERS** WESTERN MILITARY COMMAND, THE SECOND **MILITARY** COMMAND TO FALL TO RESISTANCE

Mandalay came under attack Theoretically, an election could be held contingent upon the ground situation in November next year. Even with low turnout and rigging an election will be manipulated. ASEAN's problem is Myanmar after the failure of its five-point consensus peace formula. Many meetings have been held with and without Myanmar representation without any light at the end of the tunnel. During the 18 December talks in Bangkok, with Myanmar's neighbouring countries, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, a former Ambassador in Myanmar, discussed prospects for elections with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Than

People's

**Protest Against** 

**Military Coup!** 

There was a separate set of talks with stakeholders from non-neighbouring countries. India's stakes are high given competition with China, a disturbed situation in its northeast and a troubling relationship developing with Bangladesh. Myanmar is a pivotal land bridge for its Act East policy, the Asean Trilateral Highway and the security of its Eastern frontier.

created an adverse situation stituent of any outcome. along the border with *(The writer, a retired M* Mizoram and a broken Manipur. While India is not proactive like China, its new policy pronouncement – old wine in a new bottle - is "immediate cessation of violence, peaceful resolution of

the ethnic issue through a genuine federal democracy where the process should be Myanmar-owned Myanmar-driven.

While Delhi has taken its time to engage resistance groups, it did organise one-and-a-half track meetings with select EAOs and Junta separately. In November, it first engaged Junta officials followed by EAOs who met the Joint Secretary (Bangladesh- Sri Lanka- Myanmar) at the Indian Council for World Affairs. In September, it had met representatives from Chin, Rakhine, Sagaing and Magwe who are already in refugee camps in Mizoram.

While India has not opened humanitarian corridors to these areas it is providing food, fuel medicines across the border. But that is not enough as they also want weapons and cash. Delhi does not want to annoy the Junta with which it has little leverage, unlike China. NUG was not invited to Delhi though it is being engaged back channel. India has to get real; be proactive, take risks and support AA and Chin rebels as its Act East policy is pivoted in areas under The junta's loss of control in their control. It can't dump the Rakhine and Chin states has Junta as it will be a key con-

> 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)

### Across cultures and ages: The beauty of unexpected friendships



The unexpected joy of forging meaningful friendships in middle age defies the common belief that the best opportunities for connection are behind us

our hat is fantastic. It makes you look more Bavarian than any of us, the concierge quipped as I entered the venue for the coffee-and-cake event at a resort in southern Germany. Although he was stretching the truth — I have neither blonde hair nor blue eyes — I accepted the compliment with a coy smile. "Danke schön," I said, tipping my woolen hat. Just then, another guest remarked, "That's a pretty pin on your hat," pointing to the delicate hand-crafted Edelweiss flower. A cherished gift from my friends, Wolfgang and Amelie, the pin symbolised a friendship that began just a year ago, in this very Bavarian town of

Schliersee. The Wolfgangs - a handsome, warm-hearted couple – are a testament to the unexpected joy of friendships made in middle age. Our bond didn't begin with shared childhoods or decades of history but with a simple "hello" and an open heart. The modest origins of our connection and the way it blossomed over the past year defy the notion that meaningful friendships are reserved

for youth. Our paths crossed serendipitously during an evening walk.

antries evolved into deeper conversations about life, culture, and shared interests. What began as polite conversation in an Alpine countryside ended with an exchange of coordinates and it continued with texting in the months after. It is widely held that the friends we make in our formative years are the ones who stay, while those forged later in life are fleeting, superficial, or driven by necessity. This belief may hold some truth; adulthood scepticism, and wariness.

A casual exchange of pleas-

brings with it obligations, We become cautious in extending ourselves. The raderie gives way to guarded interactions, and we convince ourselves that the window for profound friendship has closed. Yet, the Wolfgangs remind me that this window is not sealed shut — it merely takes a little more effort to

Friendships formed in middle age are special not despite our life experiences, but because of them. We bring to these connections a deeper sense of self-awareness, empathy, and appreciation.

There's no rush to impress or to conform. The pressures of youthful identity-building are gone. In their place, we find sincerity, authenticity, and the willingness to value people for who they truly are. They remind us of the universality of human warmth and curiosity. Meeting someone from another country someone whose life, traditions, and language are different — can feel like discovering an entirely new world. And when such encounters lead to genuine friendship, they break down the invisible

walls that geography and cul-

ture often build around us.

There is also a profound joy

innocence of youthful cama- in the intentionality of these connections. In our younger years, friendships are often born of proximity — classmates, neighbours, or college roommates. As adults, friendships require deliberate effort. This intentionality infuses middle-aged friendships with a depth and resilience that can be even more rewarding than the bonds of our youth. I think back to the pin on my hat — that delicate Edelweiss - and I see it as a metaphor for these kinds of friendships. The Edelweiss, a rare Alpine flower, thrives in challenging conditions. It symbolises courage, devo-

tion, and the willingness to climb new heights. Like the flower, friendships made in middle age might take more effort to cultivate, but they are hardy, resilient, and precious. A year after that first meeting, found myself once again in Schliersee last month, sharing coffee and cake with the Wolfgangs, laughing over our language blunders and cultural quirks. It is never too late to make friends.

(The author is a columnist and writing coach based in Dubai. Views are personal)

#### **STRENGTHENING INDIA- KUWAIT TIES** Madam -The two-day visit of PM

Narendra Modi to Kuwait will further boost the bilateral ties between two historically friendly nations. This is the first visit by any Indian prime minister to the Gulf nation in 43 years. Though India and Kuwait have enjoyed traditionally friendly relations, which date back to the pre-oil era of Kuwait when maritime trade with India was the backbone of its economy, India and most Arab countries, especially Kuwait, have enjoyed very cordial relations based on mutual trust and peopleto-people contact, nurtured over several millennia. Till 1961, the Indian rupee was the legal currency tender of Kuwait till it introduced its currency, the Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD). This was a symbol of enduring economic and cultural centuries between two brother nations.

PM Modi was conferred with Kuwait's highest civilian honour, the prestigious "Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer. The Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer' is a knighthood order of Kuwait. It is awarded to heads of state and foreign sovereigns and members of foreign royal families in a sign of friendship and has been previously awarded to foreign leaders like Bill Clinton, Prince Charles, George Bush, King Salman Bin Saud, and King Hussein of Jordan. This visit of PM Modi holds great significance as current global volatility requires better cooperation and stability among nations, especially among regional players, for energy security, and India's desire for stability in the Gulf region, beside Kuwait, holds significant strategic importance. The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) has the world's oldest and fifth largest sovereign wealth fund, valued around US \$1 trillion, which has US \$969 billion in assets under its management. This visit of PM Modi has heralded a new era of friendship, which will further boost trade, cooperation, and peace at a time when economic concerns and regional stability dictate are of the foremost importance in the formation

of political alliances. Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru add to the burden on citizens already grap-

#### **PV Sindhu marries Venkata Datta Sai**



ndian badminton star Pusarla Venkata Sindhu, a two-time Olympic (silver and bronze) medallist, is married to Venkata Datta Sai in Udaipur. Sindhu, a five-time World Championship medallist, a few days ago, clinched the Syed Modi India International title and announced her engagement via an Instagram post on December 14, 2024, that captured a memorable moment with the couple holding their rings and smiling from ear to ear. The wedding festivities began on December 20th

**POPCORN PRICING DEBATE** 

Madam— The recent decision by the GST Council has turned popcorn from a simple snack into a focal point of economic debate. Under the new rules, salted popcorn is taxed at 5 per cent, packaged popcorn at 12 per cent, and sugar-flavoured popcorn at 18 per cent. This decision raises questions about the priorities of the tax structure while adding complexity to people's daily lives. Will samosas, tea, and water also be classified into tax categories based

on taste and packaging? The tax determination for popcorn signals that the government is exploring every possible avenue to increase revenue. The aroma of popcorn in cinemas might now bring concerns about tax slabs before the joy of taste. Popcorn, once a symbol of social equality, has now become a marker of class division due to the 5 per cent and 18 per cent tax differential. This decision could negatively impact the Rs 1,200 crore popcorn industry, pushing people toward cheaper alternatives. The government must recognise that such decisions

in the lake city of Rajasthan at the reclusive and majestic Raffles Udaipur Resort. Pre-wedding festivities included sangeet, haldi, and mehendi ceremonies. The families, long-time acquaintances, planned the wedding swiftly to accommodate Sindhu's training schedule.

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat (shockingly, he was wearing a black kurta in an auspicious ceremony, even as a Hindu party leader) shared a captivating photo of the couple, offering his blessings. Now the reception is scheduled in Sindhu's native city, Hyderabad, on December 24. Congratulations to the darling daughter of Mother India, P. V. Sindhu, and her husband, Venkata Datta Sai. Best wishes to the newlyweds for a wonderful & eternal married life. Whatsoever, the first image of the wedding has already captivated hearts, setting the tone for the couple's happily ever after.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

pling with inflation. Popcorn is no longer just a snack but a representation of the complexities of policymaking.

RK Jain | Barwani

#### TRIBES PROTECT NATURE

Madam —It is a great irony that all the welleducated and better-placed-in-life populations are destroying nature and damaging the environment; it is the indigenous tribes across the world who are supposedbackward and primitive who are doing heir best to protect it. The bond between nature and her people has all but broken down in all urban centres, and the city dwellers do not think twice about their lifestyles, which is slowly destroying the environment. After all, we, the human race, are not the sole inhabitants of the planet, and other living creatures are co-inheritors too. It is time for all the nations with tribal populations to learn from them on how to care for and protect the planet.

Anthony Henriques | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

#### **FIRST COLUMN**

#### THE ETERNAL WISDOM **OF SUNDAR KAND**

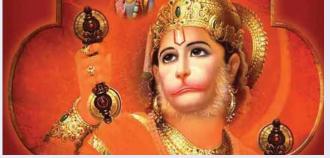
Sacred texts and mantras hold a timeless power to uplift the soul



RAVI VALLURI

he faithful recognise the profound benefits of chanting or reading sacred texts, mantras, and scriptures like the Hanuman Chalisa and Sundar Kand. These practices are especially embraced by large numbers on auspicious days such as Tuesdays and Saturdays. The vibrations generated by reading these sacred books and meditating on the mantras foster positive thoughts, beautify the mind, and empower us to overcome internal obstacles and dispel negativity clouding our perspective. Yet, many of us struggle to engage in these practices regularly, often citing demanding schedules and lack of time.

As spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar observes, "The time given to the Divine is the least." Consequently, we neglect to devote quality time to the Lord, remembering Him only in moments of distress. Even when time is found, many face difficulties focusing, maintaining clarity, or chanting with proper intonation. The mind frequently drifts into worldly con-



To aid this practice, here is a simple version of Sundar Kand: Ram Ram Jai Ram

Ram Jai Ram Ram

Peaceful, Compassionate, Sinless,

One served by Brahma and Shambhu,

One who appears in human form by Maya,

O Raghuvar, I bow to you. You are my innermost Self.

Liberate me, O Lord, Instill devotion within me.

O Lord Hanuman, epitome of strength, knowledge, and wisdom, emboldened by Jambavanth's counsel, set out to cross the mighty ocean in search of Sita. He triumphed over the demoness Surasa and reached Lanka under the cover of night. Guided by divine intuition, he discovered Sita and presented her with Lord Ram's ring, bowing at her feet and seeking her blessings. Hanuman then wreaked havoc in Ashok

Vatika—eating fruits, breaking branches, and shaking trees.

