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INSIDE

SPORTS
KIRAN GEORGE ENTERS SEMIFINALS OF KOREA MASTERS



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FORGIVE ME IF I EVER HURT ANYONE OF YOU: CJI



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With folded hands and teary eyes, Chief Justice Chandrachud, on his last working day as the 50th head of the Indian judiciary on Friday, sought forgiveness if he had hurt anyone. "If I ever hurt anyone of you, I would like to just say please forgive me for something which I didn't intend to ever say or do which may have hurt you," he said. Heading a four-judge ceremonial Bench, also comprising CJI-designate Sanjiv Khanna, Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, which assembled to bid him farewell, the CJI expressed a deep sense of fulfilment, not only for the work accomplished but for the opportunity to serve the country. Justice Chandrachud stepped into the shoes of his illustrious father YV

LANDMARK JUDGEMENTS

- Right to Privacy declared a Fundamental Right
- Homosexuality decriminalised
- Ayodhya Judgment, paved the way for Ram Mandir construction
- Gave Abortion Rights to unmarried women
- Cancelled Electoral Bond Scheme
- Upheld the scrapping of Article 370

Rich tributes were paid to him by CJI-designate Khanna and Bar leaders, including the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, SCBA president Kapil Sibal and others to mark the pivotal moment in India's judicial history. "You asked me what keeps me going. It is this court which has kept me going, because there is not a single day when you feel that you have not learned something, that you have not had an opportunity to serve the society. "And there is no greater feeling than being able to serve those in need and the people you would never meet, people you possibly do not even know, people whose lives you have the ability to affect without ever having seen them," a visibly emotional CJI said. In his address, CJI Chandrachud recounted his journey, from sitting in the last row of the court as a young law student to his time on the revered corridors of the SC.

He reflected on the immense privilege of serving the country, emphasising that each day spent in the court was an opportunity to learn and grow in both legal knowledge and personal insight. "I was always aware of the overpowering presence of the greats of this court and the responsibility that came with sitting in this chair. But at the end of the day, it is not about the individual, it is about the institution and the cause of justice we uphold here," the CJI said. He spoke with admiration for his colleagues, particularly highlighting his time on the bench with Justices Pardiwala and Misra, noting the camaraderie and diversity of perspectives that enriched their collective work. The CJI also expressed his confidence in the future of the court, reassuring the legal community that his successor, Justice Khanna, whom he described as "dignified, stable and deeply committed to justice", would lead the court with equal dedication and vision. In a heartfelt conclusion, CJI Chandrachud expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to his journey, senior advocates, juniors, officers and staff, acknowledging that each one of them played a role in shaping his understanding of the law and life. Justice Khanna wished good luck to the CJI, saying, "He has made my task easy and tough. Easy because of the revolutions ushered in and tough because I cannot walk up to him. He will be sorely missed. His youthfulness is not known here only but also abroad. In Australia, there were so many who came to me and asked what his age was." **Continued on page 2**



Representational Image

NSCN (IM) threatens to break ceasefire agreement

PTI ■ DIMAPUR

Naga insurgent group National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) NSCN (IM) has threatened to break its 27-year-old ceasefire agreement with the government and return to its "armed struggle" if its demands for a separate "national flag and constitution" are not met. The group, which carried out a violent insurgency in Nagaland soon after India's independence in 1947, entered into a ceasefire pact in 1997 before starting prolonged peace talks with the government's interlocutors. On August 3, 2015, the NSCN(IM) signed a framework agreement with the government in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to find a permanent solution. In a statement released on Friday, general secretary of the group and chief political negotiator Thuingaleng Muivah said he and former chairman, late Isak Chishi Swu, went to the negotiating table for the resolution of the conflict through peaceful negotiation and also honouring the commitment of former prime ministers PV Narasimha Rao, HD Deve Gowda, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and others to resolve the issue through peaceful

political negotiation, leaving aside armed movement. Accordingly, the political negotiations began on August 1, 1997 and since then more than 600 rounds of talks had been held without any pre-conditions both in India and abroad, leading to the signing of the framework agreement of August 3, 2015, he said. Muivah alleged that authorities and the leadership in the government have "deliberately betrayed" the letter and spirit of the framework agreement by refusing to recognise and acknowledge the Naga "sovereignty national flag and sovereign national constitution". He said the benchmark for a political agreement between the government and the NSCN must be according to the letter and spirit of the framework agreement wherein among others, the Naga "sovereign national flag and Naga sovereign national constitution" must be an integral part of the political agreement. Muivah said today or tomorrow, Naga's "unique history, sovereignty and freedom, sovereign territory, sovereign national flag and sovereign national constitution are non-negotiable." **Continued on page 2**



Israeli soccer fans attacked, five hospitalised, 62 detained

AP ■ AMSTERDAM

Israeli fans and protesters clashed overnight after a soccer match in Amsterdam, leaving five people hospitalised and 62 arrested, police said Friday. Dutch authorities said attackers systematically targeted Israeli fans. It was not clear how the violence began. Dutch and Israeli leaders denounced the violence as antisemitic. Video also showed Israeli fans chanting anti-Arab slogans in the streets at some point. Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema told reporters Friday that the Dutch counter-terror watchdog said there was no concrete threat to Israeli soccer fans before the game. Peter Holla, the city's acting police chief, said at the news conference that the fans were "willfully attacked." Condemnation of the violence poured in from Jewish groups. Israel's foreign minister left on an urgent diplomatic trip to the Netherlands. Security concerns have shrouded matches with Israeli teams in multiple countries over the past year because of global tensions linked to the wars in the Middle East. The Amsterdam police said in a post on social media platform X that they have started a major investigation into multiple violent incidents. The post did not provide further details about those injured or detained in Thursday night's violence following the Europa League match between Ajax and Maccabi Tel Aviv. **Continued on page 2**

J and K has had 10 terror attacks since October 16

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The merciless killing of two Village Defence Group (VDG) members in the higher reaches of the Kishtwar district in the Jammu region has shaken the top brass of the security establishment, close on the heels of multiple attacks on the security forces and migrant workers since the formation of Omar Abdullah led popular government in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. So far a total number

of 10 incidents of terrorist violence have been reported across different areas of Jammu and Kashmir since October 16. Meanwhile, the dead bodies of two VDGs killed by terrorists were recovered on Friday from near a rivulet in the Pongdwari area in the Keshwan belt. "Two VDG members, Nazir Ahmed and Kuldeep Kumar from Ohli-Kuntwara, went missing in the upper reaches while grazing livestock," a police spokesperson said.

