

# **Delhi LG cracks whip on illegal immigrants**

#### SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

elhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has issued instructions to District Magistrates and the Commissioner of Police to identify illegal immigrants in Delhi, and take action in coordination with the Central government. "Lieutenant Governor's attention has been drawn to reports on social media and other reliable sources that there is a sudden spurt in the number of illegal immigrants in Delhi. There is also a rise in encroachment by such people on public roads, footpaths, parks etc," stated an official letter from LG's office.

The letter has been forwarded by the LG's Principal Secretary to the Chief Secretary of Delhi, Commissioner of Police, Commissioner of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and Chairman of New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC). A senior official from the MCD told The Pioneer that in light of the letter, a drive will be carried out to identify and evict such people from the land belonging to the MCD, and any illegal immigrants will be reported to the law enforcement agency.

According to reports, at least 20,000 Rohingya are registered in India with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, also known as the UN Refugee Agency) and an estimated 1,100 such people live in New Delhi, including at the Kalindi Kunj camp in South-east Delhi. Ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, due early next year, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders in Delhi have been accusing the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of "patronising the Rohingyas and Bangladeshi living illegally in the city and gaining votes from them". The LG's letter also mentioned that many illegal migrants are being given various officials to be extra vigilant

FILE PHOTO

ID cards in Delhi, and this has the potential to impact electoral politics, "there are reports that efforts are underway for getting their identity documents such as Aadhar, Election Identity Card, etc, prepared on the basis of fake documents and adopting a manipulative process."

It added that these documents are being claimed as citizenship documents by the illegal immigrants. "Election Identity Card, if issued to illegal Card, if issued to illegal immigrants, provides them the most powerful right of democracy i.e. Right to Vote in our country. Giving such rights to illegal immigrants cannot be accepted by any Indian Citizen and such moves can even be detrimental to National security," the letter stated. The letter added that the Chief Secretary may issue instructions to District Magistrates through Divisional Commissioner to exercise extra caution in verification of people applying for identity documents. "Separately, Commissioner Police may also issue instructions to field level

while undertaking specially inspections of squatters along road side and on vacant Government land," it stated, adding that Delhi Police shall conduct a special drive for one month for identification of illegal immigrants and take further action in coordination with central agencies. "All government agencies should also ensure that no unauthorised occupation of public places takes place anywhere in the city as directed by the Supreme Court of India," the letter read. Reacting to the LG's direction, Delhi BJP accused the AAP of viewing it through a political lens. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva stated that previously, encroachments on Delhi's footpaths and around parks were mostly done by hawkers, but in recent months, Resident Welfare and Associations trade organisations have consistently drawn attention to encroachments by Rohingyas and others, who have been settling along roadsides and in parks. "During this period, both small and large criminal incidents have occurred on the streets of Delhi, and in light of this, Delhi's

Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena has directed the Police Commissioner to take action. It is unfortunate that the AAP is politicising the serious issue of encroachments by Rohingyas and others, which is related to the security of Delhi and the BJP strongly condemns this," he said. Reacting to the letter by the LG, the AAP claimed that the BJP is merely using the issue of illegal immigrants for political gains. "A thorough investigation should be launched on how illegal immigrants are entering our country in the first place. For this, the direct responsibility lies with Amit Shah, and the Union Home Ministry," the party said in a statement. It asked that if there are illegal immigrants, how many are there? "This is a massive failure, and the lack of action on detentions highlights it further," they claimed. Further, Delhi's ruling party claimed that while on one hand,

the BJP is granting citizenship to illegal immigrants, and on the other, it is staging a farce of an investigation. "The BJP must stop

this hypocrisy and put a rest to its dirty politics," the AAP said. On November 12, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raided multiple locations in pollbound Jharkhand, apart from West Bengal, in a money West Bengal, in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged illegal infiltration of Bangladeshi nationals, official sources said. A total of 17 places were raided in the two neighbouring states by the Ranchi office of the federal probe agency, a day before the first phase of polling in Iharkhand.

Visuals of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel positioned outside a hotel located on Bariatu Road in Ranchi and a resort in the city were captured by media teams as ED teams scoured for documents, ledger entries and financial records inside. It was in September that the ED had filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to probe an instance of alleged infiltration, and trafficking of some Bangladeshi women into Jharkhand leading to the generation of alleged slush funds. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders had also accused the State Government of aiding such infiltration leading to the altering of the demographic landscape of the tribal-dominated areas of Santhal Pargana and Kolhan regions during the recent poll campaign. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday accused the ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led coalition of converting Jharkhand into a 'dharmashala' for Rohingyas and Bangladeshi infiltrators. Earlier this week, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had announced that a committee would be formed, if the BJP is voted to power in Jharkhand, to identify and drive out infiltrators from the state besides reclaiming land grabbed by them.



### **BCCI stumps PCB dream of Champions Trophy visiting POK**

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Friday strongly objected to Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) purported move to take the Champions Trophy for a tour of the disputed 'Pakistan Occupied Kashmir' (POK), prompting the global body International Cricket Council (ICC) to put the promotional event on hold. The tournament, last played in

2017, is already in limbo after the BCCI officially intimated ICC about the Indian cricket team's inability to travel to Pakistan. The PCB in return, as of now, has rejected the proposed 'Hybrid Model' with India playing its matches in Dubai. The schedule has also been put on hold and the new controversy could only make things ugly. It is learnt that BCCI secretary

Jay Shah on Friday spoke to the top brass of the ICC and condemned this move by Pakistan and has urged the global body to take strong note. "The BCCI secretary, after it came to his notice, called up the ICC and was extremely critical of PCB tweeted.

PCB's move to conduct a Trophy tour of multiple cities which fall under Pakistan Occupied Kashmir," a senior BCCI official privy to the development said according to reports, adding, "He has urged the ICC to take strong action. As far as Islamabad is concerned, there is no issue but there can't be any Trophy tour to POK."

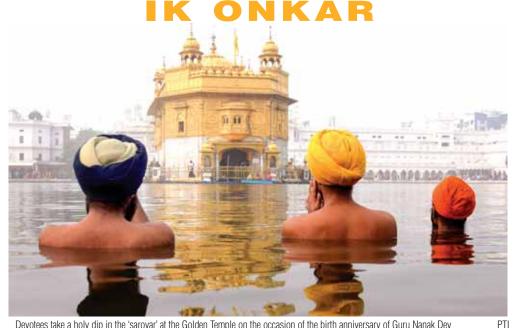
The Trophy Tour is part of the global body's promotional campaign, involving visits to multiple cities as per discussions between the international body and the host country.

However, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), without prior consultation with all stakeholders, announced on its official social media that the Trophy would be taken to Skardu, Murree, and Hunza, areas that fall under the disputed territory. "Get ready, Pakistan! The ICC Champions Trophy 2025 2025 trophy tour kicks off in Islamabad on 16 November, also visiting scenic travel destinations like Skardu, Murree, Hunza and Muzaffarabad. Catch a glimpse of the trophy which Sarfaraz Ahmed lifted in 2017 at The Oval, from 16-24 November," the

### **IAF** aircraft develops snag, PM stranded at **Deoghar airport**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE





Drime Minister Narendra Modi, Pwho was stranded in Jharkhand's Deoghar airport for nearly two hours on Friday after his special Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft developed a snag, flew back to Delhi in another plane. PM Modi was supposed to return to New Delhi on the IAF plane after addressing a rally in Bihar's Jamui, around 80 km from Deoghar. Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi too faced a two hour delay in the schedule due to a grounded helicopter close to the place where PM's craft was held. The PM visited Jamui to attend a

function marking the 150th birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda, celebrated as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas.



"PM Modi left for Delhi from Deoghar in another special aircraft after his IAF plane developed a technical snag. The aircraft could not be rectified on time. The PM had to wait for more than two hours," Deoghar Deputy Commissioner Vishal Sagar said. While Modi waited for the issue to be resolved, the region's airspace was declared a "noflying zone".

Meanwhile, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was also caught in a similar situation in Godda, Jharkhand. Rahul's helicopter, which was supposed to take him back after addressing an election rally, was grounded for about two hours, prompting allegations from the Congress that the delay was politically motivated. "Our leader Rahul Gandhi's

helicopter was not allowed to take off for about two hours, posing a grave threat to his life. This was a security lapse at the behest of the Centre," state minister Deepika Pandey Singh alleged.

Congress also Friday complained to the Election Commission against the alleged grounding of Rahul Gandhi's helicopter in poll-bound Jharkhand and sought its urgent intervention in ensuring a level-playing field in poll campaigning.



RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

s air pollution crossed the As an pointion crosses Commission for Air Quality Management to invoke the stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) from Friday, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi Friday announced staggered timings for government offices in the city in a bid to tackle traffic congestion and reduce pollution levels in the National Capital.

Under the new schedule, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) offices will operate from 8.30 am to 5 pm, Central Government offices from 9 am to 5.30 pm and Delhi Government offices from 10.00 am to 6.30 pm, Atishi said in a post on X.She said the move aims to ease vehicular traffic during peak hours. Revised office timings implemented as part of GRAP-III restrictions effective from Wednesday.

The air quality across several parts of Delhi remained in the "severe" category on Friday morning, with a thick layer of smog once again blanketing the National Capital Region, including Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurugram, which reduced visibility and disrupted both

traffic and flight operations. According to IQAir, a Swiss company, PM2.5 concentration is currently 95.4 times the World Health Organization (WHO) annual PM2.5 guideline value. This has put Delhi on the list of world's most polluted city with AQI 817, followed by Pakistan's Lahore with AQI 802 recorded at 12.30 am. IQAir, a Swiss company, ranks major cities based on Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5)

data. average 396 on Friday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board

While the AQI stood at an

(CPCB). AQI has touched 420

plus. The top five polluted areas in Delhi this morning are Jahangirpuri (with AQI 458), Bawana (455), Wazirpur (455), Rohini (452), and Punjabi Bagh (443), according to Central Pollution Control Board's

day of severe pollution. Of the 39 monitoring stations in Delhi, 21 registered severe AQI levels,

four classified as 'severe

Sameer App. However, the 24-hour overall air quality showed slight

improvement compared to Thursday's AQI of 432.Drone footage captured from areas like AIIMS and Akshardham Temple highlighted the extent of smog, making even prominent landmarks barely visible.