Allowing himself to be captured by the asuras, he was taken to Ravana's court. There, he urged Ravana to repent and return Sita to Lord Ram. Ravana, consumed by ego, refused and instead set Hanuman's tail ablaze. In response, Hanuman used the fire to destroy Lanka's golden city. Before departing, Hanuman comforted Sita and took her Chudamani (jewel) as a token for Lord Ram. On returning, he presented it to Ram, who embraced him, deeply moved by his devotion and bravery. When asked how he accomplished the task, Hanuman humbly replied that nothing is impossible with the grace of Lord Ram. Lord Ram then instructed Sugreev to assemble the army and seek the ocean's permission to cross into Lanka. Meanwhile, Mandodari, Ravana's queen, warned him of the dire consequences of his actions and implored him to release Sita, but he refused. Ravana's virtuous brother Vibheeshan also advised him to repent, cautioning that even Lord Shiva would disapprove of his deeds.

Ignoring all advice, Ravana's stubbornness led Vibheeshan to abandon Lanka and seek refuge at Lord Ram's feet. Recognising his righteousness, Lord Ram crowned Vibheeshan as the future king of Lanka. Ravana sent spies disguised as messengers to gather information on Lord Ram's plans. They returned with alarming news and urged Ravana to free Sita, but he remained defiant. With the help of Nal and Neel, Lord Ram constructed the Setu bridge to cross the ocean. Along the way, he released the river Sarayu from its curse and advanced toward Lanka. This timeless Sundar Kand, penned by Tulsidas, continues to inspire and guide devotees on their spiritual journey.

(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)

# Atal ji: The statesman with vision and resolve



Today, as we mark the 100th Jayanti of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, we celebrate the life and legacy of a statesman whose vision and leadership continue to inspire generations



oday, 25th December is a very special day for all of us. Our nation marks the 100th Jayanti of our beloved former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji. He stands tall as a statesman who continues to inspire countless peo-

Our nation will always be grateful to Atal Ji for being the architect of India's transition into the 21st century. When he took oath as PM in 1998 our nation had passed through a period of political instability. In about 9 years we had seen 4 Lok Sabha elections. The people of India were getting impatient and also sceptical about governments being able to deliver. It was Atal Ji who turned this tide by providing stable and effective governance. Coming from humble roots, he realised the struggles of the common citizen and the transformative power of effective gover-

One can see the long-term impact of Atal Ji's leadership in so many sectors around us. His era marked a gigantic leap in the world of Information Technology, telecom and communications. This was particularly important for a nation like ours, which is also blessed with a very dynamic Yuva Shakti. The NDA Government under Atal Ji made the first serious attempt to make technology accessible to the common citizens. At the same time, there was foresight in connecting India. Even today, most people recall the Golden Quadrilateral Project, which connected the length and breadth of India. Equally notable were the Vajpayee Government's efforts to enhance local connectivity as well through initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Similarly, his Government gave a push to metro connectivity by doing extensive work for the Delhi Metro, which stands out as a world-class infrastructure project.

Thus, the Vajpayee Government not only boosted economic growth but also brought distant regions closer, fostering unity and integration. When it comes to

ATAL JI PRESIDED OVER THE CREATION OF THE NDA, WHICH REDEFINED COALITIONS IN INDIAN POLITICS. HE BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER AND MADE NDA A

FORCE FOR DEVELOPMENT, NATIONAL PROGRESS AND REGIONAL **AMBITIONS** 

> world peace. Atal Ji understood Indian democracy and also the need to make it stronger. Atal Ji presided over the creation of the NDA, which redefined coalitions in Indian politics.

the social sector, an initiative like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan highthe Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan high-lights how Atal Ji dreamt of build-ing an India where modern educa-tion is accessible to people across the nation, particularly for the poor and marginalised sections. At the same time, his government presided over many economic reforms which set the stage for reforms which set the stage for India's economic surge after several decades of following an economic philosophy which encouraged cronyism and stagnation.

A wonderful example of Vajpayee

Ji's leadership can be seen in the summer of 1998. His Government had just assumed office and on 11th May, India conducted the Pokhran tests, known as Operation Shakti. These tests exemplified the prowess of India's scientific

The world was stunned that India had done the tests and expressed their anger in no uncertain terms. Any ordinary leader would have buckled, but Atal Ji was made differently. And what happened? India stood firm and resolute with the government calling for another set of tests two days later, on 13th May! If the tests of the 11th showed scientific skill, the ones on 13th showed true leadership. It was a message to the world that gone were the days when India would buckle under threats or pressure. Despite facing international sanctions, the then NDA government of Vajpayee Ji stood firm, articulating India's right to safeguard its sovereignty while simultaneously being the strongest proponent of

He brought people together and

made NDA a force for development, national progress and regional ambitions. His Parliamentary brilliance was seen throughout his political journey. He belonged to a party with a handful of MPs but his words were enough to rattle the might of the all-powerful Congress Party that time. As Prime Minister, he blunt-

ed the criticisms of the Opposition with style and substance. His was a career spent largely in the Opposition benches but never carried any trace of bitterness against anyone, even though the Congress stooped to new lows by going to the extent of calling him a traitor! He was also not one to cling on to power through opportunistic means. He preferred to resign in

of horse-trading and dirty politics In 1999, his Government was defeated by 1 vote. A lot of people told him to challenge the immoral politics happen-

ing then but he preferred to go by the rules. Eventually, he came back with another resounding mandate from the people. When it comes to commitment to protecting our Constitution too, Atal Ii stands tall. He was deeply impacted by the martyrdom of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Years later, he was a pillar of the anti-Emergency movement. In the run-up to the 1977 elections after the Emergency, he agreed to merger of his own Party (Jan Sangh) into the Janata Party. I am sure it would have been a painful decision for him and the others, but safeguarding the Constitution was all that mattered

It is also noteworthy how deeply rooted Atal Ji was in Indian culture. Upon becoming India's External Affairs Minister, he became the first Indian leader to speak in Hindi at

the United Nations. This one ges ture showcased his immense pride in India's heritage and identity, leaving an indelible mark on the glob-

Atal Ji's persona was magnetic and his life was enriched by his love for literature and expression. A prolific writer and poet, he used words to inspire, provoke thought, and even offer solace. His poetry, often reflective of his inner struggles and hopes for the nation, continues to resonate with people across age groups. For so many Bharatiya Janata

Party Karyakartas like me, it is our privilege that we were able to learn and interact with a person like Atal Ji. His contribution to the BJP was foundational.

1996 instead of following the path In those days to spear-head an alternative narrative to the dominant Congress showed his greatness. Alongside stalwarts like Shri L.K. Advani Ji and Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi Ji he nurtured the party from its formative years, guiding it through challenges, setbacks and triumphs. Whenever the choice came between ideology and power, he always chose the former. He was able to convince the nation that an alternative world view from the Congress was possible and such a world view could deliver.

On his 100th Jayanti, let us rededicate ourselves to realising his ideals and fulfilling his vision for India. Let us strive to build an India that embodies his principles of good governance, unity, and progress. Atal Ji's unwavering belief in the potential of our nation continues to inspire us to aim higher and work harder.

(This tribute to the visionary statesman late former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee has been penned by PM Narendra Modi)

### Dreaming of a White Christmas in New York City

The first snowfall and the twinkle of lights on the Rockefeller tree—there's a certain magic that makes Christmas in New York unforgettable

he first time I saw New York City during the holidays, I was 19, a college freshman on a whirlwind trip with my friends. It was my first real taste of winter-snow, bitter cold, and the kind of brisk air that turns your cheeks red. Coming from a place where Christmas meant palm trees with twinkle lights, the sight of NYC blanketed in snow felt like stepping into a new world. I didn't know it then, but that trip would spark a love affair with the city that would eventually bring me

back here five years later. My First Snow, My First NYC Christmas

I still remember how the snow caught me off guard. It wasn't the gentle, picture-perfect kind I'd imagined from movies. It was harsh, relentless, and



SHREYA DAYAL

absolutely freezing. Walking through Times Square that Black Friday, bundled up in layers that still didn't feel like enough, I saw the city come alive in a way that felt electric. It wasn't just the towering billboards or the endless sales signs luring shoppers into stores at all hours of the night.

It was the energy-the palpable hum of people chasing holiday deals while dodging each other in the snow. It was chaotic, overwhelming, and unforgettable. Somewhere in the madness of flashing lights and icy sidewalks, I knew I wanted to come back someday-not as a visitor, but as someone who belonged here.

The Magic of NYC's Holiday

During that trip, we did all the things you're supposed to do when you're experiencing Christmas in New York for the first time. We saw the Rockefeller Center tree, towering above the skating rink, every inch of it glowing like it had been plucked from a fairytale. The cold bit at my fingers as we stood there, taking it all in. For a moment, the crowds

and the cold faded away, leaving only the soft twinkle of the lights and the awe of standing in front of something so icon-

The Met was another world entirely. As someone who'd only read about it in books, stepping into its grandeur felt surreal. Wandering through the exhibits, I found myself captivated by the way history and art came alive here. Outside, the snow was falling again, but I was too caught up in the beauty around me to notice the cold.

The Broadway Moment That **Changed Everything** 

That trip wasn't just about the sights; it was about the moments that stayed with me long after I left. Óne of those moments was seeing Phantom of the Opera on Broadway.



Sitting in that theater, watching the chandelier crash and the Phantom's haunting story unfold, I felt a kind of magic I couldn't quite explain. It was more than just a show-it was a moment that made me feel alive in a way I hadn't before. Walking out of the theater into

the orchestra still echoing in my mind, I felt a connection to the city that I couldn't shake. It was as if New York had opened its arms to me and whispered, "Come back." Coming Full Circle

Five years later, I did come back. I'd dreamed of living in the snowy night, the sounds of New York ever since that first

trip, and now here I was, not as a wide-eyed tourist, but as someone calling the city home. It's funny how those early memories still feel so vivid, like they're a part of me.

Walking through Times Square today, I still think about that freezing Black Friday night when I braved the snow for the first time. Seeing the Rockefeller tree now brings back flashes of that first tripstanding in awe of its beauty and dreaming about a future that somehow feels like the present now. Even when I catch a Broadway show, I can't help but remember how Phantom of the Opera made me fall in love with this city in

the first place. The Spirit of a NYC

Christmas There's something timeless about Christmas in New York. No matter how many years pass or how many times you see it, the magic never fades. The snow still glistens, the lights still dazzle, and the city still hums with that unmistakable holiday energy.

For me, it's not just about the sights or the snow-it's about how this city makes you feel. It's about the way it wraps you up in its chaos, its beauty, and its magic, and leaves you with memories that last a lifetime. A White Christmas in New York City isn't just a holidayit's a story. And for me, it's the story of a 19-year-old who fell in love with the snow, the lights, and the city that would one day become home!