"My brother and Nazir were abducted and killed by terrorists. They were village defence guards and had gone to graze cattle as usual," Kuldeep Kumar's brother Prithvi, told a news agency. These VDGs form the backbone of the security grid in the entire Jammu region. By targeting them, terrorist handlers aim to demotivate them against participating in the ongoing anti-terrorist operations launched in the region to flush them out of



their safe hideouts. According to official sources, over 4,100 VDGs and 32,000 SPOs were engaged in Jammu and Kashmir, with different responsibilities for the protection of civilians and anti-terrorist operations under the direct supervision of district Superintendents of Police (SP). A massive cordon-and-search operation is also underway in Kishtwar to track down the terrorists responsible for the killings. The operation is concentrated in the Kuntwara,

Ohli, and Munzla Dhar hilly areas of Kishtwar. Director General J and K Police Nalin Prabhat and Additional Director General of Police Jammu Anand Jain visited Kishtwar to review ongoing operations on Friday. White Knight Corps Commander Lieutenant General Navin Sachdeva also landed in Kishtwar and held a meeting with the Director General J and K Police to chalk out their counter strategy. **Continued on page 2**

India faced 255 days of extreme weather this year

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

India faced 93 percent days of extreme weather from January to September this year. Of the 255 days out of 274, India experienced extreme weather events marked by heat and cold waves, cyclones, lightning, heavy rain, floods and landslides, almost every day in the first nine months of this year which claimed to 3,200 lives, affected 3.2 million hectare (mha) of crops, destroyed 235,862 houses and buildings, and killed approximately 9,457 livestock. The report titled "Climate India 2024: An Assessment of Extreme Weather Events" by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), based on the India Meteorological Department (IMD) data has come days ahead of the 2024 United



Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Azerbaijan's Baku from November 11 to 22. Compared to this, the first nine months of 2023 recorded extreme weather on 235 of 273 days, with 2,923 deaths, 1.84 mha of crops affected, 80,293 houses damaged, and 92,519 animal deaths. The year

2024 also set several climate records. January was India's ninth driest since 1901. In February, the country recorded its second-highest minimum temperature in 123 years. May saw the fourth-highest mean temperature on record, and July, August and September all registered their highest minimum

temperatures since 1901. In the Northwest, January was the second driest, and July recorded the region's second-highest minimum temperature. The Southern Peninsula saw its hottest February ever, followed by exceptionally hot and dry March and April, but with a 36.5 percent surplus in July rainfall and the second-highest minimum temperature in August. According to the report, between January and February, extreme weather events spanned 50 days, a sharp rise from 38 days in 2022 and 28 in 2023. Cold days and cold waves dominated, occurring on 38 days-a 17-day increase from the previous year. Additionally, lightning and storms were recorded on 17 days, up from 5 days last year. **Continued on page 2**

Make Congress 'Yuvraj' speak in praise of Savarkar: PM Modi

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Seeking to drive a wedge among the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) constituents over their ideological differences, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday dared the MVA leaders to get Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speak in praise of the contributions made to the country by Veer Savarkar and Balasaheb Thackeray. Kick-starting his campaign for the State Assembly polls from north Maharashtra where he addressed election rallies at Nashik and Dhule, PM Modi played the "Maharashtra self-respect and pride card", when he slammed the Congress leaders for denigrating Savarkar and the Shiv Sena (UBT) — which considered Savarkar as its icon — for allying



with the grand-old party. Taking pot shots at both the Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT), the PM said: "In Maharashtra, Savarkar is a source of inspiration... They [Congress leaders] never allowed Marathi language to get the classical language status. But they abuse Savarkar regularly." **Continued on page 2**

HARVESTING HISTORY Shahjahanpur farmer unearths cache of 1857 Revolt-era weapons

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ SHAHJAHANPUR

A farmer in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, uncovered a surprising find while plowing his field - a hidden cache of historical weapons believed to date back to the 1857 Indian Rebellion. District authorities have secured the weapons, which are now stored in a safe repository, and have reached out to the Archaeological Department for further examination. District Magistrate Dharmendra Pratap Singh shared the details on Friday, "Babu Ram, a farmer from Dakkhia Parvezpur in Nigohi police station area, was plowing his field recently when he discovered an

iron sword-like object beneath the soil. As he continued digging, he uncovered several more weapons buried underground." According to Singh, as the excavation continued, more weapons emerged from the soil. In total, the field yielded 23 swords, remnants of 12 matchlock rifles, one spear, and a dagger. The rifles discovered are heavily deteriorated, with only the barrels and some metal fragments intact, suggesting that termites may have consumed the wooden parts over time. Given the style of the gun barrels, experts believe they are indeed matchlock rifles. Upon learning of the discovery, district authorities dispatched a team led by the sub-divisional