After a high level meeting with officials and all stakeholders, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai announced that an additional 106 cluster buses would ply in the city while metro trains would make 60 extra trips in view of GRAP-3 measures imposed due to worsening air quality. Emergency measures, such as artificial rain, will be considered if the air quality deteriorates further, the minister said, adding that he would Centre about it again. Private construction and demolition activities have been

banned under GRAP III measures, he said.

Continued on page 8

Devotees take a holy dip in the 'sarovar' at the Golden Temple on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev

### 700 Kg drugs seized off Gujarat coast

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI/AHEMDABAD

n a joint operation, agencies on Friday seized about 700 kg of drugs and arrested eight Iranian nationals from Indian territorial waters off the Guiarat coast around Porbandar. The street value of the seized Methamphetamine, a synthetic recreational variety of narcotics, could be anywhere between Rs 2,500-3,500 Crore in the international market, said Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officials. An operation codenamed 'Sagar Manthan- 4' was launched based on

intelligence inputs to intercept an

unregistered vessel, without an AIS



NCB personnel after an operation in which they successfully dismantled an international drug trafficking cartel and seized approximately 700 kg of meth in Gujarat

(automatic identification system) or an electronic boat or ship-tracking indicator, that will be entering the Indian waters with drugs, the NCB said in a statement. The suspect identified and vessel was

"interdicted" by the Navy by mobilising its maritime patrol assets (ships) and the seizure of the drugs and apprehensions took place on Friday, it said.

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### From Sarai Kale Khan to Birsa Munda Chowk, a historical journey

#### RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

Mediaeval era origin Sarai Kale Khan Chowk dating back to the 16-17 Century will now be called Birsa Munda chowk in a tribute to the tribal icon and freedom fighter. The renaming, on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary, was announced on Friday by Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal. November 15 was declared 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' by

the Central government in 2021. Sarai Kale Khan is one of the busiest areas of Delhi, particularly due to the Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT) from where buses ferry travellers to destinations across north India. In the past, it was known as Moocho Waali Sarai

(Inn of Moustaches) because every man had long moustaches, which was a symbol of masculinity in those days.

The renaming of the historic area, comes ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, and was announced by the minister on the occasion of the unveiling of a statue of Birsa Munda by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena at the Baansera Bamboo Park near Sarai Kale Khan inter-state bus terminus (ISBT) in south-east Delhi. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several leaders also paid tributes to the great leader. Birsa Munda spearheaded a tribal movement that started in the



Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Delhi Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Union Minister of State Harsh Malhotra, BJP MPs Manoj Tiwari, Bansuri Swaraj, Kamaljeet Sehrawat and Ramvir Singh Bidhuri and others during the unveiling of a statue of freedom fighter Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary

Bengal Presidency (now Jharkhand) in the late 19th century, making him an important figure in the history of the country's independence movement.

Born in 1875 in present-day Jharkhand, Munda had challenged British rule and is credited with mobilising tribals against the empire. He died in British custody at a young age of 25 years. Munda, the hero of the Indian tribal freedom struggle, played a pivotal role in inspiring the tribal community of the Chotanagpur region to fight for their independence. He led the armed revolution known as "Ulgulan" (the rebellion) against British rule. He belonged to the Munda tribe in the Chhotanagpur Plateau area. He spearheaded an Indian tribal mass

PTI

movement that arose in the Bihar and Jharkhand belt in the early 19th Century, to protest British colonisation.

Munda rallied the tribals to fight against the forceful land grabbing carried out by the British government, which would turn the tribals into bonded labourers, and force them to abject poverty. He influenced his people to realise the importance of owning their land and asserting their rights over it. He founded the faith of Birsait, a blend of animism and indigenous beliefs, which emphasised the worship of a single god. He became their leader and was given the nickname, 'Dharti Aba' or the father of the earth. He died on June 9, 1900, at age 25. Continued on page 8



### city 02

The chief minister shared

# Tribal community exemplifies sacrifice, loyalty and bravery: CM



#### PNS LUCKNOW

Thief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Friday, said that the sacrifice, lovalty and bravery of the tribal community for the motherland serve as a profound source of inspiration. He emphasised that the tribal community, as India's original inhabitants, has consistently shown unwavering dedication in service to the nation. The chief minister made these remarks while inaugurating the Janjati Bhagidari Utsav (International Tribal Participation Festival) on Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Lord Birsa Munda. He said, "During foreign rule, Lord Birsa Munda fought bravely to protect the rights of his community and to seek freedom for the country. The festival is taking place from November 15 to 20 at the Sangeet Natak Academy in Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, with artistes from 22 Indian states, as well as from Slovakia and Vietnam, participating in the event. Welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to celebrate November 15

as Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas, Chief Minister Yogi said this was a meaningful way to honour the sacrifice of Lord Birsa Munda across the country. He added that through this festival, tribal communities from across the country and the state will showcase their art and traditions.

This festival is a unique effort to celebrate the rich history, culture and preservation of tribal heritage, he added. The chief minister emphasised

his government's efforts to empower tribal communities, noting that since his government assumed office in 2017, it has prioritised the needs of these communities, which were previously overlooked by past administrations.

He highlighted efforts to con-nect tribal groups such as Tharu, Kol, Cheru, Gond, and Buksa with essential government schemes through a saturation plan, aiming to ensure that every individual in need receives support. "Our goal is to extend benefits to every eligible member of the tribal community," he stated.

The chief minister added that the tribal community has ben-

Two killed in |

efited from various programmes, including the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, household toilets, LPG connections, old-age pensions, women's pensions and Divyangjan pension.

Chief Minister Yogi outlined the government's ongoing efforts to preserve the culture and traditions of tribal communities. He shared that museums are being built to safeguard the art, traditions and heritage of tribal societies.

One such grand museum, ded-icated to the Tharu tribe's culture, has been constructed in Balrampur, which the chief minister personally visited. Emphasising the importance of staying connected to one's roots while embracing technology, the chief minister noted that museums are also being constructed in areas like Sonbhadra and Bijnor, home to the Buksa tribe, to ensure that future generations remain familiar with their cultural heritage.

Chief Minister Yogi outlined the government's special efforts to enhance education for the tribal community. He shared classes and other disadvanthat schools named after the taged groups.

legendary Eklavya are being set up in various regions to provide modern education for tribal children. "Additionally, ashram system schools are being used to further spread education within these communities," he added.

Emphasising economic growth, Chief Minister Yogi noted that access to various government schemes is helping the tribal society move rapidly toward economic self-sufficiency. He then emphasised Prime Minister Modi's vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, stating that delivering the benefits of government schemes to every section of society, without dis-crimination, is a top priority. He mentioned that, under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi, the Uttar Pradesh government is working to improve the living standards of every needy person by connecting them to welfare programmes. He added that to achieve the goal of zero poverty, a campaign is underway to ensure that welfare schemes reach tribal communities, Scheduled Castes, extremely backward

details about the six-day festival running from November 15 to 20, where tribal artistes from 22 Indian states, along with participants from Slovakia and Vietnam, are showcasing their talents. He said such events not only encourage the tribal community but also provide an opportunity to better understand their way of life. Chief Minister Yogi acknowledged the vital role the tribal community has played in protecting the country's natural resources, even in challenging circumstances. He highlighted that 11 districts in Uttar Pradesh, including Sonbhadra, are home to tribal communities. The government, he noted, is implementing various welfare programmes to integrate the tribal population into the mainstream society. On this occasion, Minister of

State for Scheduled Caste, Tribe Welfare (Independent Charge) Asim Arun, Principal Secretary (Social Welfare) Dr Hariom, Principal Secretary (Culture) Mukesh Kumar Meshram, along with many officers and dignitaries associated with the tribal society were present.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath bows to the idol of Lord Birsa Munda at the Janjati Bhagidari Utsav in Lucknow on Friday

### **STF nabs 5 members of gang making** 'digital arrests' to defraud people

#### PNS LUCKNOW

 $T^{he \ Uttar \ Pradesh \ Special}_{Task \ Force \ (UP \ STF)}$  arrested five members of an organised gang that cheated people by posing as CBI, Narcotics, or Crime Branch officers while holding their victims under digital arrest. The operation was successful on November 14, when a raid was conducted at a hotel in Gurugram, Haryana.

The arrested individuals were identified as Pankaj Surela (28) from Alwar, Rajasthan (gang leader, BSc), Sagar Singh (24) from Jalaun (BTech dropout), Sunny Verma (24) from Jhansi (BBA), Anshul Mahaur (21) from Jhansi (BCom), and Abhay Singh (21) from Jhansi (BBA).

The police recovered six mobile phones, two ATM cards, an Aadhaar card, two PAN cards, one voter ID card, and other documents, as well as Rs 620 in cash. An STF spokesperson said that the team had been investigating fraud cases involving digital arrests, where officials from the CBL

expired passports, a laptop, a pen drive, four credit cards, 420 grams of MDMA (a banned narcotic), and 3 kg of toys.

Dr Solanki was then connected to a fake officer from the Mumbai Crime Branch, who told him that several bank accounts were opened using his Aadhaar and mobile number, and that millions of rupees had been transferred via Hawala transactions. He was told that an investigation was underway and that the money from his accounts would be sent to

these fraudulent accounts via the Reserve Bank to aid in catching the culprits. He was also threatened over Skype by individuals posing as officers from the CBI, ED, and Mumbai Narcotics.

The fraudsters demanded Dr Solanki's personal information, including bank account details, and intimidated him by stating that his account would be verified by the RBI and Ministry of Finance, after which his money would be returned.