(The writer is a researcher at Johns Hopkins University; views are personal)

#### President to confer national bravery awards to 17 children

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

President Droupadi Murmu will on Thursday confer the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children from 14 states and Union territories. The Union Ministry of Women

and Child Development said in a statement that it would celebrate Veer Bal Diwas and the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar with nationwide activities, highlighting the achievements and potential of India's youngsters. This year, 17 children from 14 states and Union territories will be conferred with the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar by President Droupadi Murmu, it added. The award recognises exceptional achievements in seven categories -- art and culture; bravery; innovation; science and technology; social service; sports; and environ-

The honourees -- seven boys and 10 girls -- will receive a medal, certificate and a citation booklet as part of the recognition. The centerpiece of the celebration, the national programme for Veer Bal

Diwas, will take place at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi

will be present on the occasion, inaugurating the Suposhit Panchayat scheme that aims to bolster nutritional security at the grassroots. The event will also feature a march-past led by children, representing diverse cultures.

Union Minister of Women and Child Development Annapurna Devi will deliver the opening address, setting the tone for a day dedicated to nurturing young minds and fostering creativity, the ministry said in its statement. Approximately 3,500 children, including the awardees, will participate in the event, which will feature cultural performances showcasing India's rich heritage. Educational and creative activities will engage children around the country.
Schools, childcare institutions

and Anganwadi centres will host storytelling sessions, creative writing competitions, postermaking events, essay writing, poetry recitals and quizzes. Online platforms such as MyGov and MYBharat will also facilitate participation.

#### Dalit boy dies by suicide after being forced to drink urine

From page 1

They accused the police of failing to act promptly, which they believe could have prevented the tragedy. "He was humiliated and tormented to a point where he couldn't take it anymore," said a grieving family member.

This incident has sparked widespread condemnation, bringing to light the ongoing caste-based discrimination People's Vigilance Committee and violence faced by of Human Rights (PVHCR) marginalised communities.

Activists and community leaders have called for stringent action against the perpetrators accountability for the police

to ensure justice is delivered. "The boy's tragic death serves as a grim reminder of the urgent need to address systemic discrimination and ensure stronger protections for vulnerable communities in India," Lenin Raguvnshi of **AAP launches registration drive** for women, seniors schemes



STAFF REPORTER N NEW DELHI

Government's AMinisters, MLAs, and volunteers on Tuesday took to the streets to register citizens for the 'Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana' and 'Sanjeevani Yojana'

Similarly, on Wednesday too, many ministers, MLAs and volunteers including former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia will register people by setting up camps. On Monday, AAP Convenor Arvind

Keiriwal commenced the registration drive for the schemes by personally registering a few beneficiaries.

Continuing the initiative, the registration drive for both schemes was extended across Delhi on Tuesday. Several Delhi Cabinet Ministers joined the campaign including Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, who organized a camp in Shahpur Jat Village in Greater Kailash Assembly constituencv, while Minister Imran Hussain facilitated registra-

tions in Motia Khan, Gali Kasam, Ballimaran Assembly constituency.

Other leaders, including Minister Raghuvinder Shokeen, MLAs Sanjeev Jha, Vishesh Ravi, Ajesh Yadav, Kuldeep Kumar, and Rajesh Gupta, along with numerous volunteers, conducted camps to ensure maximum outreach. AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal has instructed volunteers to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out of the registration process. Following these

directives, volunteers are actively spreading awareness through public announcements using microphones in their respective areas. They are urging residents to visit the camps and register to avail themselves of the benefits of these schemes.

There is no deadline for regisunder tration Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana' and 'Sanjeevani Yojana'. The ruling party estimates that 35 to 40 lakh women may register for the 'Mahila Samman Yojana'.

### PM meets economists for inputs on Budget

PNS NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister on Tuesday met eminent economists and sectoral experts at NITI Aayog to hear their views and suggestions for the upcoming Budget. Job creation, improving farm productivity, and mobilising public funds for infrastructure development were some of the issues that during figured interaction.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Budget for 2025-26 in the Lok Sabha on February 1, 2025. According to an official statement, the Prime Minister emphasised that Viksit Bharat can be achieved through a fundamental change in mindset, which is focused towards making India developed by 2047.

The participants shared their views on several issues, including including navigating challenges posed by global economic uncertainties and geopolitical tensions, strategies to employment enhance particularly among the youth, and create sustainable job opportunities across sectors.

Suggestions were also made on aligning education and training programmes with the evolving needs of the job enhancing market. agricultural productivity and creating sustainable rural employment opportunities, attracting private investment and mobilising public funds for infrastructure projects to boost economic growth. Suggestions were also made

for promoting inclusion and financial boosting exports and attracting foreign investment, as per the statement. Renowned economists and analysts present at the interaction included Surjit S Bhalla, Ashok Gulati, Sudipto Mundle, Dharmakirti Joshi, Janmejaya Sinha, Madan Sabnavis, Amita Ridham Desai, Chetan Ghate, Bharat Ramaswami, Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Siddhartha Sanyal, Laveesh Bhandari, Rajani Sinha, Keshab Das, Pritam Banerjee, Rahul Bajoria, Nikhil Gupta, and Shashwat Alok, the statement added.

#### LG orders weekly police meets with senior citizens

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Tuesday directed Delhi Police for weekly interaction with senior citizens and requested divisional commissioner for setting up dedicated help desks for them at district magistrate offices.

The Delhi LG Saxena interacted with over 600 senior citizens at the Raj Niwas during 'Samvaad@Raj Niwas' series of dialogues.

In a post on X, the LG said he has directed the Delhi Police to

the senior citizens. Police have been instructed to increase patrolling in vulnerable areas, he said. Saxena also requested the divisional commissioner for dedicated help desks at DM offices for settlement of disputes concerning senior citizens. A majority of senior citizens from all across the city raised issues like waterlogging, dark spots, harassment & red tape at government offices, encroachment on footpaths, traffic congestion / road safety,

hold weekly interactions with

#### Delhi Police bust gang settling illegal migrants, 11 arrested

From page 1

"It was found that the centre was involved in preparing Aadhaar cards and other documents using fake IDs. Sehgal revealed that he was approached by illegal Bangladeshi immigrants through the deceased Sentu Sheikh alias Raja," the DCP added.

'Sahil used the fake website 'Jantaprints.Site' to generate Based fraudulent birth certificates surveillance, and sent them to his associate. Ranjit for Aadhaar card processing," the officer said. Ranjit, a resident of Sector 7 in Rohini, worked with 25 per cent commission and year old Afroz, an authorised transferring the remaining from Uttam Nagar, being Aadhaar operator at amount to Saddam Hussain. apprehended in Ambala and

Sector 5. Using fake birth certificates, Afroz facilitated the creation of Aadhaar cards. "Raniit and Afroz were arrested, and investigations revealed that the "Jantaprints.Site" offered fake added. documents," he for Payments these documents were made via Paytm QR codes linked to a number registered under Mohammad Chand.

on 28-year-old Mohammad Chand, from from Vikas Nagar, Delhi. He confessed to retaining a two

Hussain, from Uttam Nagar, was arrested, leading to the that discovery 'Jantaprints.Site' was operated by his associate, Deepak Mishra. Saddam transferred the payments to Deepak Mishra, retaining a 2 per cent share for himself.

Further questioning revealed that the accused initially created Aadhaar cards showing ages under 18, as technical such cards were easier to process at multiple centres in Delhi. Cards for individuals Uttam Nagar, was arrested over 18 were limited to just four centres in Delhi. Technical surveillance led to

34-year-old Deepak Mishra, apprehended in Ambala and Karnataka Bank in Rohini Thirty three-year-old Saddam arrested after sustained

interrogation. He disclosed that his brother-in-law, Sonu developed Kumar, "Iantaprints.Site." Thirty-one-year-old Sonu

Kumar, was arrested from Noida, where he admitted to learning how to create fake websites via YouTube. He also created "Portalwale.Com" and "Portalwale.Online" creating fake ID documents. Sonu Kumar runs a cyber café in Noida, the police said, adding that further

investig ions are or Cornering the ruling party on the issue, National Convenor of Bharatiya Janata Party's IT cell chief Amit Malviva accused Arvind Keiriwal's Aam Aadmi Party of actively facilitating

immigration of Rohingyas and Bangladeshi nationals in Delhi through a wellorganised network.

'To divert attention from this anti-national operation, he falsely accused the BJP of canceling voter cards of Poorvanchalis. Now, both his tactics and lies have been thoroughly exposed. Delhi Police has uncovered a racket involved in creating fake Aadhaar and voter ID cards, along with the technology experts behind a fraudulent website. They also debunk Kejriwal's baseless claim about the cancellation of voter cards for Purvanchali women. Arvind Kejriwal is in deep trouble," he shared on

some were under 400 as well.

At the same time, the air

pollution in Delhi was over 37.

3 times the limit prescribed by

Organisation (WHO) in the

morning. The overall level of

PM2.5 (a chief pollutant) in Delhi was 188 as compared to

372 micrograms per cubic meter on Monday afternoon.

The overall level of Particulate

Matter under 10 microns was

262 micrograms per cubic meter. The level of Nitrogen

dioxide (NO?) was recorded at

49.2 micrograms per cubic meter, as against the World

Health Organization's (WHO)

limit being far stricter at

Health

World

which are not, in any way, dependent on, or even connected with any aggregation or centralized disclosures through press notes or any other means. Such decentralized statutory disclosures make it impossible for anyone to change or manipulate any details or data in these

worldwide, is not episodic and is agnostic to electoral outcomes. It is layered 'bottoms - up' with each step transiting scrupulously into the next step, in a verifiable and sequential system", the

In its reply, the Commission has listed out nearly 60 instances of proactive involvement of political parties or candidates during the entire electoral process. The Commission reiterated that political parties, being key stakeholders, are involved scrupulously at each and every stage of the

election process from Roll to Meaningful Poll. involvement of political parties/candidates are key pillars of the Indian electoral process. The poll electors Constituency

EC collaboration and transparent processes. underscored the importance of collaboration with all political parties and welcomed constructive suggestions.

While detailing the well laid out mechanism with sufficient checks and balances and disclosures, the EC emphasised that the watertight statutory scheme ensures that deletion and addition of voters is done strictly according to rules with fullest involvement of political parties at every stage.It underlined that there were no bulk deletions or unusual deletion patterns of noticed across all assembly seats.

Deletions of an average of 2,779 electors per seat happened on account of death or shifting and following

cyber and street crime, et including participation of

#### **Jump in Maharashtra voter turnout...**

It said the fact is that only six assembly constituencies had total additions of over 50,000 electors during the period. Hence the question of winning in 47 seats on this basis does not arise. "Candidates, through their polling agents and counting agents, receive all statutorily disclosed data and Forms

documents at any stage. The credibility of the Indian electoral space, recognized and acknowledged

EC said.

body informed the Congress election laws nor does any that all data, as demanded statute explain by the party, pertaining to in Maharashtra and Form 20 is available on CEO simply Maharashtra's website and term, can be downloaded. In its on its meticulous, participative, Commission

party representatives.
The Commission further clarified that the concept of "Voter Turnout" is neither defined anywhere in the of publica procedure on of each data of voter turnout at constituency level, state level or at national level. It has simply evolved as a popular coined psephologists, assures academicians, media and general public, over the last several decades to broadly denote the level of participation electorate in the polling process. To avoid confusion and ambiguity about voter turnout and its reporting mechanism stakeholders and election authorities, it is imperative to explain the term 'Voter Turnout' (VTR) and provide a clear framework through instructions.

On the Congress concerns, the EC said the working of a meticulous, transparent and participative electoral roll updation process, involving all political parties and public at large. While detailing the well laid out mechanism with sufficient checks and balances and disclosures, the poll body emphasised that the watertight statutory scheme ensures that the deletion and duplicate entries after addition of voters is done due process, strictly according to rules.