magistrate to the site. The recovered weapons have since been moved to the Nigohi police station for safekeeping. Dr. Vikas Khurana, Head of the History Department at Swami Shukdevanand College in Shahjahanpur, suggested that the weapons may be linked to the 1857 Indian Rebellion. "These weapons appear to have characteristics of Rohilla culture. It is possible that when the British forces advanced after defeating the rebels in 1857, the freedom fighters retreated to the forest and may have buried their weapons to avoid capture," Dr. Khurana explained. "Victorious armies typically do not hide their weapons, so it is likely these were hidden by the

revolutionaries who were in retreat." Experts believe this discovery could provide valuable insights into the local history of the 1857 rebellion. Dr. Khurana further said, "If confirmed, these weapons could serve as a crucial link to the area's involvement in the first war of Indian independence. They offer a tangible connection to the courage and struggle of those who fought in the 1857 revolt." The district administration has written to the Archaeological Department to initiate a detailed analysis of the artifacts, which could confirm their historical significance and possibly shed light on the events of the 1857 rebellion in the region.

AMU minority status: SC defers question to new bench, overturns earlier judgment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday in 4:3 majority judgment deferred the question of Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) minority status to a new three bench and overruled the 1967 judgment that said the university cannot be considered a minority institution since it was created by a Central law. The majority judgment authored by CJI DY Chandrachud, also on behalf of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said, "The view taken in Azeez Basha (1967 verdict) that an educational institution is not established by minority if it derives its legal character through a statute, is overruled." Before pronouncing the judgment by bench, CJI Chandrachud said there were four separate opinions, including three dissenting verdicts. The majority verdict headed by the CJI laid down tests for considering the issue of AMU's minority status. The outgoing CJI asked the case's judicial records to be placed before the regular bench, after receiving instructions from the new CJI on the administrative side, for



deciding the issue on the minority status besides adjudicating appeals against a 2006 verdict of the Allahabad High Court. In his dissent, Justice Surya Kant opined the reference of the matter to a seven-judge bench by a division bench of the SC was incorrect. Justice Dipankar Datta too echoed a similar sentiment saying it might set a "dangerous precedent". "A two-judge bench tomorrow may say I doubt the basic structure (Kesavananda Bharati verdict). I refer it to a 15-judge bench. This is what would happen if we accept the majority opinion. Can it be done?" asked Justice Datta. Justice Datta in the concluding part of his verdict

wrote, "In terms of clause 5 of Article 145, it is my firm opinion that not only do the references do not require an answer, it is also declared that AMU is not a minority educational institution and that the appeals seeking minority status for it should fail." Pronouncing a separate opinion on the matter, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma agreed with the two other dissenting judges on the point of reference. "The establishment of an institution by the minority is necessary for the said minority to claim right of administration under Article 30 (of the Constitution)," he opined. Article 30 of the Constitution deals with right of minorities to establish and

administer educational institutions. "I would like to make it very clear that my judgement is neither an assenting nor a dissenting judgement. It is my personal opinion based upon the law, the judgements cited and the arguments and the facts on the subject," clarified Justice Sharma. The issue of AMU's minority status has been caught in a legal maze for the last several decades. The SC had on February 12, 2019, referred to a seven-judge bench the contentious issue. A similar reference was made in 1981. The fabled institution, however, got back its minority status when the Parliament passed the AMU (Amendment) Act in 1981.

The Congress-led UPA government at the Centre had moved in appeal against the Allahabad High Court's 2006 verdict. The university filed a separate petition against it. The BJP-led NDA government informed the SC in 2016 that it would withdraw the appeal filed by the erstwhile UPA government. It had cited the apex court's 1967 judgment in the Basha case to claim that AMU was not a minority institution since it was a central university funded by the government. In 1967, a five-judge Constitution Bench in the S Azeez Basha Vs. Union of India said AMU was a Central university and couldn't be considered a minority institution.

President Murmu bats for prompt legal action against corrupt



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Asserting that delay or weak action encourages unethical people, President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said prompt legal action against corrupt is extremely important. Addressing the vigilance awareness week function of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), she said properties worth over USD 12 billion have been seized in the last ten years under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). President Murmu said trust is the foundation of social life and the source of unity. "Public trust in the government's work and welfare schemes is the source of power for governance. Corruption is not only an obstacle to economic progress, it also reduces trust in society. It adversely affects the feelings of fraternity among people. It also has a widespread impact on the country's unity and integrity," the president said. She said every year on Sardar Patel's birth anniversary on October 31, "we take a pledge to keep the country's unity and integrity intact." "This is not just a ritual. It is a pledge to be taken seriously. We all have a collective responsibility to fulfill it," the president said. Murmu said prompt legal action against the corrupt is extremely important. "Delay in action or weak action encourages unethical persons. But it is also necessary that every action and person should not be viewed with suspicion. We should avoid this. Keeping in mind the dignity of the person, no

action should be motivated by malice. The objective of any action should be to establish justice and equality in the society," she said. President Murmu said a comprehensive approach will have to be adopted to eradicate corruption. "We will have to go to the root of this disease. It will not be effective to cure it only through symptoms. The eternal values of the Indian society like integrity, ethics, compassion and transparency have to be strengthened. There is a need for strengthening of these life values," she said. Citing Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and e-tendering, she said the Centre has taken several measures to check corruption. President Murmu said if any work is done with the right spirit and determination, success is certain. "Some people considered uncleanness to be the destiny of our country. But strong leadership, political will and contribution of citizens have brought good results in the field of cleanliness. Similarly, to consider the elimination of corruption as impossible is a pessimistic attitude of some people, which is not right," the president said. She expressed confidence that the government of India's policy of 'zero tolerance against corruption' will eradicate the roots of this malice. President Murmu said that morality is the ideal of Indian society. "When some people start considering accumulation of things, money or property the standard of a good life, then they deviate from this ideal