The fraudsters warned that he the perpetrators impersonated must not discuss the matter with anyone until the transfer was complete, or it could endanger his life. Dr Solanki was confined to a room in his house for two days. After the money was transferred, he contacted friends and relatives and realised that he had been the victim of a large fraud. Upon analysing the case using technical expertise, it was discovered that the Rs 48 lakh had been deposited into two bank accounts, and then transferred across 178 different accounts. Based on this information and

tips from informers, the STF arrested the five accused on November 14 from a hotel in

Gurugram, Harvana. During questioning, the prime accused, Pankaj Surela, revealed that he had travelled to Cambodia in March 2024, sent by one Suresh Sen for Rs 3 lakh. Along with Pankaj, two others, Bastiram Yadav and Pankaj Yadav, went to Cambodia.

A Pakistani national took them to a company 500 km away, where they were trained to impersonate officials from the Customs/Narcotics department. They were taught to tell victims that parcels being sent to Malaysia, Sri Lanka, or China in their name contained illegal drugs, fake passports,

and other illicit items. Pankaj explained that they would then digitally arrest the victims, claiming they were under investigation by the CBI, Narcotics Bureau, or Crime Branch. The fraudsters intimidated the

victims into paying large sums of money to clear the investigation, which would be transrred into Indian bank Sagar

Pankaj continued his operation with Sagar Singh, who provided him with corporate bank accounts, and Raj Kumar Singh, who provided the necessary kits (chequebooks, ATM cards, internet banking credentials, etc). The gang would then download software on the mobile devices linked to the bank accounts, giving them access to transfer funds.

In the case involving Dr Solanki, Pankaj revealed that the fraud was committed between August 20 and 22, when he received an ICICI Bank corporate account and digitally arrested Dr Solanki. Over the course of a few days, a total of Rs 48 lakh was defrauded. Additionally, over Rs 8 crore was stolen from the same account in a span of 10 davs.

Pankaj and his gang members also carried out cyber fraud amounting to about Rs 2.5 crore in a Canara Bank account on the third day of Diwali. They also used similar fraudulent tactics in fake gaming and stock market companies. During further interrogations,

Singh admitted to his rol

road mishaps Lucknow (PNS): A man was killed in a road accident in the Gomti Nagar Extension police station area. The wife of the deceased filed a police complaint against the the errant driver. In her complaint, Lakshmi Devi of Gwari Ka Purwa in Vikas Khand-5, said her husband Ranjit Kumar was on his way home at around 10 pm on November 6 when a careless driver of a vehicle hit him from behind. The vehicle was travelling at high speed, which caused Ranjit Kumar to sustain serious injuries. The incident took place at Shaheed Path service lane, near Sadar tehsil. "My husband was referred to KGMU after receiving initial treatment at the RML hospital. During treatment at the KGMU, my husband succumbed on November 10 morning," she stated in the

In another road accident in the PGI police station area, a woman died while her husband sustained serious injuries after a speeding vehicle knocked the bike they were riding. The com-plainant, Amit Singh of Kalli Paschim Police Line, said his father Ram Aashray Singh and mother Meena were hit by a car. My mother succumbed to injuries at hospital," he said. A ase was registered in this



Yogi: Society rooted in heritage,

#### PNS LUCKNOW

**~**hief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Friday, paid glowing tribute to Guru Nanak Dev on the occasion of Prakash Parv, emphasising his message of devotion to God and righteous living.

Speaking at a programme commemorating the 555th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, Yogi affirmed that a society rooted in its heritage and ideals can never be enslaved. The chief minister high

evolved into a powerful tradition under Guru Gobind Singh Maharai, whose sacrifices. along with those of his four Sahibzadas, fill every Indian with pride.

The programme was held at Alambagh and Gurudwara Patel Nagar. Reflecting on the 550th Prakash Parv five years ago, when a Kirtan Yatra was organ-

ised at the chief minister's res-

idence, Yogi recalled it as a day

celebrated as Veer Bal Diwas, honouring the bravery of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's four Sahibzadas, a tradition declared nationwide by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said that this observance would inspire today's youth to connect with their heritage and spiritual val-ues. Chief Minister Yogi extended his best wishes to the people of Uttar Pradesh on the Prakash Parv, urging everyone to honour Guru Nanak Dev Ii by following his teachings and works for the welfare of soci-

Narcotics Control Bureau, or Crime Branch. The STF had initiated this investigation after Dr Ashok Solanki, a resident of Lucknow, filed a complaint on August 20, 2024.

Dr Šolanki reported that, while returning home from his clinic, he received a call from a fraudster claiming to be from FedEx, Andheri East, Mumbai. The caller told him that his credentials were being used in connection with a parcel being sent to Iran, which contained

accounts. Once the money was collected, the fraudsters would take a 30% commission and send the remaining 70% to the company's wallet via cryptocurrency. Suresh Sen, a key figure in the

operation, had reportedly sent over 100 individuals from India to Cambodia to make these fraudulent calls.

After training, Pankaj and his associates returned to India, where they operated bank accounts to facilitate the fraud.

in the fraud, particularly in the case of Dr Solanki. He also received his share of the commission. Sunny Verma con-firmed that he had provided the Canara Bank account used for the Rs 2.5 crore fraud, while Anshul Mahaur and Abhay Singh were responsible for collecting the bank accounts. The investigation is ongoing, and further action will be taken to dismantle this organised network of fraudsters.

Chairman Prathmesh Kumar on scheme on Hardoi Road.

The site is said to be illegally occupied by locals allegedly enjoying the patronage of a political leader. Over a dozen houses are under construction, and the developer is planning to build a large banquet hall there. Upon reaching the site, the VC ordered the builder to halt construction work immediately, warning that a criminal case would be filed against the owner, the builders, and those promoting the unauthorised work. The issue was brought to the attention of LDA personnel by residents of a nearby cattle colony, part of the Vasant Kunj housing scheme. They alleged that the people from the private society were causing a nuisance. They claimed that the society had occupied land that had been grabbed by locals five years ago to make money under the table. Field workers conducting a survev revealed that a group of locals had unlawfully seized the land by fraudulent means, and claimed that no one had genuine documents proving ownership. They submitted their findings to the VC last month.

regard.

He noted that for the how Guru Nanak's teachings years, December 26 has been ety and the nation.

of great fortune.

### Cop tortures mason on mobile theft suspicion

#### PNS LUCKNOW

complaint.

A head constable posted at PGI police station allegedly subjected a mason to thirddegree torture over the suspicion of the latter being a mobile thief. He was removed from his post. The victim, Rohit Tiwari, stated he was forced to confess

to stealing a mobile phone from one Abhishek, whom he did not even know. According to the victim, when

he refused, he was beaten with a stick and kept in the lockup overnight. He was charged with breach of the peace in a public place and detained until the next day. The incident occurred on Wednesday night. Rohit Tiwari from Ghazipur Balram Mohalla in Faizullahganj (Madiaon) supports his family by working as a shuttering worker. He explained that around 11 am on Wednesday, an unidentified youth arrived with several friends and tried to enter his house, accusing him of stealing

his mobile phone. Rohit denied this, stating,

"When that youth started fight-ing, I called the police by dialling 112. The police ques-tioned him, and his name turned out to be Abhishek. After that, he and his friends were released, and I went back to work."

Rohit later told reporters that Constable Ashutosh Singh called him and asked him to come to the police outpost, where he was allegedly beaten and pressured into confessing been filed two months ago and was being investigated by to the theft.

Rohit explained that on Wednesday evening, he received a call from PGI police station. "I was called in for questioning regarding the phone theft. As instructed, I went to the Vrindavan Yojana

police post," he said. When Rohit reached there, he breach of peace in a public Abhishek already there. Head Constable Ashutosh Singh then allegedly beat him while pressuring him to confess to mobile theft. Despite repeatedly denying the theft, Rohit's refusal seemed to anger the constable, who allegedly continued the assault. "When I refused, they

beat me and kept me in the lockup overnight. The next morning, I was charged with breach of peace," he alleged. While showing the marks left on his body from the beating, Rohit alleged that he was struck with belts, kicked in the stomach and chest, and endured other forms of abuse.

Tripathi from PGI police sta-

tion explained that an applica-

tion regarding the theft had

Head Constable Ashutosh

"Abhishek and Rohit were both

called in for questioning. The

two youths began fighting,

accusing each other, and were

then arrested and booked for

Recently, a youth had died in

police custody at Chinhat police station, and another in

the custody of the Vikas Nagar

police team, both allegedly due

to third-degree torture. Senior

police officials have ordered the

registration of criminal cases

Singh.

place," he said.

against the accused officers. who were also removed from their posts and sent to the Reserve Police Lines.

Meanwhile, staff and bouncers of a restaurant at a mall in Sushant Golf City police station area allegedly thrashed a host and his guests over a petty issue around 12.30 am on Friday. Inspector Ravi Shankar

Nishant Srivastava of LDA Colony, Kanpur Road, (Krishna Nagar) threw a party at a club and restaurant situated in the mall to celebrate his birthday on Friday.

"When I asked for food from the waiter, the staff abused me. When I protested, the manager, Dilip, and his bouncers and staff kicked and punched me. When I screamed for help, my friends Vineet Singh Chauhan and Anurag Singh rushed to my rescue. The accused also beat my friends with chairs and utensils. I suffered serious head injuries and my friends also got injured. We somehow managed to save our lives. The restaurant's staff threatened to kill us if we showed up again," he alleged.

GIAN LIFE CARE LIMITED
Regd Office:- 7/216 (6) Swaroop Nagar (Infront of L.L.R. Hospital), Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208002 CIN: L85100UP2018PLC110119; Mobile: 8808051576, Website: https://gianlifecare.org/; Email: arunguptagpx@gmail.com
ct of the Unaudited Standalone & Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30.09.