#### under Centre's Sameer app, points below the limits as ensure that the AQI levels do air quality and weather From page 1 decided and directed by the forecast provided by the India which provides hourly data on not slip further, citizens are the National Air Quality The restrictions also include requested to strictly adhere to Meteorological Department Index, was under 450, while

AQI under 400, Grap-III invoked in Delhi NCR

banning of road construction activities and major repairs. The Government may take a decision to stagger timings for public offices and municipal bodies in other areas of NCR. According to the CAQM, the Sub-Committee, accordingly, hereby decided to revoke with immediate effect, its orders dated 16.12.2024, for invoking actions under Stage-IV ('Severe+' Air Quality) of revised schedule of GRAP (December, 2024). The CAQM said in a

statement that the air quality index of Delhi is continuously improving since morning and has been recorded as 369 ("Very Poor") on 24.12.2024 at 4 pm, which is about 31 AQI Supreme Court for invoking Stage-IV (Delhi AQl 400). The AQI further dropped to 364 at 5pm.
"Actions under Stage I, II, and

III of the revised GRAP shall remain invoked and be concerned in the entire NCR to ensure that the AQI levels do not slip further," the commission said in its order. All implementing agencies shall keep strict vigil and especially intensify measures under Stage-I, II & III of the revised GRAP). While GRAP Stage-IV is being revoked, keeping in view the winter season when weather conditions may not be always favorable and in order to

the citizen charter under GRAP-lll," it said. The restrictions under Stage-

IV include a ban on all construction activities, entry of non-essential polluting implemented, monitored, and trucks into Delhi, and reviewed by all the agencies mandatory shifting of school classes, except for classes 10 and 12, to hybrid mode. The measures were aimed at curbing severe pollution levels and included restrictions on industrial activities, construction, and entry of non-essential trucks into Delhi.

The AQI is likely to remain in the "very poor" category in the coming days due to favourable meteorological conditions and wind speed, according to the

(IMD) and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). Adding to the environmental concerns, Delhi experienced a chilly morning with a minimum temperature of 10.8 degrees Celsius recorded at 5.30 a.m. Light rain and a drop in temperature further accentuated the winter chill. Thick fog continued to blanket parts of the city, significantly reducing visibility. While the past week's nights have already cold, been temperature drops are often felt more intensely by people due as its impact is usually felt

daytime when people are outdoors and active. In the morning, the AQI in all 36 monitoring stations listed

**LoPs record dissent over NHRC postings** of Members, we recommended the names of Justice S. Muralidhar and Justice Akil Abdulhamid Qureshi, both of whom have exemplary track records in upholding human rights," they said. Justice Muralidhar is widely respected for his landmark judgments advancing social justice, including his work on custodial violence and the protection of civil liberties, and Justice Qureshi, belonging to the Muslim minority community, has consistently constitutional principles and demonstrated a commitment to accountability in governance,

effectiveness and commitment to diversity," it said. While merit is undeniably the primary criterion, maintaining a balance that reflects the regional, caste, community, and religious diversity of the nation is equally important, it said. 'This balance ensures that the NHRC operates with an inclusive perspective, sensitive to the lived experiences of all sections of society. By neglecting this critical principle, the committee risks eroding public trust in this esteemed institution," the dissent note added.

dismissive the

contribute to the NHRC's majority of the Selection Committee in today's meeting towards these considerations is regrettable. The deeply NHRC's credibility and effectiveness depend on its ability to embody the diversity and inclusiveness that define India's constitutional ethos," the dissent note given on December 18 said. "The names we proposed reflect this spirit and align with the foundational principles of the commission. Their exclusion raises significant concerns about the impartiality and fairness of the selection process," Kharge and Gandhi said.

A former Chief Justice of India

court is appointed as NHRC chairperson by the president on the recommendation of the selection committee. Former CJIs H L Dattu and K G Balakrishnan are among those who have headed the rights body in the past.

The NHRC, in a post on X, said, "Hon'ble President of India appoints Shri Justice V. Ramasubramanian (Retd.) as the Chairperson, and Shri Privank Kanoongo and Dr. Iustice Bidvut Ranian Sarangi (Retd.) as the Members of the National Human Rights Commission(NHRC), India." Kanoongo earlier served as a chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

#### From page 1

post of NHRC The chairperson had been lying vacant since Justice (retd) Kumar Mishra completed his tenure on June

In their dissent note, Kharge and Gandhi recorded their disagreement on the grounds ignored the established of tradition mutual consultation and consensus, undermines the principles of society.

which are critical to the mandate credibility of the Selection significan Committee," their dissent note said.

of fostering Instead deliberation and ensuring a collective decision, the committee relied on its numerical majority to finalise the names, disregarding the legitimate concerns and that the selection process perspectives raised during the adopted by the committee was meeting, Kharge and Gandhi fundamentally flawed. "It was a said. They said the NHRC is a predetermined exercise that vital statutory body tasked with safeguarding the fundamental human rights of all citizens, particularly those which is essential in such from the oppressed and matters. This departure marginalised sections of from the oppressed and

depends significantly on the inclusiveness and representativeness of its composition. A diverse leadership ensures that the NHRC remains sensitive to the unique challenges faced by various communities, especially those most vulnerable to human rights violations," their dissent note read. "We proposed the names of Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman and Justice Kuttivil Mathew Joseph for the position of Chairperson, keeping in mind both merit and the need for inclusivity. "Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman, a distinguished jurist fairness and impartiality, "Its ability to fulfil this from the minority Parsi

unwavering commitment to constitutional values. His inclusion would send a strong message about the NHRC's dedication to representing India's pluralistic society," they said. Similarly, Justice Joseph, a former Supreme Court judge, belonging to the minority Christian community, has consistently delivered

community, is renowned for his intellectual depth and

consistently delivered judgments that emphasise individual freedoms and the protection of marginalised groups, making him an ideal candidate for this critical position, Kharge and Gandhi said.

defended strong the two leaders said. "Furthermore, for the position

"Lastly, "Their inclusion would approach adopted by the or a retired judge of the top

# on Pak firms, says Shehbaz

**PTI** ISLAMABAD

rime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday defended Pakistan's nuclear and missile programme, saying the recent US sanctions against the country's four entities have "no justification".

His remarks came days after the US slapped sanctions on four Pakistani firms, including the state-owned flagship aerospace and defence agency National Development
Complex (NDC) — on charges of contributing to ballistic missile programme. In addition to the NDC, the three other entities are Akhtar and Sons Private to the entire nation. Limited, Affiliates International and Rockside Enterprise. All three are there will be no comprobased in Karachi, while the NDC is in Islamabad.

"The sanctions placed upon our National Development" issue.

Pakistan and the US have Complex and other entities have no justification," Prime Minister Shehbaz said while addressing a federal cabinet rights, terrorism, nuclear

"Pakistan has absolutely no intention for our nuclear system to be aggressive. It is 100 per cent for Pakistan's defence. It's just deterrence; nothing else," he added.

The prime minister also said that Pakistan's ballistic missile programme was for defending itself "if God forbid there is aggression against Pakistan".

Earlier, the Foreign Office termed the US decision to impose sanctions on NDC and three commercial entities as "unfortunate and biased. Shehbaz noted that the FO had given a "comprehensive response" and said that the missile programme belonged

"It's dearer to them (the public) than their hearts and mise," he said, clarifying that the nation was united on the

experienced an uneasy relationship in recent years due to issues related to human weapons and missile pro- little and too weak. Speak

US expresses concern over sentencing of 25 civilians by Pakistan military court: Expressing concern over the sentencing of 25 civilians by a military court in Pakistan. the United States on Monday said that it lacked judicial independence, transparency

and due process guarantees. The United States is deeply concerned that Pakistani civilians have been sentenced by a military tribunal for their involvement in protests on May 9, 2023. These military courts lack judicial independence, transparency, and due process guarantees," said State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller.

"The United States continues to call on Pakistani authorities to respect the right to a fair trial and due process, as enshrined in Pakistan's constitution." he added. However, a close aide of President-elect Donald

tle and too weak. "You are late. And this is too

Trump described it as too lit-

normally. Free Imran Khan," said Richard Grenell, who served as acting director of national intelligence under President Trump in 2020 and was the US ambassador to Germany from 2018 to 2020. Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna

ioined Grenell in seeking

freedom for Imran Khan. "I agree with Richard Grenell. It's time to free Imran Khan and allow the people of Pakistan to hold new democratic elections," Khanna said. "Free Imran Khan. This is bipartisan. We need to not recognize the rigged election in Pakistan and the new government. We need a new election in Pakistan and Imran Khan needs to be out of jail," Khanna said in a

video posted on a social

media platform. Former Trump envoy on Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, said it is time to put more pressure on Pakistan, especially the military, to facilitate reaching a balanced political agreement with PTI and the release

### No justification in US curbs 'We should try again': Punjab Assembly Speaker on Vajpayee's failed India-Pak peace initiative

ven though the chance was missed, we should try again," says Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Áhmad Khan when asked about Atal Bihari Vaipayee's 1999 'bus yatra', a bold attempt by the then Indian prime minister to put India-Pakistan relations on the peace

Vajpayee took a bus ride to Laĥore on February 19, 1999. He and Pakistan premier Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration after a historic summit here. The agreement signalled a breakthrough, but just months later a Pakistani intrusion led to the Kargil War. Wednesday is Vajpayee's 100th birth anniversary. 'Vajpayee's visit to Lahore in

1999 was a defining moment. Even though the chance was missed, we should try again. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who follows Vajpayee's vision, leading India, and Shehbaz Sharif, Nawaz's brother, in charge in Pakistan, there is a real possibility of restarting the peace process," says Khan, who is a senior member of the Pakistan Muslim League-

Nawaz (PML-N). Khan says the future of the region depends on free trade and unrestricted movement between countries.

"Peace in the region is not just a good idea - it is necessary for growth and prosperity," the Punjab Speaker adds. Another senior PML-N leader

from Punjab, Mohammad Mehdi, describes Vajpayee's Lahore visit as historic. He believes the visit could have led to lasting peace if the Kargil conflict had not happened.

"The Western media paid a lot of attention to Vajpayee's visit because it came just months after both countries became nuclear powers," Mehdi says, referring to nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998.

"There was excitement, especially within PML-N ranks, when Vajpayee arrived in Lahore in February 1999. His speech, saying 'Pakistan is a reality, and both countries now need to move forward and leave the past behind, gave hope to many," Mehdi recalls. Unfortunately, the Kargil conflict happened soon after, and the peace efforts were unsuc-

Mehdi savs Jamaat-e-Islami (II) held protests during Vajpayee's visit, which many believe were organised by the military led by Ğeneral Pervez Musharraf.

"Jamaat-i-Islami workers even attacked the Turkish ambassador's car near Lahore Fort. mistaking it for an Indian delegation," he says.

Mehdi believes back-channel talks between Pakistan and India are still happening. "Right now, relations between

the two countries are at their lowest point. Neither country has an envoy in the other's capital. However, businessmen on both sides desperately want to restore ties to improve trade and use shorter routes through Pakistan to reach Central Asia and Europe," he says.

Political expert Brig (retd.) Faroog Hameed says Nawaz Sharif should have involved the powerful Pakistan Army in the peace process.