and resort to corrupt activities. Happiness lies in living life with self-respect by fulfilling the basic needs," she said. The president said in "our society, integrity and discipline are considered the ideals of life". About 2,300 years ago, Megasthenes (ancient Greek historian) wrote about Indian people that they dislike indiscipline and follow the law, she said. "There is simplicity and austerity in their lives. Similar mentions have been made by Fa-Hien about our ancestors. In this context, this year's theme of CVC 'Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity' is very apt," President Murmu said. Probity watchdog CVC observed the vigilance awareness week from October 28 to November three, this year. Along with the vigilance awareness week, the commission organises a three-month campaign on preventive vigilance which has been undertaken by the ministries, departments, organisations of the Central government from August 16 and will continue till November 15. The five focus areas of the campaign are capacity building, identification and implementation of systemic improvement, up-dation of circulars, guidelines, manuals, disposal of complaints received before June 30, 2024 and dynamic digital presence. Central Vigilance Commissioner Praveen Kumar Srivastava and Vigilance Commissioner A S Rajeev, among others, were present at the event.

Rahul congratulates Trump



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has written to US President-elect Donald Trump, congratulating him on his victory and expressed confidence that under his leadership, the two nations will further deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. "I wish you the very best during your second term as President of the United States of America," Rahul Gandhi wrote. Trump, 78, won the race to the White House, trouncing his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. The Republican leader has also served as the 45th President of the US after his first victory in 2016. Rahul Gandhi has also written to outgoing US vice president Kamala Harris congratulating her on her spirited presidential campaign and said her unifying message of hope will continue to inspire many.

mutual interest. I also hope that we will continue to work towards expanding avenues and opportunities for both Indians and Americans," the former Congress chief wrote in his letter to Trump, dated November 7. "I wish you the very best during your second term as President of the United States of America," Rahul Gandhi wrote. Trump, 78, won the race to the White House, trouncing his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. The Republican leader has also served as the 45th President of the US after his first victory in 2016. Rahul Gandhi has also written to outgoing US vice president Kamala Harris congratulating her on her spirited presidential campaign and said her unifying message of hope will continue to inspire many.

LK Advani turns 97, PM Modi extends greetings



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Veteran BJP leader LK Advani, who as the party president crafted its rise to become a central force in national politics, turned 97 on Friday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauding him as one of India's most admired

statesmen who devoted himself to furthering the country's development. Modi said this year is even more special because Advani was conferred the Bharat Ratna for his outstanding service to the nation. "Among India's most admired statesmen, he has devoted himself to furthering India's development. He has always

been respected for his intellect and rich insights. I am fortunate to have received his guidance for many years. I pray for his long and healthy life," the prime minister said in a social media post. Former president Ram Nath Kovind, also greeted Advani at the latter's residence and described him as a statesman.

Manipur violence: Fresh arson, attacks in Jiribam

PTI ■ IMPHAL

At least six houses were torched and residents of a tribal village were attacked by a group of armed militants in ethnic strife-torn Manipur's Jiribam district, police said on Friday. The incident occurred on Thursday evening in Zairon Hmar village after the group of militants set the houses on fire, a senior officer said. "Preliminary reports suggested that several villagers managed to flee during the attack and took shelter in nearby forest. At least six houses were severely damaged due to the arson. An investigation is underway," he said. Kuki-Zo organisations claimed that a woman, a resident of the village, was killed during the attack but the report of death has not been confirmed by the district police. Manipur has been rocked by ethnic violence since May last year and over 200 people were killed. The violence erupted on May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

India, Australia hold military exercise Austrahind in Pune



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

The third edition of joint military exercise between India and Australia named Austrahind commenced at Foreign Training Node, Pune on Friday, defence ministry said here. The exercise will end on November 21. Giving details, officials said the exercise is an annual event conducted alternatively in India and Australia. Last edition of the same exercise was conducted in Australia in December 2023. The Indian contingent comprising 140 personnel will be represented mainly by a battalion of the Dogra Regiment and 14 personnel from the Indian Air Force. The Australian Army contingent comprising 120 personnel will be represented by the 13th Light Horse Regiment of the 10th Brigade of 2nd Division. Aim of the is to promote

military cooperation between India and Australia through enhancement of interoperability in conduct of joint sub conventional operations in semi-urban environment and semi-desert terrain under Chapter VII of the UN mandate. The exercise will focus on physical fitness, joint planning and joint tactical drills. The exercise will be conducted in two phases - combat conditioning and tactical training phase, and validation phase. Drills aspects to be rehearsed during the exercise will include response to a terrorist action of capturing a defined territory; establishment of a Joint Operations Centre; conduct of joint counter terrorism operations like Raid and Search and Destroy Missions; securing of a helipad; employment of drones and counter drone measures and Special Heli Borne Operations.

Military museums to be digitally linked soon: CDS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Friday said work is underway to virtually link the various military museums to one e-platform under a project that aims to spread awareness about India's glorious military heritage. In his keynote address at the inaugural ceremony of the second edition of the Indian Military Heritage Festival here, the CDS also pitched for creating military fiction work that combines literary fiction with military events of the past to make them more accessible to the masses. "We, in the armed forces, with an intent to spread awareness of our glorious history and heritage, have initiated a project of e-linking of our military museums. We already e-linked about eighteen of these military museums, and shortly we are going to e-link all 47-48 military museums. So, they will be available at one site, you need not have to go there," General Chauhan said. The CDS said, "We are also thinking of e-linking all the war museums" to a national platform, so that it would be available to people, who wish to visit these sites virtually. Similarly, to familiarise people with military valour, a hybrid model has been adopted for "battlefield