		STANDALONE (Rs. In Lakhs)				CONSOLIDATED (Rs. In Lakhs)				
PARTICULAR	Quarter ended 30.09.2024 (Unaudited)		Quarter ended 30.09.2023 (Unaudited)		Year ended 31.03.2024 (Audited)		Quarter ended 30.06.2024 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 30.09.2023 (Unaudited)	Half Year ended 30.09.2024 (Unaudited)	
Total Income	211.27	216.74	244.81	428.01	1378.86	210.82	215.25	244.81	426.07	1375.91
Net Profit for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	14.3	15.09	24.1	29.39	574.73	16.76	16.51	24.22	33.27	591.21
Net Profit for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	14.3	15.09	24.1	29.39	574.73	16.76	16.51	24.22	33.27	591.21
Net Profit for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	11.73	9.2	20.37	20.93	415.23	14.19	10.62	20.49	24.81	429.57
Total Comprehensive Income (net of tax) for the period	12.07	9.2	20.37	21.27	415.91	14.53	10.62	20.49	25.15	430.25
Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value of Rs.10/-each)	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524	10341524
Reserves (Excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of Previous Year)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Earning per Share (of Rs. 10/-each)(not annualised) Basic & Diluted	0.12	0.09	0.2	0.21	4.02	0.14	0.1	0.2	0.24	4.16

Place : Kanpur Dated : November 14, 2024

 Notes
 The above result of the Company were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their respective meetings held on 14 November, 2024 which were reviewed by the Statuory Auditors of the Company.
 The figures of previous period/year have been re-grouped and/or recast wherever found necessary.
 The above is the extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Quarterly! Half Yearly Financial Results as filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation, 2015. The full Quarter/Half Yearly Year to date Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange website at www.bseindia.com and the company's website - https://gianlifecare.org/

	Stock Exchange	the	on	available	are	Results	Financial	ate
	Board of Directors Sd/-	of the	alf c	and on beh	For			
L	Arun Kumar Gupta							
L	Managing Director							
L	DIN:- 01331593							

#### AAP for CBI probe into assembly recruitment scam

Lucknow (PNS): Aam Aadmi Party UP unit's chief spokesperson Vanshraj Dubey, on Friday, demanded a CBI probe into the alleged Uttar Pradesh assembly recruitment scam. "The alleged scam shows corruption and involvement of ruling party leaders in the job market. Jobs in UP are not given with transparency and honesty, but to the families of ruling party leaders and officials," Dubey alleged. He claimed that a big scam had come to light in the recruitment of 186 posts in the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly. "The Allahabad High Court

has termed this recruitment process as a 'scam'. During the hearing of the petition filed against the recruitment process, it came to light that there are serious signs of irregularities and corruption in this recruitment. The court has recommended a CBI investigation into this matter, which is an important step so that the culprits can be brought to justice," Dubey said. The AAP state chief spokesperson alleged that during this recruitment drive 38 posts were occupied by relatives of VVIPs which clearly shows corruption and involvement of ruling politicians in the job market.

Dubey also alleged that the firm hired for the recruitment process was working from a small office which was not big enough to conduct any serious exam or selection process.

PNS LUCKNOW health centre in Munder (Ambedkar Nagar) has been ¬he Uttar Pradesh governsuspended. ment has issued instructions Instructions for departmental disciplinary action have also been issued against CMO of to terminate the services of eight government doctors after Unnao, Dr Satyaprakash, and superintendent of community they were found to be continuously absent from duty without

health centre at Safipur (Unnao) Dr Rajesh Kumar Verma for any information. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh being negligent towards their Pathak has given these instrucduties, giving misleading infortions to the principal secretary mation at high level and not fol-(medical and health). Pathak said that instructions had been lowing the instructions of higher officials. The deputy chief minister said that negligence given to dismiss general physician Dr Anita posted in community health centre at Baldev would not be tolerated at all. (Mathura), ophthalmologist Dr Pathak has taken cognisance of Nidhi Verma posted in district joint hospital, Vrindavan the viral video related to tarnishing the dignity of the hospital by (Mathura), gynecologist Dr Radhika Parashar posted in the staff nurse and employees in district hospital Varanasi. Chief Medical Officer, Varanasi has community health centre, Farah been instructed to investigate (Mathura), medical officer Dr Ashish Kumar posted in primathe said case and take action and ry health centre at Namaini send the report within a week. The deputy chief minister said (Kasganj), medical officer Dr M that hospitals were temples of Tahir posted under chief medhealth and strict action would ical officer in Barabanki, medical officer Dr Ravindra Kumar be taken against those who tarnish its dignity. posted in primary health centre at Ratol (Baghpat), general sur-Pathak has given instructions to geon Dr Ashish Kumar Singh the principal secretary (medical and health) to completely ban posted in Lok Bandhu Raj Narayan Joint Hospital, mobile phones and camera in Lucknow and dental surgeon Dr the labour room. Poonam Pal posted in commu-He said that apart from the docnity health centre, Payagpur tor, entry of any other male

(Bahraich). At the same time, Dr Prashant Kumar Singh, medical officer

other employee, would be completely prohibited in the labour in-charge posted at primary room.

employee, be it a trainee or any

Govt to dismiss 8 doctors LDA VC halts construction found missing from duty at private

housing society Lucknow (PNS): Lucknow Development Authority Vice-

Friday inspected the premises of a private housing society, which has recently come into existence near the Vasant Kunj housing



### city 03

### **Our legacy is Ram Mandir; SP's** linked to Atiq, Mukhtar: Yogi

#### PNS LUCKNOW

In a blistering attack on Samajwadi Party on Friday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that while the nation's heritage is represented by the Ram Temple, the true legacy of SP is tied to figures like Khan Mubarak, Atiq Ahmed and Mukhtar Ansari. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made this remark while addressing rallies for the assembly by-elections in Katehari of Ambedkar Nagar and Maihawan assembly constituency of Mirzapur, seeking support for party candidates Dharmaraj Nishad and Suchismita Maurya respectively. Yogi asserted that under the

leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for the past 10 years, the nation has made uninterrupted progress in security, poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, and in preserving its heritage. "In contrast, before 2014, the leaders of the opposition alliance played with national security and disrespected our heritage. Today, Ram Lalla has been enshrined in the magnificent Ram temple in Ayodhya, a sight that fills every citizen of the country with pride. This is our her-itage, which has been repeatedly insulted by the people of the Samajwadi Party," he said. Yogi said, "While significant development work is being carried out in the state, our heritage is also being honoured. Though Dr Lohia was born in Ambedkar Nagar, the Samajwadi Party has strayed far from the values and ideals upheld by him and Acharya Narendra Dev. This is why they avoid visiting the memorial of Maharaja Suheldev they fear that doing so might alienate their Muslim vote bank.

The rallies were attended by several ministers, including Swatantra Dev Singh, Om Prakash Rajbhar, Sanjay Nishad, Dayashankar Mishra 'Davalu', MLC Dr Dhamendra Singh, and ministers Anil Rajbhar, Ashish Patel, Ramkesh Nishad, and MP Vinod Bind.

While addressing an election rally in Katehari, Yogi Adityanath highlighted the



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with others during a by-election rally in Ambedkar Nagar on Friday

pensions and other essential

facilities to eliminate poverty

Narendra Modi's leadership.

He highlighted the emergence

ernment which is rapidly building a model of security,

prosperity and good gover-nance akin to the speed of a

itself of mafia dominance.

in the state.

bullet train.

achievements of the National crimination. Unlike previous Democratic Alliance government in honouring heritage and promoting development. He mentioned the grand memorial of Maharaja Suheldev in Bahraich, built to commemorate one of India's great warriors. Additionally, a 56-foot-high statue symbolising the friendship between Lord Ram and Nishadraj has installed been in Shringverpur, reflecting the government's respect for cultural traditions.

Yogi criticised the Samajwadi While addressing a public meeting in the Majhawan Party for disrespecting traditions, farmers and youth. He assembly constituency of referred to a shocking incident in Ayodhya involving a Mirzapur, Yogi Adityanath emphasised the transforma-Nishad community girl, emphasising that the Samajwadi Party leadership attempted to justify it. of a new, developed India, dri-ven by the double-engine gov-'Our government firmly stands with the Nishad daugh-

ter and her family. There is no place for the perpetrator of such acts — only a place in hell awaits them," he declared, reaffirming the government's commitment to justice.

Yogi also emphasised the transformative development happening across the state, including in Katehari, where significant progress has been made over the past two years. He noted the government's efforts to provide free LPG cvlinders, and pensions for senior citizens, widows and

dreaded criminals responsible for the murders of BJP MLAs the disabled, and to ensure benefits reach all without dis-Krishnanand Rai and Raju

Pal were once celebrated by the SP and BSP. Today, Uttar governments, which selectively distributed benefits, the Pradesh stands free from mafia influence and the fear current administration is working with the principle of they instilled," he asserted. Yogi added, "Earlier, UP was Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, he stated. Highlighting the state's ambitious Zero Poverty synonymous with curfews and riots; now, it is defined by peace and progress — "No curfew, no danga, UP Mai sab changa"; this is the new Uttar Scheme, Yogi said that a rapid survey is underway to identify beneficiaries. The scheme aims to provide free housing, Pradesh of a new India." He also provided updates on Ayushman cards, ration cards,

the development projects in Mirzapur, noting that the Maa Vindhyavasini Corridor is nearing completion and will soon benefit devotees. Under the One District, One Medical College initiative, the construction of a medical college tive progress being made under Prime Minister named after Maa Vindhyavasini is progressing rapidly. Additionally, a new university has been approved to empower the region's youth, he added.

Criticizing the Samajwadi Party, Yogi stated that such projects were never part of their agenda, as "they prioritised nepotism over public welfare".

He pointed out the swift pace of infrastructure development "Our government operates on across Uttar Pradesh, assertthe principle of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas while the ing that the state has now rid Samajwadi Party only served "In stark contrast, during the their inner circle," he said. In closing, Yogi urged the voters Samajwadi Party rule, develto ensure the Samajwadi Party opment was limited to the experiences the same depriva-Saifai family and the families of powerful mafias. The tion for votes as they once made the public endure for development, security and basic resources

### **PCS prelims** V-P Dhankhar inaugurates to Dec 22

#### PNS LUCKNOW/PRAYAGRAJ

 ${
m T}$  o accommodate the needs of competitive exam candidates, the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission (UPPSC) has rescheduled the Provincial Civil Services Preliminary Examination 2024 to December 22.