"The initiative failed because the military was not consulted, which led to the Kargil conflict and ended the peace process. If Nawaz Sharif had taken the military on board before Vajpayee's visit, the chances of the peace talks being success-

ful would have been higher." Hameed says Nawaz has repeatedly shown interest in improving ties with India, including his desire to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi after returning to Pakistan last vear from a four-vear selfimposed exile in London. However, he pointed out, that Nawaz's younger brother, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has not made any recent public statements indicating a similar desire.

"Nawaz should first consult Shehbaz, who enjoys the military establishment's favour, to determine if he shares this vision for improved relations with India," he says.

He also notes the lack of progress after Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar visited Pakistan recently.

"Most Pakistanis are not anti-India. Unlike in India, politicians here do not need to criticise India to win elections," Hameed says.

However, terrorism remains a major obstacle to reconciliation, he says. India has often accused Pakistan of supporting terrorism, while Pakistan now blames India for terror attacks

### Syria's new authorities 'very receptive' to probe of Assad war crimes

**AP** UNITED NATIONS

 $T^{\text{he UN organization assist-}}_{\text{ing in investigating the most serious crimes in Syria}$ said Monday the country's new authorities were "very receptive" to its request for cooperation during a just-concluded visit to Damascus, and it is

preparing to deploy. The visit led by Robert Petit, head of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria, was the atrocities and killings while he first since the organization was established by the UN General Assembly in 2016. It was created to assist in evidence-gathering and prosecution of indi-

viduals responsible for possible war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide since Svria's civil war began in 2011. Petit highlighted the urgency of preserving documents and other evidence before it is lost. Since the rebel overthrow of Syria's President Bashar Assad and the rebel opening of prisons and detention facilities there have been rising demands from Syrians for the prosecution of those responsible for

"The fall of the Assad rule is a significant opportunity for us to fulfill our mandate on the ground," Petit said. "Time is

was in power.

running out. There is a small window of opportunity to secure these sites and the material they hold."

UN associate spokesperson Stephane Tremblay said Monday the investigative team "is preparing for an operational deployment as early as possible and as soon as it is authorized to conduct activities on Syrian soil." The spokesperson for the organization, known as the IIIM, who was on the trip with Petit, went further, telling The Associated Press: "We are preparing to deploy on the expectation that we will get

authorization." "The representatives from the

caretaker authorities were very receptive to our request for cooperation and are aware of the scale of the task ahead," the spokesperson said, speaking on condition of not being named. "They emphasized that they will need expertise to help safeguard the newly accessible documentation."

The IIIM did not disclose which officials in the new government it met with or the site that Petit visited afterward. "Even at one facility," Petit said, "the mountains of government documentation reveal the chilling efficiency of systemizing the regime's atrocity

### **Hong Kong police issue arrest** warrants, bounties for six activists

AP HONG KONG

Hong Kong police on Tuesday announced a fresh round of arrest warrants for six activists based overseas, with bounties set at USD 1 million Hong Kong dollars for information leading to their arrests. According to the warrants, the six are wanted for national security offences such as secession. subversion and collusion with

foreign forces. They include Tony Chung, the former leader of now-defunct pro-independence group Studentlocalism. UK-based Carmen Lau, a former district councilor and current activist with the Hong Kong Democracy Council, as

well as Chloe Cheung, an activist with the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong, also had warrants issued against them. The latest round of warrants signals that the Hong Kong government is targeting vocal critics based abroad. The government had previous-

ly issued two rounds of arrest warrants and bounties for more prominent activists, including ex-lawmakers Ted Hui and Nathan Law.

The increasing number of wanted individuals abroad come as Hong Kong continues to crack down on political dissent following massive anti-government protests in 2019 that resulted in a wave of pro-democracy movements. Many outspoken prodemocracy activists have since been jailed, with others fleeing abroad.

The Hong Kong government's latest round of arrest warrants and bounties against six Hong Kong activists is a cowardly act of intimidation that aims to silence Hong Kong people," said Maya Wang, associate China director at Human Rights Watch.

The six — including two Canadian citizens — live in the UK and Canada. We call on the UK and Canadian governments to act immediately to push back against the Hong Kong government's attempts to threaten Hong Kongers living in their

Tuesday's arrest warrants take the total number of wanted people to 19.

Others on the list Tuesday are Chung Kim-wah, previously a senior member of independent polling organization Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute: Joseph Tay, co-founder of Canada-based NGO HongKonger Station; and YouTuber Victor Ho.

Separately on Tuesday, the Hong Kong government issued orders for the cancellation of passports belonging to seven "absconders", including ex-lawmakers Hui and Dennis Kwok, who are wanted under the secu-

# UK PM Keir Starmer hopes for peace in Middle East in Christmas message

PTI ■ LONDON

Keir Starmer has said he will be hoping for peace in the Middle East, the birthplace of the Christmas story, and a brighter future for all in his first festive message since being elected British Prime Minister. In a video message released by Downing Street ahead of Christmas Day on Wednesday, Starmer attempts to strike an optimistic tone and encourages people to "look after those around us". He extended his special gratitude to the armed forces and frontline workers who will be helping people up and down the country.

'This Christmas, I will be hoping for peace, particularly in the Middle East as the birthplace of the Christmas story," said

Starmer. "I'll be looking towards a better, brighter future for every person and celebrating the joy and



wonder that Christmas brings," he said.

He said the festival was a reminder of what's really important, such as family, friendship and fellowship between all peo-

He added: "Being there for one another - in these celebrations, as well as the more difficult times. I'd like especially to thank those who will spend their Christmas serving others this year. In our NHS [National Health Service] and emergency services, our Armed Forces and the churches and charities that will welcome every person this Christmas."

"Because I know that this is not an easy time for everyone, and my thoughts are with all those who are lonely this Christmas. Having a tough time, missing a loved one. You are not alone, because as Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Christmas story reminds all of us to reach out to one another. To care for one another. And to look after those around us," he said. Earlier, Downing Street indicated that Starmer and his family would spend Christmas at the Prime Minister's country retreat of Chequers in Buckinghamshire. He is then set to travel abroad "for a few days"

for his first family holiday since

taking charge at 10 Downing

Street following the July general election.

It comes as King Charles III set a new tradition for his customary Christmas Day message and chose Fitzrovia Chapel in London for its recording. It is understood that his speech will reflect on international, national and personal challenges and how they can be overcome by communities supporting one another.

"The living Christmas tree shown in this year's broadcast was decorated with sustainable decorations including pinecones, metal bells, twisted glass and glass baubles," Buckingham Palace said.

It added that 2024 marks the first time a British monarch's Christmas message has been filmed outside a royal residence since 2006 when the late Queen Elizabeth II filmed a message at Southwark Cathedral in London.



### Where does Santa live? It's a trickier question to answer than you may

THHE CONVERSATION ■ QUEENS-

Sending a letter to Santa can be difficult as no one can agree on where exactly Santa lives. Several countries are competing to claim Santa as one of their citizens. Finland's tourism industry suggests

Santa keeps his workshop, and the link between Santa and Lapland brings in hundreds of millions of tourist dollars. Danes say Santa is in Greenland. Sweden suggests Mora is the place, and has built the theme park

Korvatunturi in Lapland is where

Santaworld. These places certainly look the part with white snow in winter and reindeer. They're also close to the

North Pole. Not so jolly traditions: They also have old and often quite disturbing

folklore about the man in red. Pagan Finns celebrated St Knut's Day in wintry January by having men in furry jackets, the nuuttipukki, go from house to house with a sack of presents. Except the nuuttipukki weren't giving gifts and would likely make children cry.

Except the scape.

It could have been the North Pole, and no one in 1866 had actually

They came demanding gifts and would curse bad luck to any household not handing over a present. Eventually the gift grabbing nuut-tipukki became the gift giving Joulupukki. Like other northern traditions such as the Yule Lads of Iceland, this visitor gave gifts but only to well behaved children. By the 19th century, Santa Claus was

settled in popular awareness more or less what we think of now: a jolly old man with a beard, a sleigh, reindeer and presents, living some-where northern and cold. That image built on but sanitised the more grotesque European folklores of elves, gnomes and other supernatural creatures who either brought or demanded gifts.

But standardising Santa's appearance did not settle where he actually lived and worked.

In the mid-19th century the illustrator Thomas Nast portrayed Santa as a jolly old man in Harper's Weekly, and the illustration and the archetype took off. But Nast iust showed Santa in a wintry land-



been to the Pole. No explorer turbed in his workshop. reached there until 1926, leaving Santa, if he did live there, undis-Santa and territorial disputes: The medieval and pagan mytholo-

gies in Finland and Scandinavia give some credibility to these countries' efforts to claim Santa as their

Other countries take a more modern approach. The Canadian government makes sure Christmas happens each year by allowing Santa to travel through Canadian airspace. Taking that a step further, in 2013 the Conservative government of Stephen Harper issued Santa and his wife with Canadian passports.
That action might seem twee or whimsical or simply some Christmas fun for children, but it

own. After all, these are old legends.

may also have shown that some governments want to claim a lot more than Santa. Harper's gesture came at a time of an international political dispute about ownership of the North Pole and specifically Canadian claims to Artic regions.

Somewhere hotter than the Pole: But are all these countries wrong, or being opportunistic?

Despite what we think, where Santa really comes from is a lot hotter and a lot further east - and those red robes would be uncomfortable to wear.

Santa Claus is a name derived from Sinterklaas or Saint Nicholas. Along with pagan elves and gnomes,

another element in the long and very complex history of Santa is the Christian bishop St Nicholas of Smyrna. Or is that Nicholas of Myra?

Smyrna, now called Izmir in Turkiye, and Myra, now Demre in Turkiye, are both associated with Nicholas. Just as in northern Europe, different places in Anatolia compete to be associated with Nicholas is patron saint of seeming-

ly everything including archers and brewers but also children and sailors. The link with children explains the later association as Santa, especially as Saint Nicholas gave children gifts. The link with sailors is why his legend is known around the world.

A 2017 archaeological dig under the Church of Saint Nicholas in Turkiye was believed to have found the burial place and therefore the body of Saint Nicholas. A grave full of old bones is not very

Christmas-like, but it may be an authentic link between a place and a person which no amount of snow or reindeer in northern Europe could match.

# **UPI** transactions jump 33 per cent at retail stores in India this year: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

PI transactions at retail stores have increased by 33 per cent in semi-urban and rural areas this year, reflecting the growing adoption of digital payments, says a report. Moreover, insurance policy

purchases and premium collections saw a 127 per cent increase in transaction volume and a 96 per cent growth in new customer adoption during the year, the report by branchless banking and digital network

PayNearby said.
"The data highlights the role digital retail stores play in overcoming the challenges of insurance penetration across Bharat," it stated.

The report is based on an analysis of real transaction data derived from over 10,00,000 small retailers (kirana stores, mobile recharge stores etc) offering financial and digital services spread across India in rural



and semi-urban regions. The findings compare business data from January to November 2024 with the same period in 2023.

The report, Retail-O-Nomics, stated that there has been an impressive 297 per cent volume rise across credit

products, including business loans, gold loans, personal loans, and revolving credit in rural and semi-urban areas. This significant uptick reflects a growing awareness and demand for credit solutions at the grassroots

However, micro ATM and Aadhaar Enabled Payment (AePS) Systems withdrawals saw a decline in 2024. Both transaction volumes and the average cash withdrawal per transaction saw a slight decline, with the latter dropping from Rs 2,624

the report said.