tourism", he added. "This includes online links of various battlefields where the armed forces have fought, and actual field tours of those battlefields will also be organised for those wanting further information on the exploits of the Indians armed forces in these theatres of war," the CDS said. The event also witnessed the launch of Project Shaurya Gatha which is an initiative of the Department of Military Affairs and think-tank USI. The project aims to conserve and promote India's military heritage through education and tourism, it said. The festival aims to engage

global and Indian think-tanks, corporations, public and private sector undertakings, non-profit organisations, academicians, and research scholars focusing on India's national security, foreign policy, military history and military heritage. The CDS, underscoring the importance of art in war said, the British not only practised the art of war but also patronised art works related to war. Sir Stanley Spencer served as an official war artist in World War 1 and World War 2. His works depicted daily lives of soldiers and emotional toils of

the war," he said. The British in India had also developed a company school of painting that depicted daily and military lives. The CDS also recalled the contribution made by Colonel Arul Raj, whose paintings adorn the walls of military establishments from the South Block to Manekshaw Centre. Perhaps, there is a need to create a catalogue or organise a retrospective exhibition of his art works, he said. The CDS further emphasised that military literature plays a significant role in preserving and interpreting experiences, values and ethos of the

military. Poetry and prose, each offer a unique insight into the military experience, he said. "What I think is missing is the military fiction or the art fiction part of it. When I was very young, I remember authors like Manohar Malgaonkar and his books like 'Distant Drum', 'A Combat of Shadows', 'Spy in Amber', where he combines military historical events along with fiction to make it easily readable for the ordinary audience, or the citizens. That I think is missing in the Indian context and we need to do more about it," the CDS said.



FIRST COLUMN

TRUMP 2.0:
IMPACT ON INDIA

Trump's return could offer India a pivotal role in global tech and manufacturing



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The third time is a charm, as the saying goes and we are not talking about PM Modi coming back to power for three consecutive terms, but his close friend, the 47th President of the US, Donald Trump. Having successfully dodged a couple of bullets (quite literally), impeachments, and felony charges, President Trump, triumphed over the collective choice of the most powerful economy in the world the United States of America. While the right-wingers across the globe, including in India celebrated his victory, as a literal victory for the "RIGHT" and what they saw as the tyranny of the so-called "left" liberals, President Trump 2.0 is most likely to be more nuanced than his version one. What it means for India is a mixed box of chocolates which can be bitter or boldly sweet depending on the pick.

President-elect Trump is known to be a hard negotiator, particularly on trade topics and he has famously described India as one of the highest offenders on this front. He is a businessman with decades of experience and has a transactional approach to trade, something not alien to Indian politicians particularly, from the Western regions. Trump's presidency 1.0 and the humungous growth in India-US bilateral commercial relations, plus a business-oriented Indian government at the centre, for now over a decade, has also served as a training ground for several tough negotiators to emerge from the bureaucratic class in India. Therefore, while officials in the government are aware of the tough negotiations ahead with the US on trade-related matters or import tariffs or say restrictions, they are hopeful, of finding a middle path given their familiarity with the President's style of functioning.



The dragon in the room would be cagey, as President-elect Trump in the run-up to the elections has vowed to impose stiff tariffs on imports from China. This may be great news for India, especially with the current government's focus being on making Bharat the manufacturing hub for electronics hardware, at least for the region.

Indian bureaucrats pushing the manufacturing envelope are deeply aware, that developing India into a hub, is a long-term game that may outlive the current regimes in DC and Delhi. They are also acutely aware that, by allowing friendshoring to India, by large US companies in the China plus one model, Trump will have an advantage. He could negotiate this card by pressuring India to buy perhaps more hydrocarbons or defence technology from the US. While the technology partnership was not primarily the centrepiece of India US bilateral relationship under Trump 1.0, his successor Joe Biden created a delectable topping with cooperation on critical and emerging technologies as an important element of the partnership. Initiatives such as iCET (initiative for critical and emerging technologies) which are directly monitored by the heads of both countries have put an unwavering sanctity to the tech partnership between the two democracies.

President Trump could either encourage US tech to keep fulfilling India's avowed target of being the next global electronics manufacturing hub while holding it as a bargaining chip, or, he may find a creative solution to persuade some of these companies to shift back some of their factories to domestic shores. The latter possibility seems unlikely as Donald Trump has, traditionally been a huge supporter of creating more jobs for Americans in the old manufacturing sectors. Much of President Trump's technology policy is likely to be curated by his biggest donor and tech czar Elon Musk. Elon Musk has business interests in China where he has some of his largest Tesla factories, besides, he has been trying to enter the Indian automobile market with little success. His other business interests including satellite-based telecommunication services, have struggled to start beaming in India. Many of these factors would determine the crucial next four years of the Modi-Trump era.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Trump's return: A radical shift in US foreign policy



K S TOMAR

As Donald Trump returns to the White House, he may redefine the boundaries of American leadership and influence in an increasingly multipolar world

Trump's return to the White House in 2024 sparks a torrent of questions about the future of NATO, the American economy, relationships with allies, and the trajectory of the Ukraine war. Trump's previous tenure exhibited a strong tilt toward "America First" policies, frequently challenging long-standing global alliances and multilateral commitments. A Trump-led presidency, therefore, could dramatically shift the geopolitical landscape, leaving allies like NATO in uncertainty, reorienting America's economic policies, testing India's balancing act, and redefining China relations.