This adjustment follows Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's initiative to address the concerns of students. Responding to the requests of

students protesting in Prayagraj, the examination will now be conducted in a single day rather than over two days, as originally planned for December 7 and 8. The revised exam will take place on December 22 in two shifts, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am and 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm. This change aims to ease trav-

PNS VARANASI

el and scheduling issues for candidates, enabling them to complete the exam in one Kashi. dav. Prompted by Chief Minister

Yogi Adityanath, the UPPSC took swift action to amend the Dhankhar. schedule and address students' demands. PSC exam date stir: Students

call off protest after UPPSC announces new schedule Meanwhile, the students

protesting in Prayagraj, on Friday, ended their agitation, a day after the UPPSC agreed to their demand to conduct the PCS Prelim examination on a single day.

The agitation was going on since November 11 to demand that exams be held on one single day.

ACP (Civil Lines) Shyamjeet Singh said student leader Pankaj Pandey had formally announced the end of the agitation, but some people were still sitting in front of the UPPSC office.

Pandey said, "The govern-ment has accepted one demand and 90 per cent of our work has been done in the second demand. That will happen when the committee report comes. We will consider it after the report comes. Today we ended the protest and vacated the protest site," he said.

The protesters' leader said they had told all the students to go home and study. Now no in the world. India is the soul student will stay here, he of Sanatan. Everyone should take a pledge to protect and added.



Namo Ghat in Kashi

promote Sanatan. No interest is above the interest of the country for me," he added.

 $V^{ice-President}_{Dhankhar}$  inaugurated Emphasising the adoption of Namo Ghat, the world's largest Swadeshi in life, he said that this would strengthen India's ghat, in Varanasi on Fridav evening and formally launched economy, save foreign currency, and provide employment the Dev Deepawali festival, opportunities for the people. one of the biggest festivals of He also said that maintaining The vice-president was accoma harmonious environment and atmosphere is "our capital". panied by his wife Sudesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, while welcoming While addressing the gatering, Dhankhar said that his mind the guests, said that in the last was completely overwhelmed. 10 years, alongside the new, changing India, the people of Kashi have witnessed the trans-He described the inauguration of Namo Ghat as a major formation of the city, which continues to uphold its ancient and significant day in his life. Congratulating the nation,

especially the people of Kashi, culture. Today, under the Namami on the occasion of Karthik Purnima, Dev Deepawali, the Ganga Yojana, the Ganga of Kashi has become clean and 555th Prakash Parv of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, as well pure. With the construction of as the 150th birth anniversary the Kashi Vishwanath of Birsa Munda, he said that Corridor, there has been a India is changing. "The world is amazed by the huge increase in the number of visitors," he said, adding that development work being done the country's first waterway to under the leadership of Prime Haldia has been built in Kashi Minister Narendra Modi and itself.

the 'tapasya' (penance) of Yogi Adityanath," he said. "Countless development works have been carried out in Kashi. Describing Kashi, the vice-president said, "The city where Namo Ghat has been built as the largest ghat in the country. Kashi has now become a model of all-round development. Dev Deepawali in Kashi has made vation. Today, Kashi is a fusion its mark on the global stage," ity. There is no cultural centre Yogi stated. Union Petroleum and Natural

like Kashi anywhere," he said, Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, while welcoming the adding that PM Modi is dedicated to the country. "Our cultural heritage sends a message to the whole world. guests, wished the people on Dev Deepawali and the 555th Sanatan gives us the message of birth anniversary of Guru staving united and strong. India Nanak, Prakash Parv. Referring to the 'namaste mudra' displayed at Namo is emerging as a major power

Ghat, he said that it had been crafted from 350 tonnes of

steel and 50 tonnes of Ashtadhatu.

'Namo Ghat has been developed as a model. Earlier, pollution was caused by the operation of diesel boats in the Ganga here, but now all the boats have been converted to CNG. This has not only freed the Ganga from pollution but also provided huge employment opportunities for the boatmen," he said. He also mentioned that, on the

instructions of the prime min-ister, a floating CNG station and a floating mobile charging station have been established in

the Ganga river. Earlier, Yogi welcomed the vice-president by garlanding him and presenting him with a handmade 'namaste mudra' symbol at Namo Ghat.

Several cultural programmes were presented by local artistes, including those from the US and Australia.

As the sun set and darkness fell, Dhankhar, his wife, Governor Anandiben Patel, CM Yogi, Union minister Puri, and others lit lamps to formally start Dev Deepawali at all 84 ghats of Kashi, as well as at major ponds and sandbanks along the Ganga. Uttar Pradesh Minister of State for Stamp and Court Fees (Independent Charge), Ravindra Jaiswal; Minister of State for AYUSH and Food Security (Independent Charge), Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu'; Zila Panchayat Chairperson Poonam Maurva; Mayor Ashok Tiwari; MLAs Dr Neelkanth Tiwari, Saurabh Srivastava, and Sunil Patel; MLCs Dharmendra Rai and Hansraj Vishwakarma; and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

adherence to navigation lanes.

The security plan is divided

into four zones, each carefully

tailored to ensure safety at the

world's largest cultural

gathering: First Zone (Sangam Area):

This zone will feature 290 per-

sonnel from the PAC, SDRF,

and NDRF, 8 PAC divers, 30

security staff, 18 private divers,

26 home guards, 27 motor-boats, and 113 boats. Security

will be organised across 25

#### Yogi for integrating agriculture **Robust security plan for Maha Kumbh 2025** with entrepreneurship Additionally, solar-powered reflective river lanes are being PNS PRAYAGRAJ Govt aims for zero fire incidents introduced to prevent boat collisions and ensure strict

#### PNS LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief 🧗 U Minister Yogi Adityanath has given the call for integrating agricul-ture with entrepreneurship to enhance the income of farmers. He has also stressed the need for digitising agriculture and promoting nat-

ural farming. Chief Minister Yogi on Friday inaugurated the Krishi Bharat 2024 in Lucknow. The four-day agricultural and technology event, being held at Vrindavan Yojana Grounds, highlights the importance of integrating agriculture with entrepreneurship and employing modern technology to increase farmers' income.

"In the past decade, significant efforts have been made across the country to free farmers from the burden of high-interest loans and guide them toward self-reliance. However, there is still room for improvement," Yogi Adityanath said.

"Our focus should be on advancing the agricultural sector with enhanced technology.

Given the diverse agro-climatic zones within the country, each state brings unique experiences, and regions have shown remarkable progress — even under chal-lenging circumstances worldwide. By sharing best practices, we can learn much from one another," the chief minister said.

Before the event, Chief Minister Yogi participated in a bilateral meeting with part-ner country the Netherlands, where he met with a delegation led by the country's Deputy Agriculture Minister Jan-Kees Goet and Ambassador to India Marisa Gerards.

During the meeting, two memorandums of under-



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Krishi Bharat 2024 in Lucknow on Friday

sised Uttar Pradesh's vital

role in Indian agriculture, noting that while the state

accounts for 17 per cent of India's population (25 crore

people) and only 11 per cent of the country's cultivable

land, it contributes 20 per

cent of the nation's total

agricultural output. This remarkable achieve-

ment reflects the state's

abundant water resources

and fertile land, he added. Highlighting the untapped potential, he stated that with

the integration of digital agriculture and advanced

technologies, agricultural productivity could increase by three to four times.

Chief Minister Yogi empha-

sised the need to reduce

agricultural costs, adopt

modern technology, and

minimise reliance on chem-

ical fertilisers by utilising natural resources. He high-

lighted the importance of raising farmer awareness,

ensuring market access for

quality seeds, and connect-ing agriculture with entre-

preneurship to drive trans-formative changes in the sec-

tor. Before the inaugural ses-

sion, Chief Minister Yogi, in

a meeting with the delega-tion, highlighted Uttar

Pradesh's vast potential, not-

ing its 25 crore population, fertile land, and abundant

water resources.

Pradesh government and the Chief Minister Yogi empha-Netherlands, and Chief Minister Yogi toured various exhibition stalls.

The Krishi Bharat Exhibition spans 20,000 square metres, showcasing innovations and sustainable developments in agriculture. Featuring over 250 exhibitors, the event is expected to attract more

than one lakh farmers and visitors. The exhibition highlights advancements in agriculture,

dairy, food processing equipment, and other agri-services and technologies. Organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Krishi Bharat serves as a state and national pavilion, presenting world-class agricultural

innovations. Expressing gratitude to the CII, Chief Minister Yogi acknowledged its efforts in organising Agrotech in India since 2000. For the first time, this prestigious event is being held in Uttar Pradesh,

moving beyond its traditional location in Chandigarh — a milestone of tional great significance.

Partnering with the CII for this event, the Netherlands is the official country partner, while nations like Australia,

Canada, Uganda, Spain, and the UK, along with agriculstanding (MoUs) were tural experts and stakehold-signed between the Uttar ers, are also participating.

The Uttar Pradesh govern-ment is working to make 'Maha Kumbh 2025' the largest and most secure spiritual event in the world. With an estimated 45 crore devotees expected to gather in Prayagraj, the government is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring safety and preparedness for every emergency. A comprehensive security plan has been put in place, featuring a four-zone security framework, supported by water police and 107 security beats manned by personnel. In addition, 10 companies each of the PAC, SDRF, and NDRF, along with 141 security guards, will be deployed across 700 boats. Health teams are also collaborating to enhance safety measures during the event.

IG, PAC (Eastern Zone), Dr Rajiv Narayan Mishra, stated: "Ten PAC companies will remain on high alert to ensure the safety of both domestic and international devotees attending Maha Kumbh 2025. With an expected 45 crore attendees, we have implemented special security measures, including 107 beats manned by dedicated personnel." He added, "Modern water con-

trol rooms, equipped with doc-tors and Jan Aushadhi centres, are being set up to enhance convenience and safety. The

Lucknow (PNS): Tragedy struck many places on Kartik Purnima in which 14 people were reported dead.