AePS withdrawals surged by 35-45 per cent during DBT releases, particularly under schemes like PM Kisan Yojana, compared to the rest of the year.

"Cash withdrawals in Jammu and Kashmir recorded an impressive growth of 58 per cent in value and 74 per cent in volume," the report said.

"By equipping local retailers with tools to offer diverse services like insurance, ecommerce, and lending, we are empowering them to become key enablers of financial access and economic progress at the grassroots," Anand Kumar Bajaj, Founder, MD & CEO, PayNearby, said.
PayNearby is a branchless

banking and digital network that operates on a B2B2C model. It has more than 10 lakh retail touchpoints comprising kirana stores, medical shops, travel agents

#### Govt launches AI-enabled consumer helpline, e-commerce giants pledge safety

 $F_{
m Minister}^{
m ood}$  and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Tuesday launched several initiatives to strengthen protection, consumer including artificial intelligence-enabled helpline and tools to detect deceptive

marketing practices, while major e-commerce players pledged to enhance online shopping safety.
Leading platforms, including

Reliance Retail, Tata Sons and Zomato adopted a safety pledge as the government rolled out new consumer protection measures like the AI-enabled National Consumer Helpline, e-maap portal and Jago Grahak Jago mobile application.

"Significant progress has been made in expediting resolutions of consumer disputes," Joshi said at the National Consumer Day event.

The minister, who attended the event online, highlighted that out of 3,628 cases filed the National Commission between January and November this year, cases have been

disposed of through the country's three-tier consumer court system at district, state and national levels.

The government's e-Daakhil Portal, launched in 2020 and expanded nationwide in June 2023, has achieved 100 per cent adoption for online complaint filing in states like Karnataka, Punjab and Rajasthan, as well as several

Addressing growing commerce concerns, Joshi said: "While this digital revolution offers incredible opportunities, the Indian government believes it is equally important for our

districts.

consumers to feel confident and make informed choices. The Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) is drafting new guidelines to regulate surrogate advertising and has issued notices to 13 companies for compliance with existing rules, he added.

Minister of State for Consumer Affairs B L Verma, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti, All India Council for Education T G Sitharam and Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare were present at

#### Puri, Varanasi, Haridwar top spiritual destinations in 2024, Hyderabad most-booked city: Travelopedia 2024 annual report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Puri, Varanasi and with Deogh Haridwar are the most Govardhan travelled spiritual destinations Hyderabad is India's top-booked city this year, according to OYO's 'Travelopedia 2024' annual report unveiled on Tuesday. The report delves into travel patterns and trends, with its findings based on the booking data of the travel tech major for the entire year. "In India, religious tourism continued to be a key focus, with Puri, Varanasi, and Haridwar dominating the dominant

pilgrimage sector. However, a contributors. Smaller towns with Deoghar, Palani, and experiencing growth, substantial while indicating a shift towards less explored spiritual destinations..."OYO stated. explored Following Hyderabad, cities like Bengaluru, Delhi, and Kolkata rounded out the top

spots for bookings, with Uttar Pradesh maintaining its position as the most popular state for travel. High volume of bookings were reported from Telangana, and Karnataka, which continue to be

Maharashtra,

significant trend emerged like Patna, Rajahmundry, and Hubli have shown tremendous growth, with bookings increasing by as much as 48 per cent year-on-

The year also saw a surge in leisure travel, with Jaipur continuing to be a top tourist magnet, followed by perennial favourites Goa, Pondicherry, and Mysore. Interestingly, Mumbai saw a drop in bookings, with travellers preferring nearby locations for leisure," OYO stated. Shreerang Godbole, Global Chief Service Officer, OYO said, "2024 has marked

a vear of transformation in the global travel landscape. We've seen how travellers are embracing flexibility and adaptability, whether for business or leisure. As remote work trends continue to shape how people approach travel, the demand for both quick getaways and long stays has been a

this year". The fourth of July weekend saw the highest number of bookings, aligning with national celebrations, while the Christmas season was also notable for a sharp spike

significant driver of bookings

#### Inflation continues to hit FMCG industry, urban growth expected to slow in H1/2025

Heading towards an amid inflationary pressures, the FMCG industry's volume growth during August-October this year has dropped to 4.3 per cent from 6.4 per cent in the year-ago period, research and insight firm Kantar said in a report. Moreover, the FMCG volume growth was lower sequentially also as in the growth May-July period, this was 4.5 per cent, according to Kantar's latest FMCG Pulse

and the FMCG growth as of the quarter ending October is 4.3 per cent. This number is a far cry from the 6.4 per cent growth seen in Q/E Oct '23, but is also a tad lower than 4.5 per cent we saw in the last quarter, i.E. Q/E Jul '24," it said. Volume growth in the urban market was at 4.5 per cent in the August-October period, down from 6.9 per cent in the same period of

However, the report added: "It is also true that a 4.5 per cent growth following a near 7 per cent growth in the report. previous term is extremely "We are in that last quarter, rare. In fact, over the last five previous term is extremely

years, this has only happened in the quarters of 2024." Therefore, technically urban is in a slowdown, though "it is

far from a slump".
About the inflation, the report said that perhousehold average quarterly spending crossed Rs 6,000 for spending crossed Rs 6,000 for the first time in the August-October period of 2022, and two years since then, spending has seen a 13 per cent jump and is at Rs 6,761 during this quarter. In May-luly 2024, shoppers, were July 2024, shoppers were paying Rs 133 per KG of FMCG on average. Just one quarter since then, shoppers are paying Rs 137 per KG, a

August-October period. "In recent years, this kind of growth in a single consecutive quarter was only seen during the initial months of the 2022 inflation period," it said.

With no signs of food inflation relenting in the immediate future, where value growth rapidly draws away from volume growth for some more time, it's hard to see urban (market) growing more rapidly than the current levels. "We are expecting similar levels of growth to continue into the first half of the next year," it said.

#### Domestic air passenger traffic rises 12 per cent in November, IndiGo leads market share



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

**▼**ndian airlines carried 1.42 Lerore passengers on domestic routes in November, nearly 12 per cent more compared to the year-ago period, amid rising air traffic demand.

In terms of domestic market share, IndiGo topped the list with a 63.6 per cent pie, followed by Air India (24.4 per cent), Akasa Air (4.7 per cent) Air India completed the

While all these carriers saw their share rise, the share of November. Alliance Air was unchanged at The On Time Performance 0.7 per cent in November. according to the latest data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-November 2024 were 1,464.02 lakh as against 1,382.34 lakh during the corresponding period of the previous year thereby registering an annual growth of 5.91 per cent and monthly growth of 11.90 per cent," the watchdog said in its monthly

report. Domestic air passenger traffic was at 142.52 lakh in November compared to 127.36 lakh in the same period

a year ago. In October this year, domestic passenger stood at 1.36 crore.

and SpiceJet (3.1 per cent). merger of full service carrier Vistara with itself in

> (OTP) of scheduled domestic airlines - computed for the four metro airports at Bangalore, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mumbai - took a beating in November. IndiGo's OTP stood at 74.5 per cent while that of Akasa Air and SpiceJet touched 66.4 per cent and 62.5 per cent, respectively.
> The OTP of Air India and

> Alliance Air were at 58.8 per cent and 58.9 per cent, respectively, the data showed. Further, the data revealed that 2,24,904 passengers were affected by delays in November. Carriers shelled out nearly Rs 2.90 crore towards facilitation.

> Last month, a total of 624 passenger-related complaints were received by the scheduled domestic airlines.

#### Federation of retailer association of India urges government to empower kirana stores with enhanced tech platform

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Tuesday asked government to provide enhanced technology platform to Kirana stores to enable them to compete with quick commerce firms.

Such support would enable the kirana stores to remain competitive amidst the increasing encroachment into their space by quick commerce companies like Swiggy Instamart, Blinkit or Zepto," said Federation of Retailer Association of India (FRAI), which says that it represents about 80 lakh micro, small and medium retailers from across the country with a membership of 42 retail associations. Providing local kirana stores with a technology platform

compete on equal terms with Indian Sellers Collective. quick commerce players, Kirana stores are facing steep The Federation of Retailer Association of India on playing field, it added. With new technologies

brought in by the government, like ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce), what is now required is a more focused approach in creating a specific solution for kirana stores that makes them as discoverable and accessible to customers, much like the way quick commerce companies are operating," Honorary FRAÎ Spokesperson Abhay Raj

Mishra said. Essentially, the kirana stores should remain competitive by being empowered to tap into the growing digital market and meet new customer needs," said Mishra, who is also Member

would allow them to & National Coordinator, quick commerce players, Lok quick commerce prayers, Sabha member Praveen Sabha said. "For shopkeepers, it is crucial to stay updated and embrace all channels to meet the evolving expectations of customers," he added.

FRAI said quick commerce platforms have advantage" over "unfair Kirana stores, which cannot match the heavy discounts offered by quick commerce giants who benefit from deep pockets, large warehouses and a huge customer base. The increased competition from quick commerce players has resulted in stagnant sales for kirana stores, particularly during high-demand periods such as

#### Sensex, Nifty settle almost flat in highly volatile trade; metal, power stocks drag

PTI MUMBAI

nenchmark equity indices **D**Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note in a volatile trade on Tuesday, as investors preferred to stay on the sidelines awaiting further triggers amid persistent foreign fund outflows.

After gyrating between highs and lows, the 30-share index declined 67.30 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at 78,472.87. During the day, it dropped 142.38 points or 0.18 per cent to 78,397.79.

The NSE Nifty dipped 25.80 points or 0.11 per cent to 23,727.65.

As many as 2,019 stocks declined, while 1,977 advanced and 96 remained unchanged on the BSE.

domestic market The concluded flat ahead of the holiday, with metal and power stocks dragging performance while FMCG and auto sectors gained from corrections.

The near-term market trajectory hinges on the outcome of Q3 results and the Union budget, but caution prevails due to a strong dollar, high bond yields, and concerns over rate cuts. The rupee hitting an all-time low further evoked the caution," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial

Services, said. From the 30 blue-chip stocks,

Power Grid, State Bank of India, Titan, Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank Cement, Adani Ports and Infosys were among the laggards.

In contrast, Tata Motors, ITC, Nestle, Tata Consultancy Services, NTPC and Zomato were among the gainers.
The BSE smallcap gauge

climbed 0.37 per cent, and the BSE midcap index rose 0.09 per cent.
"The Nifty index saw a

lacklustre start to the much-anticipated 'Santa Claus Rally Period, with the index closing at 23,728, down 26 points. The sluggish session was attributed to persistent selling by FIIs, concerns over India's slowing economic growth, and a weakening Indian rupee, which hit a record low of Rs. 85.13 against the dollar. "These factors weighed on investor sentiment, keeping the market directionless and choppy throughout the day. Our earlier call suggested a low-volume trading session, and that prediction held true as Nifty traded in a volatile range," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Among sectoral indices, metal slumped 0.93 per cent, power declined 0.73 per cent, utilities (0.52 per cent), consumer durables (0.50 per cent) and commodities (0.33 per cent).



People For Animals (PFA), Noida, an animal welfare organization received an animal ambulance with hydraulic jack and a ventilator by Can Fin Homes Limited CSR initiative. On this occasion, Marketing Head of Can Fin Homes Limited Himanshu, Senior Manager Sameer flagged off the ambulance. Shilpi, Naveen, Jagmohan and Ravi Dubey from People For Animals Trust were present.