The Future of NATO: Endurance or Erosion? NATO, the cornerstone of Western defence since 1949, stands as a central topic of speculation with Trump's return. During his presidency, Trump questioned the alliance's relevance, particularly its financial obligations, going as far as to imply a possible US withdrawal if members didn't contribute "their fair share." This stance generated unease among NATO allies, who rely on the US for critical defence resources, particularly amid heightened Russian aggression. As Trump resumes office, his approach to NATO could undergo even bolder recalibration. The European defence structure, largely dependent on the US, might face significant strategic and funding shifts, possibly prompting European powers to take on more defence responsibilities. A reduction in US military and financial support for NATO might embolden adversarial actors, especially Russia. A scaled-back US commitment could mean vulnerabilities for Eastern European countries like Poland and the Baltic states, which depend on NATO's security umbrella to counter Russian expansionism. The impact on NATO, therefore, hinges heavily on Trump's strategic decisions regarding alliance burden-sharing and his capacity to persuade European allies to increase their defence expenditures.

The Global Stakes: A Pivotal Crossroads The implications of Trump's return extend far beyond America's borders. With China's rise and Russia's ambitions continuing to shape global security dynamics, Trump's foreign policy choices will carry weighty consequences. His transactional approach to alliances, "America First" economics, and unpredictable stance on defence alliances could reshape international relationships, with traditional allies rethinking their reliance on US support. His handling of NATO's commitments, the Ukraine war, and relations with global powers like India and China will determine the future stability of Western influence and the global balance of power.

China and India: Competing powers: Under Trump, the US-China relationship could revert to one defined by rivalry, as he has consistently advocated a tough stance on China's trade practices and global ambitions. Trump may reassert his strict tariffs on Chinese goods and impose even tighter restrictions on Chinese companies operating in the US, aiming to curb China's influence in areas like technology and manufacturing. For India, Trump's return poses a mix of opportunities and challenges. His administration was notably warm toward India, fostering stronger economic and defence ties through agreements such as the "2+2" Dialogue. A renewed focus on countering China could make India a key strategic partner, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. Trump might offer India more defence cooperation or



A RENEWED FOCUS ON COUNTERING CHINA COULD MAKE INDIA A KEY STRATEGIC PARTNER, PARTICULARLY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC. TRUMP MIGHT OFFER INDIA MORE DEFENCE COOPERATION OR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS, POTENTIALLY STRENGTHENING INDIA'S MILITARY AND ECONOMIC POSITIONING IN ASIA

technology transfers, potentially strengthening India's military and economic positioning in Asia. However, India's balancing act between the US and Russia—given India's defence ties with Moscow—could be complicated if Trump takes a firm stance against the Ukraine conflict. India's careful neutrality on the Russia-Ukraine issue might attract scrutiny, with Trump possibly expecting more alignment with US strategic priorities.

Economic Fallout-America's Financial Future: Trump's economic approach has traditionally leaned toward protectionism, focusing on restoring jobs, renegotiating trade deals, and limiting dependence on foreign supply chains. This economic philosophy could be reinvigorated if he returns to the Oval Office, with potential implications for trade, inflation, and employment in the US. One possible outcome is the continuation or even intensification of tariffs on China, aimed at reducing the US trade deficit. However, these tariffs historically contributed to increased costs for American consumers and businesses, raising prices on imported goods and creating inflationary pressures.

Another protectionist push could have similar consequences, forcing Americans to pay more for everyday products as companies pass on tariff costs. Trump's "America First" approach could also mean tax reforms or incentives for companies to manufacture domestically. This reshoring could create jobs but would also drive up production costs due to higher wages, potentially making US goods less competitive internationally. Furthermore, a rigid stance on trade could strain relations with economically integrated allies,

with Trump demanding trade terms perceived as fair to the US, which could disrupt existing agreements and introduce new economic tensions globally.

Allies under Pressure: A Reshaped Global Order?

The Trump administration's approach to alliances was often unpredictable, blending close relationships with some leaders while alienating others. His "transactional" foreign policy style prioritised immediate gains over long-standing partnerships, which led to fractures with allies. Now Trump's return could mean intensified pressure on allies to prioritise bilateral deals over multilateral cooperation, transforming relationships with the EU, Japan, South Korea, and other allies. Trump's policies toward Europe might manifest in demands for favourable trade deals or concessions on defence spending. For Japan and South Korea, his re-emergence could signal heightened pressure to contribute more to their defence arrangements, potentially testing their security alliances with the US. Even Middle Eastern allies, like Saudi Arabia, could face new expectations under a Trump administration more interested in specific, tangible returns on US support rather than abstract commitments.

The Ukraine War: A Fractured Consensus?

Trump's return to the White House could introduce an alternative perspective on the Ukraine conflict, deviating from the largely unified Western support for Ukraine. Trump has openly criticised high US financial aid to Ukraine, signalling his belief that European countries should shoulder more of the burden.

With the conflict consuming billions of dollars in American aid, he

may choose to reduce US involvement, putting pressure on European allies to increase their support and potentially compelling Ukraine to consider negotiations. A Trump-led administration might seek to avoid confrontation with Russia, which could weaken Ukraine's position on the battlefield. Trump's emphasis on diplomacy over confrontation with Moscow could affect NATO's cohesion, with some members potentially favouring a stronger stance against Russia while the US takes a more hands-off approach. This scenario could embolden Russia, who might see a shift in US leadership as a chance to pursue more aggressive tactics in Ukraine or even attempt to influence other former Soviet territories.

The fate of the Ukraine war, therefore, would depend largely on Trump's approach—whether he chooses to maintain US support for Kyiv or pivot toward encouraging negotiations, potentially shifting the course of the conflict and signalling a new era of US-Russia dynamics. In many ways, Trump's presidency would signify a recalibration of American foreign policy, returning to his brand of nationalism mixed with pragmatism.

However, this approach could generate friction with allies, alter the global economy, and challenge existing diplomatic norms. Whether this path will foster a stronger, more self-reliant US or an isolated and fragmented world order remains to be seen. As Trump is poised to start second term, his return promises to redefine the boundaries of American leadership and influence in an increasingly multipolar world.