In Jasuri village of Sadar Kotwali area of Chandauli, two girls entered a pond to take bath. Both were cousins. The girls could not fathom the depth of the pond and drowned.

In Ballia, two women were going by train to take bath in the Ganga on the occasion of Kartik Purnima. Suddenly they fell down from the coach at Sahatwar railway station. Both were rushed to Bansdih community health centre where they were pronounced dead.

A major accident took place on National Highway 9 under

#### PNS PRAYAGRAJ

The Yogi Adityanath govern-ment is making extensive preparations to ensure Maha Kumbh 2025 is safe for devotees, with a particular focus on pre-venting fire-related incidents. To enhance fire safety, the govern-ment has significantly increased the number of fire personnel and specialised fire vehicles. State-of-the-art equipment, including AI-powered fire detec-

tion cameras, are being deployed to monitor potential fire outbreaks. Firefighters will be stationed in each sector, and response times have been reduced to just two minutes to quickly address any incidents. The government's goal is to conduct Maha Kumbh 2025 as a zero-fire event, with the fire department working tirelessly to make this vision a reality.

Chief Fire Officer of Prayagraj and Nodal Officer for Maha Kumbh, Pramod Sharma, emphasised that efforts are being made to ensure Maha Kumbh 2025 is free of fire incidents. Extensive preparations include deploying advanced rescue tenders and 200 specially trained rescue teams.

Water Police will also establish 16 sub-control rooms, along with dedicated police stations

Rajabpur police station of

Amroha. Four people, including a woman, died in a collision

between a pickup truck and two

motorcycles. Two others were

injured in the mishap and their

condition was said to be critical.

The deceased were returning

from a fair in Tigri. The

deceased include two brothers,

In another accident in Khothi

Persia Tola under Ramkola

police station of Kushinagar, a

tractor-trolley loaded with straw

overturned on two people walk-ing on the road, killing 65-year-old Singhasan and 55-year-old

a woman and a youth.

akhadas, 5,000 special fire extinguishers are being provided. For the first time, AI-enabled fire detection cameras will be installed throughout the event. These cameras will monitor for potential fire incidents and instantly alert control rooms, allowing fire stations to respond within just two minutes.

the soil is Paras is called Banaras. Kashi is the city of sal-

of development and spiritual-

This system aims to ensure quick action to contain any fire emergencies and keep the event safe for all attendees.Sharma also noted that compared to the 2019 Kumbh, the number of personnel and vehicles being deployed for Maha Kumbh 2025 is significantly higher. In 2019, as many as 43 temporary fire stations were set up, but for 2025, this number will increase to 50. The number of temporary fire posts will rise from 15 to 20, and fire watch towers will increase from 43 to 50. Additionally, more than 7,000 fire hydrants will be installed, up from 4,200 in 2019. The number of reserve water tanks will also double, from 75 to over 150. In terms of manpower, 1,551 personnel were deployed in 2019, while this year the number has increased to 2,071.

and outposts, to ensure seamless services for the devotees." To prevent accidents, floating

In Ayodhya, a doctor hailing

from Deoria and two medical

students were killed while two

Chanwa.

To control fire hazards in the The number of fire vehicles has nearly doubled, from 166 to 351, ensuring a robust and swift response to any fire incidents during the event. In the 2013 Kumbh, 612 fire incidents were reported, resulting in six fatalities and 15 burn injuries. However, under the leadership of the Yogi govern-ment, the 2019 Kumbh saw a significant improvement, with only 55 fire incidents and no fatalities or burn injuries, thanks to meticulous planning and stringent

safety measures. beats. For Maha Kumbh 2025, the Yogi Second Zone (Banyan Ghat): government is taking even further The second zone will have 33 steps to ensure safety, with a goal security personnel, 100 PAC of reducing fire incidents to zero. This includes deploying more personnel, vehicles, and advanced and NDRF/SDRF members, 50 home guards, 40 PAC divers, 50 private divers, 24 motorboats, and 77 boats, deployed technology, some of which will be used for the first time. across 28 beats.

Firefighters have received special training, and practical sessions for all core groups have been organ-ised. Additionally, the govern-ment has signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with the Uttarakhand Fire and Emergency Services and the National Fire Service College in Nagpur for external audits, ensuring that safety measures meet the highest standards.

thermoplastic barricades will be installed, alongside roundthe-clock police deployment.

> and Ashok of Magorra police station area.

#### One person was killed and 18 others were injured when a Roadways bus collided with a parked dumper on Etawah-Bareilly highway in Rajepur police station area of Farrukhabad. The deceased girl was identified as Shahana (19). In Firozabad, three people were killed when an overcrowded auto-rickshaw overturned after being hit by a truck from behind on Thursday night. The deceased were identified as Bantu (40), Himanshu alias

others were critically injured when three vehicles collided with each other. Reports said that five friends from Lucknow were going to Ayodhya in a car for Darshan of Ram Lalla. A Traveller bus driver was turning the vehicle at Kudra Sadat Cut in Kotwali Rudauli area when

the vehicle collided with the car and one tractor at 5 am on Friday. Medanta Lucknow lab technician Dr Mohammad Hussain, medical students were identified as Dharmendra

19 die in separate mishaps Rachna and Upasana Singh died while two others, Sneha and Neetu, were critically injured. The car was being driven by Hussain. The others injured, who were on the Traveller, were identified as Sunil Jaiswal, Sandeep Jaiswal, Vandana Jaiswal, Ashish Jaiswal, Gauri Jaiswal, Suti Jaiswal, Garima Jaiswal, Reena Jaiswal, Randhir Singh, Tripti Jaiswal, Pooja Jaiswal, Meena Devi and Pihu. Two motorcycle riders were killed in a mishap on Agra-Delhi Highway in Jaint police station area of Mathura. The deceased

Kanhaiya (15), a class 9 student, and Jagdish Prasad (45). Six others were injured, including the

auto driver and passengers.

Third Zone (Sangam to **Durvasa):** Security for this stretch will include 21 personnel, 68 PAC and SDRF/NDRF members, 16 private divers, 28 home guards, 8 motorboats. and 99 boats across 16 beats. Fourth Zone (Sangam to Phaphamau): This zone will be staffed with 50 security personnel, 210 PAC, SDRF,

and NDRF members, 14 PAC divers, 19 private divers, 64 home guards, 33 motorboats, and 311 boats, distributed across 38 beats.



### state 04

# Varanasi glitters on Dev Deepawali

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

It was a rare sight when 84-odd Ganga ghats spread over seven kilometres in semi-circle shape glittered with several lakh diyas (earthen lamps) while Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham was decorated with flowers in large quantities and the entire Kashi as well as its main crossings with attractive tricolour spiral LED lighting arrangements on the auspicious occasion of Dev Deepawali here on Friday evening. This Kartik Purnima festival was celebrated a day ago due to the lunar eclipse on Tuesday.

Apart from this, Maha Aarti programmes were organised at some ghats with *batuks* (males) and riddhi-siddhis (females) which added beauty to the entire scene. The Maha Aarti events were performed under the auspices of Ganga Seva Nidhi, Gangotri Seva Samiti and Kendriya Dev Deepawali Mahasamiti. With the festival, the month-long event of light-ing Akashdeeps in the memory of martyred soldiers and police personnel also concluded. At Dashashwamedh Ghat,

senior officers of Army, Air Force, CRPF, NDRF and oth-



Devotees celebrate Dev Deepawali festival on the bank of Sangam, the confluence of three rivers the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati in Prayagraj on Friday. PTI

ers were present. At the mytho-

tion. It was the ghat where the logical Panchganga ghat, festival was being organised for Hazara was lit as per the tradi-a long, more than a century,



Ganga ghats glitter with lights on Dev Deepawali in Varanasi on Friday evening.

whereas at other parts of the ghats as well as ponds, it got a grandeur shape in recent twothree decades. People also lit diyas in their homes. By the time when the divas started being lit, there was not an inch of space left at any of the impor-tant ghats as they were jam-

tant gnats as they were jam-packed with people. Besides, the 3D laser mapping show continued highlighting the rich heritage of this mythologi-cal city of Lord Shiva at Chet Singh Ghat for the fourth consecutive year. The show was of 25 minutes which was repeated four times at some intervals at 5.30 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm and 8.45

shone like the stars in the sky with the tricolour spiral LED lighting on all the poles installed on the ghats apart from main crossings at Atulanand, Kutchery, Ambedkar Park, Teliabagh, Lahurabir, Maldahiya, Maidagin, Godowlia and others. On the occasion, elaborate security arrangements were made at ghats to avoid any untoward incident and the festival was mointored through CCTV cameras. The Water Police personnel were keeping a watch at different ghats while National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel remained alert to keep a watch on the ghats through pm. This City of Lord Shiva patrolling in motor boats.

### Prakashotsav celebrated with fervour PIONEER NEWS SERVICE 📕 VARANASI

The 555th Prakashotsav (Gurpurab) of the founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj was celebrated with traditional gaiety, reli-gious fervour and enthusiasm at the Gurdwara in Gurubagh on Friday on the auspicious occasion of Kartik Purnima. The Gurdwara was already decorated in a grand manner with a variety of flowers. The decorations of water foun-tains, flowering plants and the entire premises added beauty to the premises. The Gurdwara glittered with attractive lighting arrangements.

ments. However, on the eve of Gurpurab on Thursday evening, Hazuri Ragi Bhai Jagtar Singh (Amritsar) and Bhai Gurprit Singh of Simla presented Gurubani kirtans. Then a grand langar was cerved served.