#### Indian IT hiring: 2025 promises rebound, Al/data science roles to dominate job market

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

**▼**ndian IT hiring landscape is at a pivotal juncture as it transitions from a year of decline towards a more hopeful future. The focus on specialised skills, particularly in AI and data science, combined with geographical shifts towards Tier 2 cities, indicates a transformation within the sector.

While the IT hiring landscape in India in 2024 was marked by delayed onboarding and a decline in overall hiring activity, the outlook for 2025 appears promising with expectations of recovery and growth fuelled improvements in economic conditions and technological

advancements. In 2024, the Indian IT sector experienced approximately a 7 per cent decline in hiring compared to the previous year, largely due to broader macroeconomic challenges and global uncertainties.

Chemmankotil, Country Manager of Adecco India, noted that while Global Capability Centres (GCCs) played a crucial role in boosting hiring -- accounting for 52.6 per cent of job openings for



professionals - they could not fully offset the significant downturn in the IT services

sector. overall Despite contraction, certain areas showed resilience and growth. The demand for roles in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) surged by 39 per cent, reflecting a shift towards more specialised skill sets as organisations prioritised these technologies, according to

Adecco research. There was notable growth in IT hiring within Tier 2 cities, which saw an impressive 48 per cent increase during the third quarter of 2024, indicating a trend of geographic diversification of job opportunities beyond traditional tech hubs.

Hiring for professionals with to senior-level midexperience increased by 35 per cent, suggesting that companies favour experienced candidates amid market fluctuations.

The hiring landscape for fresh graduates remained subdued, with growth rates ranging from 2-15 per cent across various tech sectors, data from TeamLease Edtech showed.

Companies often delayed onboarding campus hires due to uncertain deal flows, which industry leaders believe was particularly influenced by the global political climate surrounding major elections. As India moves into 2025, there are encouraging signs that the IT hiring landscape may rebound significantly.

According to the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey (MEOS) for first quarter of 2025, 53 per cent of the 3,150 employers in India surveyed expect an increase in hiring, the highest among the 42 countries studied.

"In 2024, fresher hiring remained muted in general with several companies also choosing to delay the onboarding of their campus hires. This may change as the deal flow for large projects is expected to return in early

The first set of deal flow will benefit the large players and as the buyer sentiment improves, the tier 2 and 3 players can expect a rise in orders," Jaideep Kewalramani, COO and Head of Employability Business at TeamLease Edtech, said. As the macro headwinds slow down and the results of elections of large economies, the US being the last one in 2024 to come in, he said organisations will be confident about the economic outlook and start to make some bets on the capital investments, which will help jump-start the deal flow in early 2025.

While fresh hiring may remain subdued initially, it is anticipated that as large projects commence in early 2025, there will be a notable increase in job opportunities new graduates, Kewalramani said.

Companies are expected to invest heavily in upskilling their workforce to meet evolving demands, particularly in areas such as AI and cybersecurity.

Wipro CTO Sandhya Arun believes enterprises are set to accelerate the integration of AI and other advanced technologies to unlock significant business value.

Year 2025 promises to be a year of high-velocity technology disruptions, offering new opportunities and presenting unprecedented challenges. The future belongs

to enterprises that embrace technology and disruption..." Arun said. The demand for specialised tech roles is anticipated to

the festive season, it added.

surge by 30-35 per cent, driven by an increasing reliance on emerging technologies. "However, the shift towards AI and automation in India's IT sector has started and will

continue to create increasing impact on recruitment through AI-driven tools machine learning, and redefined job roles by automating routine tasks while creating demand for highly specialised roles," said Sanju Ballurkar, President (Experis ManpowerGroup India.

The sector is expected to rebound with projections indicating a 15-20 per cent growth in job opportunities across various industries, according to Chemmankotil. "Looking ahead, the combined hiring intent from GCC and IT services will be a welcome relief to job seekers. Employers are optimistic about recovery and growth as companies adapt to new technological landscapes and

market needs," he said.

# Modern-day greats figure out their own path: Rohit backs Kohli

With a smile, India captain Rohit Sharma on Tuesday played down concerns around Virat Kohli's struggles outside the off-stump in Australia and backed his longtime teammate to the hilt, saying "modern-day greats figure out their own path."

Kohli's five innings in this series Down Under read 5, 100 not out, 7, 11 and 3 for a total of 126 runs

at an average of 31.50, not something the team or the batting maestro himself had hoped for before embarking on the

challenging tour.
But Rohit, who is also battling poor form, is not losing his sleep over the lack of runs and is confident of a turnaround. When a question about Kohli's struggles was posed to him with some sugar-coating, the skipper added a dash of his own humour in his response.

Do you say something or leave a modern-day great alone, the scribe asked.

"You only said he is a modern-day great. Modern-day greats figure out their own path," said a smiling Rohit as others broke into a peal of laughter.

Kohli was one of the earliest to enter the nets at MCG and Rohit was last among the recognised batters to get a knocking. The India skipper played just two shots in the last 20 minutes and left everything else, as he tried to curb his natural instinct to push forward. forward.

The desperation to control his conditioned reflex of moving hands towards the fourth stump delivery was evident.

"Harshit, is jagah se jaa rahi hai (the ball is landing here)?" he pointed out at an imaginary fourth stump line while trying to know from the young pacer about the line which looked just around six inches outside off-stump. This line has been Kohli's Achilles Heel in the ongoing tour. When Prasidh Krishna came on,

he was told to bowl on the "channel" as he wanted to leave balls. Prasidh dug one short and



he just about defended. Then, the lanky Karnataka man hit the channel, and the batter withdrew his willow in the nick of time.

The 500-odd people present inside would let out a collective sigh. They made noise and once

quiet concentrate.

When Rohit batted, he was heard Kohli was also seen telling them to telling throwdown specialist

Raghavendra, "Tappa sahi pakadna padega (get the length right)." He also got beaten by a throw that reared from length. "Rohit bhai, pull maaro naa (play the pull shot)," yelled one of the demanding young fans from outside. Rohit just left the next

With the chatter about his form gaining decibels and rumours about an imminent retirement post Sydney gaining traction, Rohit's answers about himself were short. When someone has one double digit score in five innings, he wants to be left alone but then commitments needed to be honoured.

Asked about his batting position, he was borderline irritated.
"Let's not worry about that. I think who bats where, we should be discussing that within ourselves and I shouldn't be answering this and I shouldn't be answering this question in every press conference," the skipper said, trying to hold his composure.

At the onset, he informed that his

knee which was hurt while batting on an old practice track, was

Then next question was a "flighted query" on where he stood with regards to his batting form.

"After last Test (in Brisbane) we had two sessions. What could have possibly changed in two days?" he countered with a wry smile.

As usual, he didn't give away anything about whether playing two spinners while factoring in the Melbourne heat was feasible or not.

The inimitable Rohit was back lacing everything with a bit of humour when asked what led to the selection of Tanush Kotian over Kuldeep Yadav.
"Well Kuldeep didn't have visa," he

smiled before informing that the wrist spinner is still not hundred percent fit.

"Axar couldn't travel as he has had a baby. I am not saying Tanush is bad but he is here more as a cover," he said.

The five-match series is levelled at 1-1 with all to play for in the remaining two matches in Melbourne and Sydney.



#### Gill needs to back himself, he's changed things up too much: Ricky Ponting

**PTI** ■ MELBOURNE

India top-order batter he changed his guard, he shubman Gill has made far moved across to the off stump, too many changes in his too many changes in his batting approach, which is hindering his run-scoring ability on away tours, feels former Australian captain Ricky Pointing, adding that the way out for the young cricketer is to trust his instincts.

The Australian legend added that rather than making wholesale changes in his is to trust his instincts.

Cill missed the approach, which is presented his front pad to Boland, and Boland got him out with a full straight one," he said.

The Australian legend added that rather than making wholesale changes in his is to trust his instinct to the said.

the Border-Gavasker Trophy in improve his batting. Perth due to a thumb injury he during suffered Índia's simulated training game. In the second Test at Adelaide, he

second Test at Adelaide, he failed to convert good starts into big scores as Australia levelled the series 1-1.

The third Test at Brisbane saw him getting out for one in the first innings, putting India in a spot of bother before KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja struck half-centuries to halt the slide. "I love watching him play. When you're watching him bat and bat well, he looks as good as anyone in world cricket. But the numbers don't really stack

the numbers don't really stack up, do they, away from home?" Ponting said on ICC Review on Tuesday.
Ponting said he had observed several changes in Gill's technique during the second Test at Adelaide, which were impeding his chility to soon impeding his ability to score

"I watched him a little bit in Adelaide and it almost looked like he changed things up too thinking about getting out – he's only thinking about scoring runs."

Scott Boland was bowling and presented his front pad to

Gill missed the opening Test of upon trusting his instincts to

Gill's composed Gabba during the 2021 tour had helped India clinch a historic series win, but since then he has scored just one Test ton away from home – in Bangladesh in 2022.

Gill averages 23.8 across nine Tests in England, Bangladesh, the West Indies, South Africa and Australia but at home he has accumulated 1,177 runs and four centuries across 17 Tests at an average of 42.03. "If anything, I think he needs to back himself a little bit more, needs to back his defensive technique a little bit more here in Australia and still find a way

to be able to score and score quickly," Ponting said.
"I'm sure when he's at home or when he's generally scored runs anywhere around the world, he scores them in a nice, attacking mode and almost to the point where he's not really

### ICC announces Champions Trophy schedule, India-Pakistan clash on Feb 23

India will play all their matches of the Champions Trophy in Dubai with the marquee clash against archmarquee clash against archrivals Pakistan scheduled on February 23, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced on Tuesday. PTI had reported last week that India will play all their matches in Dubai including the semifinal and final if they qualify.

qualify. As has been the case with ICC events, India and Pakistan have been clubbed in the same group which also has New Zealand and Bangladesh.

Group B comprises South Africa, Australia, Afghanistan and England.

The tournament opener will be played in Karachi on February 19 when hosts Pakistan face New Zealand and the final is scheduled for March 9. The premier 50-over event, last played in 2017, will have 15 matches with at least games scheduled in

PTI KARACHI

Pakistan's premier fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi had requested the team management and national selectors to not

consider him for the Test matches in South Africa because of workload

management since he wants to be "100 percent fit" for the ICC Champions Trophy in February-March.

After the Pakistan squad was announced for the two Tests

in South Africa without

Shaheen, the interim head

coach and senior selector, Aaqib Javed, said that the

left-arm pacer's workload is

being managed to keep him

fresh for the Champions



Shaheen Afridi had requested PCB to

not include him for Tests against SA

Pakistan.

Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will be the three hosting venues in Pakistan with the second semifinal to be staged at the refurbished Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. "Lahore will also host the final on 9 March, unless India qualify, in which case it will be played in Dubai. Both the semi-finals and the final will have reserve days," said the ICC in a statement.

India will open their campaign against Bangladesh

himself requested he not be considered for Test matches

until the Champions Trophy

He said Shaheen had also

is over," a source said.

Trophy. apparently informed the "The truth is Shaheen team management and

on February 20 before taking on Pakistan three days later. Their final league fixture will be against New Zealand on March 2.