(The writer is strategic affairs analyst and political analyst based in Shimla; views are personal)

Expanding healthcare for India's elderly: A new phase for PM-JAY

Comprehensive healthcare needs of India's rapidly growing elderly population require further policy evolution, aiming for a holistic, sustainable healthcare system for the aging citizens

India is home to a significant elderly population, with approximately 138 million people aged 60 and above, including more than 10 crore individuals over the age of 70. This segment of the population has unique and pressing healthcare needs. As people age, they are increasingly susceptible to multiple chronic conditions that require specialised care and consistent medical attention. According to the Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI), every fourth Indian over 60 years and every fifth Indian over 45 years reports poor health. Additionally, 75 per cent of the elderly have one or more chronic diseases, and 40 per cent experience disabilities. 1 in 4 elderly individuals has



ASHISH PANGHAL

multi-morbidity, with diabetes and cancer rates rising, particularly in urban areas. As per the Global Health Estimates data of 2019, non-communicable diseases such as ischemic heart diseases, stroke, and diabetes are leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) lost among individuals over 60. This highlights the growing need for specialised treatments and consistent

medical attention for age-related disorders. The rising prevalence of hypertension, heart disease, and respiratory issues among the elderly increases the need for hospitalisation and specialised care, placing immense pressure on healthcare providers and overwhelming the elderly and their families. The financial burden associated with recurrent hospital visits and treatments is a significant challenge.

Also, India's current medical inflation rate, standing at approximately 14 per cent which worsens the healthcare difficulties confronting the elderly. Escalating medical costs, including those for hospitalisation, doctor consultations, and medications, make it increasingly chal-

lenging for this vulnerable population to access necessary care. Inflation, coupled with the high cost of living, leaves many elderly individuals struggling to afford even basic healthcare services.

Additionally, as medical inflation continues to rise, insurance companies are compelled to cover higher expenses for medical procedures and treatments. This, in turn, results in increased premiums for policyholders. For many elderly individuals, these higher insurance costs compound the financial burden, deepening the overall healthcare affordability crisis.

While the expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana



(AB PM-JAY) is a significant step towards improving healthcare access, covering an additional 6 crore individuals from 4.5 crore families, and focusing on seniors aged 70 and above, several challenges persist in the insurance market. Current insurance products are limited, particularly for individuals over the age of 70. Pre-existing diseases (PED) such

as diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and cancer often result in waiting periods or outright denial of coverage. Furthermore, insurance premiums for senior citizens are substantially higher due to the associated health risks, making insurance unaffordable for many. Denial of insurance based on PED, combined with exorbitant premiums, often forces elderly individuals to rely on personal savings or government schemes, leaving them without adequate financial protection against serious illnesses.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), India's elderly population is projected to nearly triple by 2050, reaching 320 million. This demo-

graphic shift will necessitate more comprehensive solutions to safeguard the well-being of the nation's senior citizens. While the expansion of PM-JAY is a welcome development, it does not fully address the broader geriatric needs of India's aging population.

AB PM-JAY is largely limited to inpatient care. The scheme does not cover outpatient services, which make up a considerable portion of healthcare costs. Research published in the International Journal of Preventive Medicine shows that outpatient care accounts for 40-80 per cent of health expenditures in India. Consequently, even with the enhanced insurance coverage, many individuals may

continue to face out-of-pocket expenses for treatments that do not require hospitalisation.

There is an urgent need to expand coverage to include services such as long-term care, outpatient services, mental health support, palliative care, and rehabilitation, which are essential for ensuring the well-being of the elderly.

Additionally, the government must focus on reducing financial barriers to healthcare, such as high insurance premiums, and ensuring the inclusion of PED coverage without long waiting periods.

(The writer is senior consultant at Enira Consulting; views are personal)

Marking 50 Years of Artistic Expression

Geeta Chandran is a true icon of Bharatanatyam, celebrating fifty years of remarkable contributions to this classical dance. At a recent festival in New Delhi, her legacy shone brightly, showcasing her innovative spirit and deep passion for the art, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

In the world of Indian classical dance, few names resonate with the passion and innovation of Geeta Chandran. As she marks her 50th year of performing Bharatanatyam, her influence goes beyond the mastery of movement, it's a legacy of reimagining and rejuvenating an ancient art form for the contemporary stage. Celebrated with a two-day festival at New Delhi's Kamani Auditorium, Chandran's golden jubilee was a journey that began with her Arangetram at age 12 and has flourished through decades of performance, teaching and cultural advocacy. Organised by Natya Vriksha, her beloved dance institution, the event became a dynamic expression of Bharatanatyam's enduring power, where tradition met innovation and art met life.

DAY ONE: PRAVAHATI — THE FORWARD FORCE

The first day's performance, titled Pravaahati, was both meditative and exhilarating. Having seen Geeta Chandran perform numerous times, Pravaahati offered something deeply personal and expansive - it was as though the dance itself became a vessel of her mastery and message. The programme began with an evocative Mallari in praise of Shiva, drawing the audience into a space of contemplation as Chandran and her collective invoked the deity through precise footwork, graceful arms and powerful expressions. The performance felt timeless, a moment where past and present intertwined. The journey continued with Varsha

Ritu, where Chandran brought to life Kalidasa's monsoon verses from Ritusamhara. It was a celebration of Bharatanatyam's storytelling power, capturing both the gentleness and force of nature. Watching her, it was as though each movement held a mirror to nature's dance, immersing us fully in its changing rhythms.

Then came Vahati, a piece that celebrated tradition as a dynamic, flowing stream, one that carries the past forward while moving into the future. Chandran's steps seemed to reimagine Bharatanatyam, presenting it as a continuously evolving art. This piece struck a powerful chord, a reminder that Bharatanatyam is not static but ever relevant. Finally, the evening closed with an exuberant Tillana, which radiated pure joy and the applause stayed long after she took her bow.