The programme of Prakashotsav began from 3.45 am with Shahana sangat which was followed by showering flowers, Naam Simran, Path Sukhmani Sahib, Asa Di Vaar Kirtan etc. From 9 am, the Vaar Kirtan etc. From 9 am, the students of Guru Nanak English School (Shivpur), Guru Nanak Khalsa Girls Inter College and Guru Nanak English Medium School (Gurubagh) rejoiced the sangat by singing *shabad kirtans* and then Bhai Ranjit Singh, the chief granthi of the gurdwara, delivered discourses followed by presentation of shabad kira by presentation of shabad kirtans. Later, in the afternoon langar was served.



Kartik Purnima: Devotees

Devotees taking a holy dip in Ganga on Karthik Purnima in Varanasi on Friday

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Thousands of devotees thronged various Ganga ghats on Friday morning to take a bala discipation of the second take a holy dip in the Ganga river on the auspicious occasion of Kartik Purnima.

In view of the rush of people, elaborate security arrange-ments were made at various ghats and several traffic restrictions were imposed especially in the central city area of Dashashwamedh, southern part of Assi and Bhaisasur in the northern part near Rajghat. Water Police and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel were seen active along with expert divers. Senior police officers in view of the rush of devotees were camping there.

Since morning the devotees started thronging various ghats of Ganga and heavy rush was seen at Dashashwamedh, Rajendra Dashashwamedn, Kajendra Prasad, Ahilyabai, Man Mandir, Assi, Sheetla, Scindia, Panchganga, Nagwa, Bhainsasur, Rajghat, Narad, Kedar, Hanuman, Ravidas and Tulsi Ghat. Rush was also seen at different ghats of Ramnagar including, Shastri

and Balua ghats. Meanwhile, the activists of Namami Gange launched a massive cleanliness drive to collect the garbage from the river. During the bathing period, the activists led by regional convenor (Kashi Unit) Rajesh Shukla appealed to the people not to throw plastic bottles, polythene bags, flowers etc in the river and put them in dustbins. He said the festivals of Kartik Purnima and Dev Deepawali give us a message to save rivers.

### Blessings sought for well-being of families

A huge crowd of devotees Agathered to bathe in the Yamuna river at Baluaghat on Friday on the occasion of Kartik Purnima. Bathing in Kartik Purnima. Bathing in Yamuna in the month of Kartik has special importance. After bathing, people wor-shiped with rituals and sought blessings for the well-being of their families. A grand mela is organised for a month on the backs of Yamuna river at banks of Yamuna river at Baluaghat here. In view of the crowd of devotees coming for bathing on Kartik Purnima, special preparations were also made by the administration at Baluaghat. A separate changing room was made for women bathers to change clothes after bathers to change clothes after bathing. Arrangements were made by the Municipal Corporation to get the ghat cleaned continuously. Along with the police, water police were also deployed at the ghat. Apart from this, arrangements for people to do worship etc.



at the Baradari near the ghat were also made by the administration. People did a lot of shopping on the occasion of the closing of Kartik fair. A large numbers of devotees took bath at Sangam also on the occasion of Kartik Purnima and performed puja with rituals. On the occasion people worshipped the Sun and sought blessings for their families. SPORTS MEET: The first inter IIIT Employee Sports Meet organised by IIIT-Allahabad began with a colourful ceremony on Jhalwa campus on Friday.

### **NER GM inspects Varanasi City railway station**

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

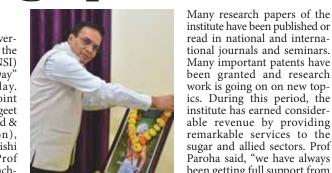
General Manager (GM) of North Eastern Railway (NER) Saumya Mathur gave necessary instructions to the officers for the progress of Bhatni-Varanasi City doubling works, safe and secure rail movement during fog season and also directed to maintain the visibility of the signal. During her window trailing inspection on Friday, she reviewed the progress of dou-bling projects related to safety as well as development works going on on this section. Later, during her inspection at Varanasi City railway station, she instructed the officers concerned to complete the remaining construction works for the development of the station within the stipulated time period with full quality. When Saumya Mathur reached Varanasi City railway station in the afternoon while doing window trailing inspection from Krishak Express, she conducted a thorough inspection of the construction work going on at this station. Along with the expansion of the Varanasi City station, she inspected the renovated entrance, expansion of circulating area, platform sheds, construction of new pay and use toilets and beautification of waiting room for the convenience of passengers, seating arrangements, signages, water drainage, newly constructed reserved/unreserved ticket counter building etc. The GM also inspected the development works being done under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS). Varanasi City railway station is being redeveloped and made state-of-the-art at a cost of ₹59.87 crore under



# Homage paid to Birsa Munda

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

On the 150th birth anniver-sary of Birsa Munda, the National Sugar Institute (NSI) organised "Tribal Pride Day" celebrations on Friday. Ashwani Shrivastava, Joint Secretary (Sugar) and Sangeet Singla, Joint Secretary (Food & Public Distribution), Government of India, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi, Prof Seema Paroha and other teach



Many research papers of the on Thursday under the chairinstitute have been published or manship of Áshwani Srivastava, read in national and interna-Joint Secretary (Sugar), tional journals and seminars. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Many important patents have been granted and research Food and Public Distribution, Department of Food and work is going on on new top-ics. During this period, the institute has earned consider-Public Government of India, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. Among able revenue by providing the special guest members who remarkable services to the participated in this meeting sugar and allied sectors. Prof were Sangeet Singla, Joint Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, New Paroha said, "we have always

(Member Secretary). The invited special guest members visited the lush green surroundings of the institute. Praising the huge campus, they thanked Director Prof. Seema Paroha Distribution, for promoting natural beauty and all the members contributed in increasing the greenery by planting trees that provide shade and flowers in the institute campus. After confirming the minutes of the 55th meeting of the Advisory Board, the action taken on the recommendations of the last meeting was discussed in the meeting. Apart from this, while reviewing the work done by various departments of the institute, other main activities of the institute and the progress being made towards the development of basic and other facilities of the institute in the period from June 1, 2023, to October 31, 2024, the restructuring of the institute and the requirement of personnel accordingly was discussed. Apart from this, many targets were set to establish the institute at the pinnacle of development.

NER GM Saumya Mathur inspecting Varanasi City railway station on Friday

City station, the landscaping

work of old PRS centre and par-

cel office is also nearing com-

pletion. The GM directed the

officers concerned to complete

the 12-metre pedestrian over-bridge. On the occasion

Manager (Gati Shakti)

Kaushalesh Singh, Senior Divisional Engineer

(Coordination) Rakesh Ranjan,

Senior Divisional Engineer-3 Anuj

Verma, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Sheikh

Rehman, Senior Divisional Signal

and Telecommunication Engineer

Rajat Priya, Deputy Chief Engineer (Gatishakti) IC Subhash,

Divisional Commercial Manager

Ramesh Pandey, Divisional

Electrical Engineer Ram Dayal,

Public Relations Officer Ashok

Kumar and other senior railway

officers were also present.

the ABSS. She reviewed the progress of works being done under the scheme and inspected various works of passenger amenities, including beautification of station building, expansion and beautification of circulating area, reserved and unreserved ticket counters installed in the new building, improvement of ATM, OR scanner and motivated the passengers standing behind in the queue of UTS counter to make their tickets from ATM machine and get the tickets made in less time.

In a formal conversation with the media personnel the GM informed that Varanasi City is an important station of NÉR. For the convenience of passengers at the station, the construction work of new waiting room, new passenger reservation centre building and pay and use toilet has been completed, she said adding that for the convenience of passengers at Varanasi ers of the institute paid homage to Birsa Munda by offering garlands and flowers etc.

Speaking on the occasion, Ashwani Srivastava said despite adverse circumstances and weak economic condition, the personalities who lit the flame of rebellion against the British by organising the tribals with limited resources will be remembered for centuries. His efforts are praiseworthy. Sangeet Singla also expressed his views on the occasion. Director, National Sugar Institute, Prof Seema Paroha, said, "it is a matter of pride for all of us that great souls like Birsa Munda were born in



Joint Secretary (Sugar) Ashwani Srivastava paying homage to Birsa Munda at NSI, Kanpur on Friday

India. His contribution to the freedom struggle is unforgettable".

She said in the 56th Advisory Board meeting, many important decisions related to the development of the institute were taken. While participating in the meeting with the officials of the Central Public Works Department, Prof Paroha said all the departments of the institute were discharging their responsibilities with full dedication.

the responsible officials of the Ministry in implementing the developmental schemes. For that the institute is grateful to all of them. Our concerted effort will be to make the courses run by the institute more employment-oriented by using the latest technologies for the benefit of the students. In the coming days, the students in who graduate from the institute will bring glory to it by bene-fiting not only the country but the entire world with their important services".

ADVISORY BOARD MEET-**ING:** The 56th meeting of the Advisory Board was held at National Sugar Institute (NSI)

Delhi, Ashish Garg, Professor and Head of the Department, Sustainable Energy Engineering, IIT, Kanpur, Rasappa Vishwanathan, Director, Indian Sugarcane Research Institute (ISRI), Lucknow, Prabhakar Rao, President, Indian Sugar Mills Association, New Delhi, Naik Navrekar, President, National Cooperative Sugar Mills Association, New Delhi, Shekhar Swarup, President, All India Distillery Association, New Delhi, Dr Govind Raj, Director, Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore, along with Prof Seema Paroha, Director, NSI, Kanpur

#### Divisional Railway Manager Vineet Kumar Srivastava, interacts with students Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infrastructure) Roshan Lal Yadav, Chief Project

Varanasi (PNS): Vice-Chancellor of BHU Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain has said that the role of an educational institution is very important in fulfilling the aspirations of the students and empowering them to achieve their goals and BHU is moving forward with full commitment and seriousness regarding this responsibility. Prof Jain was interacting with the newly-admitted students in Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV) here. The V-C said three aspects are most important to achieve success in life, being physically and

mentally healthy, developing healthy and positive relation-ships and moving forward in career. "Success can have different meanings for everyone, but it is important that we do not measure our success on the scale of others", he said, adding that the students from different parts of the country take admission in BHU's MMV to acquire education. The V-C called upon the students to learn to take decisions of their lives with full confidence and not to be afraid of mistakes. He said we learn

from mistakes and eventually develop confidence to take important steps.Prof Jain asked students about their life's objectives suggesting that to achieve heights in a particular field, they should not limit themselves to just acquiring information relat-ed to that subject, but also develop those qualities in their personality, which can improve their personality along with being a skilled professional. Sharing his life experiences, he advised it is very important to develop the quality of emotional toughness, so that emotions do

not dominate us even in adverse circumstances. "This will not only maintain our balance but also our ability to take prudent decisions and perform well will not be affected", he said. Prof Jain said to move ahead on the path of progress, it is necessary to have qualities like self-discipline, following life values, time management and adopting a positive attitude towards people and situations because negative feelings become an obstacle in our progress. He said that one has to prepare oneself to develop a positive attitude and sometimes

success is not achieved in this, but with constant effort we can establish ourselves as a better person. Prof Jain said to move forward in life, it is very important to walk on the right path and adopt the right methods. "Sometimes it may happen that we have to take the wrong decision for the right work but we have to decide firmly that no matter what, we should not move towards the wrong path. To do this, moral strength and courage is required, which comes from our strong determination and commitment to ideals", he said.