Group B action begins on February 21 when Afghanistan square up against South Africa in Karachi. A big weekend then kicks off

with rivals England and Australia clashing in Lahore on February 22. The eight sides in the Champions Trophy are the teams that finished in the top

eight in the points table at ODI World Cup in India last

year. The ICC has kept reserve days for both the semifinals and the final.

The schedule was announced after a deadlock over the hosting of the tournament ended with the ICC keeping India's games at a neutral venue as desired while having a similar arrangement for Pakistan for ICC events in India till 2027.

The hybrid arrangement will also apply to the 2025 women's ODI World Cup in India and the T20 World Cup in 2026 in India and Sri Lanka before being extended to the 2028 Women's T20 World Cup which Pakistan will host. India had refused to travel to Pakistan for the event due to security concerns. The Indians have not played in Pakistan since the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in which 150 people were killed. The two countries' last bilateral engagement was

held from December 30 to

"He assured the management

and board the money was very good and he would look

after his fitness and workload during the event so he should be permitted to play in the league," the

During this period Pakistan is playing two Tests in South Africa and two Tests at home against West Indies.

"Shaheen said he would be fully fit in time for the tri-series ODIs against New Zealand and South Africa

followed by the Champions Trophy at home," the source

"Shaheen told Aaqib he can

be selected for tests once the Champions Trophy is completed," he added.

February 7.



### Respect first half an hour: Gavaskar's advice to Pant

**PTI** MELBOURNE

Legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar has advised India's flamboyant India's wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant to "respect" the conditions before launching into his attacking strokes in the remaining two Tests of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia.

Pant, who famously scripted a flashes of brilliance but has struggled to make a significant impact in the

ongoing series.
The 27-year-old has managed scores of 37, 1, 21, 28, and 9 in his five innings across three Tests so far.

Known for his aggressive approach, Pant has often prioritised attacking shots regardless of the match situation. His adventurous decision to charge down the pitch against pacer Scott Boland on the very first ball of his innings in the Adelaide day-night Test drew considerable attention. considerable attention.

"What Rishabh Pant has to do, like everybody else, respect the first half an hour; respect a little bit when he gets in there, whatever the position, unless, of course, India is 525 for 3; then he can tee off," Gavaskar told Star Sports. Commenting

challenges posed Australian bowlers, Gavaskar added, "... They get the ball to angle across. Pat Cummins and even (Josh) Hazlewood give him a little bit of a problem; Scott Boland will give him a little bit of a problem because Boland bowls around that area as well."

He should have no fear in these conditions: Havden Australian legend Matthew

match-winning knock at the Gabba in 2021, has shown admirer of Pant, urged the Indian batter to embrace his fearless approach, saying it could be a game-changer for the visitors. "I have always been a fan of

his. He's kind of a different cheese; there is no doubt about it. And I would like to just see him explore that as well because he should be coming in a situation where, as I mentioned before, there are lots of runs; and if so, that's a perfect scenario for him to be (in).

"But it's also the perfect scenario for Team India. A little bit like Rohit Sharma, I think we haven't seen some counter-punching efforts from Rishabh, but he should have no fear in these conditions. I think in the absence of fear comes a great opportunity for Rishabh and Team India," said Hayden. India will face Australia in the third Test at the MCG starting

December 26.

### McDonald defends dropping McSweeney for Konstas, says teenager will throw new challenge to India

**PTI** ■ MELBOURNE

Australia head coach Andrew McDonald on Tuesday defended the selection committee's decision to drop Nathan McSweeney in middle of the series for Sam Konstas, saying the talented teenager will post a "new challenge" for India. McSweeney, a makeshift opener, was dropped because of a string of low scores in the first

three Tests. Former Australia skipper Michael Clarke was very critical of the decision to sideline McSweeney. However, McDonald said tough calls have to be taken

at times. 'We wanted to throw a new challenge at India. We believe Nathan is good enough for the Test level. We weren't sure about how the top order is functioning. So yeah we challenged ourselves with that decision," said the head coach ahead of the fourth

"Whether it works or not, time will tell. There will be debate around this should he or shouldn't he. Selections are highly debated."
Konstas, 19, will become the

468th Australian men's Test cricketer to don the Baggy Green when he takes the field in the Boxing Day game beginning on Wednesday. Konstas, 19, will become the youngest Test debutant for Australia since 18-year-old Pat Cummins broke into the squad in 2011.

"We wanted clarity for our batting unit before the team meeting," McDonald said. Selector Tony Dodemaide informed Konstas about his inclusion during training at the MCG here on Thursday. informing Dodemaide Konstas about his inclusion

confirms the playing XI on match eve.

'It's (breaking the news) something we don't usually do because haven't had too many moving parts, but we thought we'd get that out of the way so everyone knows that he's in the team," said McDonald.

"He (Konstas) has been very similar to what I've seen on the outside within (the team) - composed, relaxed, knows his game. And what knows his game. And what he's shown is an array of shots, the ability to put pressure back on to opponents and he gets his opportunity," he added. Khawaja will get runs McDonald also brushed aside concerns over Usman

aside concerns over Usman Khawaja's form.

"I think Usman is not a concern. The way he is preparing runs will come. He knows his methods and was a departure from any good player following protocol as traditionally it's the Australian skipper who runs." Head clear for coach



Pakistan board that he had

got a lucrative offer from a

franchise in the Bangladesh

Premier League and he assured that he would manage his workload during the T20 league which will be

but medical team nod Head, one of the in-form

batters in the series with two batters in the series with two centuries, experienced "a small strain to the quad" during the last day of the third Test at the Gabba.

The 'player of the match' in the last two Tests faced only throw-downs from assistant

throw-downs from assistant coach Brad Hodge rather than his fast-bowling teammates at the nets on Tuasday. "I thought he looked good with the bat in his hands so obviously the skills are in good order. It will just be what risk is associated with that," said McDonald

McDonald. "But no concerns from my end, he's been able to do his end, he's been able to do his running so I think he'll be functional come game time." The coach did not speculate on who could fill the spot in the middle-order if Head fails to prove his fitness. The uncapped pair of Josh Inglis and Beau Webster are the

stand-byes in the squad. However, pacer Scott Boland has been all-but confirmed to replace Josh Hazlewood, who is nursing a calf strain.

McDonald said with
temperatures expected to
soar to over 40 degrees during the Boxing Day Test, the pitch could end up being more batter-friendly. "This wicket might offer the batters a little bit more in

terms of the surface as the game draws on. If we didn't pick Scotty (Boland) here – and I know I'm not allowed to declare the team because that's Pat's (Cummins) job tomorrow - but I don't think I'm coming to the ground Boxing Day if Scotty's not in the eleven. "We've got great depth in our bowling, and (all-rounder) Mitch Marsh is fully fit and able to bowl. But he (Boland) is ready to go and he'll play a role in this Test match with the ball more so than the previous

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### Senior National Badminton: M Raghu, Devika Sihag clinch men's and women's singles title

**PTI** ■ BENGALURU

arnataka's M Raghu and Haryana's Devika Sihag secured their maiden senior national badminton titles, emerging champions in the men's and women's sections respectively at the 86th edition of the tournament here on Tuesday.

Raghu, who won the Egypt international this year, saved three match points in the decider to beat former champion Mithun Manjunath 14-21, 21-14, 24-22 in the final that clocked just under an hour.

For Devika, it was a befitting end to a successful season as she ended the giant killing run of Shriyanshi Valishetty 21-15, 21-16 in the women's singles summit clash.

The 19-year-old from Haryana had claimed Swedish Open and Portugal International, besides reaching final at Estonian and Dutch International.



Junior National Champions Arsh Mohammad and Sanskar Saraswat added the senior nationals title to their trophy cabinet as they upset top seeds Naveen P and Lokesh V 12-21, 21-12, 19-21 in the men's

In doubles categories, Ayush Agarwal and Shruti Mishra defeated eighth seeds Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani G 21-17 21-18 to bag the mixed doubles crown, while second seeds Arathi Sara Sunil

women's doubles title with a 21-18 20-22 21-17 win over eighth seeds Priya Devi Mishra.

It was the men's singles final which provided the grand finale to the senior nationals as the two players from the state dished out a slugfest. Mithun, who won the title

two editions ago, was first off the blocks as he clinched the opening game rather easily.

Raghu forced a decider by racing through the second game. Raghu's control during the net exchanges made the difference as he forced his way back from 15-19 to level the scores at 19-19. But Mithun staved in the hunt

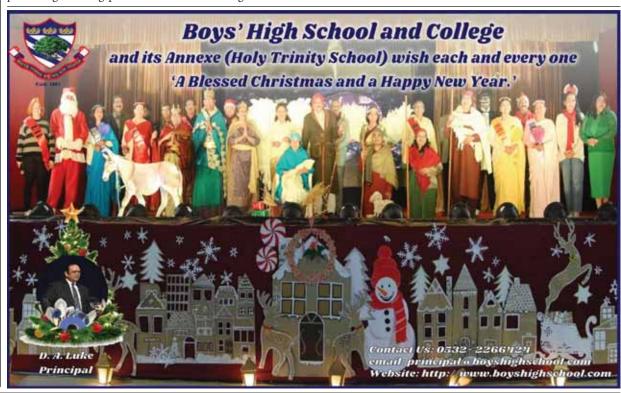
by earning three match points but could not convert any of

In the women's singles final, Devika took control of the match tempo quickly and then maintained her dominance to win in straight games.

#### Valencia fires coach Rubén Baraja after setback in La Liga

VALENCIA (SPAIN): Valencia fired coach Lim. Valencia said it "decided to bring to an Rubén Baraja on Monday after another setback in La Liga left the club stuck in the relegation zone and sparked renewed protests against Singaporean owner Peter

end Baraja's time as first team coach" following a 2-2 home draw against Alaves on Sunday. Valencia needed a equalizer to salvage the result that left the club second to last in the standings. The home draw prompted criticism from fans who have complained about administration of Lim. whom they accuse of using the club only as



### There's been a lapse in filing nominations, may be on my part: Manu on Khel Ratna furore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $P_{bronze-medallist}^{aris\ Olympics'\ double\ Manu}$ Bhaker on Tuesday admitted that "there has been a lapse may be on my part" while filing nominations for this year's National Sports Awards amid a raging controversy over her exclusion from the list of Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna awardees.

A day after the sports ministry had to do damage control by insisting that the list of awardees is yet to be finalised, the 22-year-old pistol ace took to social media to clarify her position on not being among

country's highest sporting honour.

"With regards to ongoing issue for my nomination for the most prestigious Khel Ratna award -- I would like to state that as an athlete my role is to play and perform for my

country. "I believe there has been a lapse, maybe on my part while filing for the nomination which is being corrected," Bhaker wrote on X. The Harvana shooter said her aim is to perform for the country and it would not change whether she gets an award or

those recommended for the This was after her father Ramkishan Bhaker and personal coach Jaspal Rana stated that the snub had affected her morale and drive to perform for the country. "Awards and recognition keeps

> goal," she asserted. Irrespective of the award I shall remain motivated to win more medals for my country. It is a request to everyone, please do not speculate on this," she

me motivated but are not my

and Ramkishan Rana lambasted the sports ministry and the selection committee for overlooking her despite her monumental achievements.



**Prosperous New Year 2025** 

"Good Governance Day" Celebrating accountability, transparency and service to the nation.

Christmas Mela will be held on 25, 26 & 27th of December, 2024 at St. Joseph's College Ground from 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Prayerful wishes From: Principal & Headmaster









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