Throughout, Pravaahati felt like more than a dance performance. It was a powerful statement on the evolving nature of art and the artist's role in pushing the boundaries of tradition. Chandran's words echoed through the performance: "Dance, much like life, should not be limited by tradition; it must evolve and be reinterpreted through the artist's unique perspective."

DAY TWO: A SOLO PERFORMANCE BY VIDUSHI GEETA CHANDRAN

The second day offered a more intimate experience with a solo performance by Chandran herself. Accompanied by an ensemble of musicians, Varun Rajasekharan on Nattuvangam, Smt. Sudha Raghuraman on vocals, Manohar Balachandirane



on mridangam, G. Raghavendra Prasath on violin and G. Raghuraman on flute, she brought Bharatanatyam's most intricate expressions to life. Each musician's skill beautifully complemented her dance, amplifying the emotion and story she conveyed.

In these solo pieces, Chandran laid bare the depth of her devotion to Bharatanatyam. The abhinaya or expressive storytelling, was stunning, transforming familiar narratives into powerful, moving moments. In one piece, she portrayed a waiting heroine and her portrayal struck a delicate balance between anticipation and longing, vividly capturing the subtle tension between presence and absence. Her gestures and expressions spoke of a deep connection to the emotions within the dance, giving the audience an experience that went beyond mere observation.

After the performance, Chandran spoke about her journey, saying, "As I approach this milestone of completing five decades of dancing since my Arangetram, I pay tribute to my Gurus who shared this invaluable art with me, and also gave me the freedom to question and reinterpret it." These words reflected her approach to Bharatanatyam: a constant, respectful re-exploration of tradition that brings new life into ancient forms.

GEETA CHANDRAN'S IMPACT ON BHARATANATYAM GOES WELL BEYOND HER DAZZLING PERFORMANCES. AS THE FOUNDER-PRESIDENT OF NATYA VRIKSHA, SHE HAS CREATED A STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN DANCE AND SOCIAL CAUSES, EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

GEETA CHANDRAN'S LEGACY: MORE THAN JUST DANCE

Geeta Chandran's impact on Bharatanatyam goes well beyond her dazzling performances.

As the Founder-President of Natya Vriksha, she has created a strong connection between dance and social causes, education, and cultural conversations. Her commitment to nurturing young talent and engaging with diverse communities is evident in her outreach programmes. Chandran's numerous accolades, such as the Padma Shri and the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award speak volumes about her standing in the classical dance community.

Yet, for those fortunate enough to witness her anniversary celebration, her most significant achievement lies in her ability to breathe life into Bharatanatyam, ensuring it remains not just relevant but profoundly impactful. Her performances are not just technical showcases; they are deeply immersive experiences that offer insights into the human condition.

As the curtains fell on her 50th-anniversary celebration, the audience erupted in applause, many visibly moved by her lifelong dedication to this art form. This event was not just a milestone; it was a tribute to a life defined by resilience, passion and grace. Geeta Chandran is more than a dancer or teacher; she is a torchbearer, lighting the way forward while remaining deeply connected to the essence of Bharatanatyam. Her legacy will undoubtedly inspire future generations to explore, honour and expand the possibilities of this beautiful, enduring art.



The Four: The Legacy of Innovation and Expression

The art exhibition, 'The Four' is the living tribute to the legacy of the masters of modern Indian art, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

The art galleries escalate your thoughts when you see artists painting their thoughts in the liveliest way possible. All the canvases depict a different story, a different world of emotions, and a different language. The same canvases are interpreted by the viewers in their own way, their own thoughts and that's the beauty of art. The art communicates without words, leading people to find words in patterns and strokes. 'The Four' exhibition presented by the Progressive Art Gallery in collaboration with The Raza Foundation celebrated the birth centenary of four icons of modern Indian art.

The Four exhibitions was the celebration of all the four legendary artists namely, Francis Newton Souza, K. G. Subramanyan, Ram Kumar, and Vasudev S. Gaitonde. The guests explored the historic and remarkable legacy of the four artists. The common ground of all the celebrated artists is that they were all born in 1924. The exhibition is opened at Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi commemorating the 100 years since the birth of these modern masters. The Goan artist, Francis Newton Souza oil on canvas paintings Still Life, Profile of a Man are an exemplary notion that



drew people to his distinctive style evolved into a more expressive and abstract approach, using vibrant colours and bold

brushstrokes. Being in name for exploration of human figures, often depicted in a raw and unfiltered manner, F.N. Souza's painting Profile of a Man is an example of the same. Souza's style was characterised by strong lines, distorted forms and a dark

palette, which he used to explore human emotion, social hypocrisy and religious paradoxes. K.G. Subramanyan known for his polymorphic works made in diverse media ranging from paintings, water colours and reverse painting on glass to murals

is showcased in his work of Ragini Vibhas and Peacock Throne displayed at the Progressive Art Gallery. Inspired through his travels from Varanasi, Ram Kumar depicts human figures to capture the inner essence and spirituality

of landscapes. The untitled paintings of Kumar are an example of the same. The fourth but not the least V.S. Gaitonde's

paintings assume no shape and form and evoke nothing other than themselves and beautiful patterns. He represents a dynamic force in modern Indian painting, capturing the essence of an independent nation and its cultural awakening. The show is curated by art historian Yashodhara Dalmia, and was inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India. It is on public view till November 10, 2024. Together the birth centenary of these four artistry icons is all about diverse thoughts and mindful thinking. 'The Four' exhibition honours these artists but also celebrates the strength and originality of Indian art over the past century.