### Spl metro ride organised for students

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE 📕 KANPUR

Kanpur Metro, in collabora-tion with local schools, organised a special metro ride for students on Children's Day. Around 200 students from Sunshine Education School and Government Primary School, Fatehpur, enjoyed the Metro joyride.

Educational visits for schools began at the end of October leading up to Children's Day. From October 22 to 29, trips were organised for students from Pandit DP Mishra School, Ambika Prasad Public School,

and Shri Gokul Smarak

Metro. The children were also

informed about the safety pre-

cautions to follow while travelling and the efforts made by Vidyalaya. Between November 5 and 14, following Diwali, over Kanpur Metro to ensure acces-1,000 students from Air Force sibility for passengers with dis-School (Chakeri), Gyan Bharati School, Delhi Public School abilities. For many students, it was the first time they took a (Unnao), Dr Virendra Swaroop metro ride and were thrilled Public School (Kalyanpur), with the experience. In addition Sunshine Education School, to enjoying the scenic views of the city, the children had a great and Government Primary School (Fatehpur) participated time on the metro journey. In in the educational trips. the coming days, similar tours During the trips, Metro officials will be organised in collaboraprovided students with information with various educational tion about the facilities, features, procedures, and rules of Kanpur

three people were injured after seven trucks collided with each other on Kanpur-Aligarh highway near Gauri village under Bilhaur Kotwali police station area on Friday morning. The incident took place when a truck driver suddenly applied brake which made all the other six trucks following it rammed into one other from behind. One of the injured was taken by peoinstitutions, including UP Kirana Seva Samiti Balika ple of a damaged vehicle with them while two others were Vidyalaya and Sir Syed Public sent to the community health School, among others. centre (CHC).

# **INIURED:** Due to dense fog

### Training on investigation of diseases in farm animals ends

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

A<sup>10-day</sup> national short course training titled hands-on diagnostic tech-(FVAS), Institute of Agricultural Sciences which was supported by

BHU. A total of 27 participants successfully completed this training including veterinarians and laboratory analyst from various

regions of the country. The valedictory function was graced by Prof VK Mishra (Professor In Charge, RGSC) being the chief guest and Prof Shahid Prawez (former Dean, FVAS) being the guest of honour accompanied by Dr Jubeda Begum (the Course Director) and Dr Sanjay Kumar Ravi (Co-Chairman) of training pro-

gramme. Prof VK Mishra emphasised the need of such training during post-covid period. Further, the

contribution of veterinarians and laboratory analyst in the field of veterinary practice was revered for timely intervention to cure the ailments. Prof VK Mishra and Prof Shahid Prawez distributed the certificates to successful participants and appreciated the team of organisers for successful completion of the training programme. The wide topics for hands-on

training and achievements of training programme were briefed by Dr Jubeda Begum. Dr Sanjay Kumar Ravi briefed about the trainees, arrangements and proposed vote of thanks on behalf of the organisers. Dr Utkarsh

Kumar Tripathi, Dr Anupam Brahma, Dr Balamurugan and Dr Dhananjay coordinated the events of valedictory pro-gramme. Eshan Singh Rautela, a trainee stated that his expectations were exceeded with training and he will recommend his colleagues to participate in future. Dr Sakshi, another trainee stated that the learning in this training will help in her aspired PhD programme.

The valedictory function was attended by Dr Santosh Marandi (In Charge Livestock Farm Complex), Prof RK Bais and others.

niques for the investigation of diseases in farm animals' concluded on Thursday with valedictory function held on November 14 at Rajiv Gandhi South Campus (RGSC), Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Barkachha (Mirzapur). This training was organised by the Department of Veterinary Microbiology, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences



### nation 05

Power

minister

trilateral

NEW DELHI

inaugurates

power flow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Manohar Lal Khattar, the Union Minister for Power

and Housing and Urban

Affairs, jointly inaugurated the power flow from Nepal to

Bangladesh, along with Md.

Fouzul Kabir Khan, adviser,

Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources,

Government of Bangladesh

and Dipak Khadka, Minister of

Energy, Water Resources and

Irrigation, Government of

Nepal, the Ministry of External

It said the inauguration was

done through a virtual event

hosted by the Ministry of

Energy, Water Resources and

Irrigation, Government of

Nepal. This occasion marks the

first trilateral power transaction

which has been carried out

The Government of India had

announced its decision to facil-

itate the first trilateral power

transaction from Nepal to

Bangladesh, through Indian

grid with an export of upto 40

MW of power during the visit of the former prime minister of

Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda to India from May

31-June three. During the visit,

both sides had expressed their

commitment towards greater

sub-regional cooperation,

including in the energy sector, which would lead to increased

inter-linkages between the

economies for mutual benefit

Subsequently, a tripartite power

stakeholders.

all

of

through the Indian grid.

Affairs (MEA) noted.

# President honours Birsa MundaRahul Gandhi allegesSEBI's Buch hand in



#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday led the nation in paying tributes to tribal icon Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary which is observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas. The President, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla offered floral tributes at the statue of Birsa Munda at the Prerna Sthal in Parliament complex. Rajya Sabha Deputy Chair Harivansh was also present After the event, the leaders

interacted with folk artistes.

PM greets nation on Guru Nanak Jayanti



After the president left the venue, Dhankhar, who is also the Rajya Sabha chairperson, and Birla tried their hands on musical instruments, including

drums. Since 2021, Birsa Munda's birth anniversary is being observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas to remember the sacrifices of

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on Friday hailed tribal icon Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary and said he sacrificed everything to protect the honour and glory of the motherland

Jharkhand, Munda had chal-

unsung tribal heroes.

Born in 1875 in present-day

lenged British rule and is credited with mobilising tribals against the empire. He died in British custody at a young age of 25 years.

"Bhagwan Birsa Munda ji sacrificed everything to protect the honor and glory of the moth-erland. My deepest respects to him on the auspicious occasion of his birth anniversary Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas," PM

Modi wrote in a social media post in Hindi. Modi also shared a video and audio montage on his tributes to Munda on various occasions. The PM visited Bihar's Jamui to commemorate Janjatiya Gaurav

ED siezes Rs 8.8 Crore from

Iottery king Santiago Martin

Divas, marking the com-

mencement of the 150th birth anniversary celebration of the tribal icon.

Modi also greeted people on Jharkhand's foundation day. "Best wishes to all our brothers and sisters of Jharkhand on the foundation day of the state. This land, irrigated by the struggle and sacrifice of the tribal society, has always made the country proud. I wish that this state, full of natural resources, moves forward at a fast pace on the path of progress," the PM noted in a social media post. The state of Jharkhand officially came into being on Munda's birth anniversary in 2000.

glove with corporations PIONEER NEWS SERVICE In the over six-minute video,

VEW DELHI

Stepping up his attack on Madhabi Puri Buch, chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, on Friday alleged that India's economic framework is being hollowed out from within by a "cartel of corporate giants", enabled by those meant to guard the country's interests. The former Congress chief said the Madhubi Buch scandal isn't just insider trading but is a revealing case of direct conflict of interest, where powerful regulators are entangled with the very corporations they're supposed to oversee. Rahul made the remarks in his post that accompanied a YouTube video, part of a series featuring him and Pawan

Khera, Congress' media and publicity head, in which the two leaders discuss various conflicts of interest allegations

### DFCCI celebrates 19th foundation day

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday said the dedicated freight corridor is a very important infrastructure project of the Indian Railways terming it the jewel of Indian Railways, which has made a positive impact on the country's logistics sector, Congratulating the office bearers of Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India

occasion of its 19th Foundation day, Vaishnaw said more than 350 goods trains are being operated on the corridor at present and this has improved the efficiency of logistics transportation in the country.

"The timings of cargo transportation have been reduced to half as compared to earlier. The speed of freight trains has made significant improve-ment. In every way, the DFC

pendent media services in the

According to the bulletin, Ashwini Vaishnaw, minister

for information and broad-

casting, communicated to the

Rajya Sabha secretary-general

that the president has recom-

mended the consideration of

the Bill to the House. Private members' Bills involv-

country".

Bharat Mandapam here. Expressing hope that DFC Indian Railways.

sales agreement signed on October 3 in Kathmandu. that DFC can serve the country better," he added.

### Rajya Sabha to consider private member bill to regulate independent media services

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

A private member's Bill that seeks to provide for establishment of an independent authority for the regulation and licensing of media services in the country has been cleared for consideration by the Rajya Sabha, a bulletin of the House noted



against Buch. There was no immediate reaction from Buch, who is facing conflict of interest allegations, on the video and

However, previously the SEBI chief has dismissed allegations of any wrongdoing. In his post he said, "India's economic framework is being hollowed out from within by a cartel of corporate giants, enabled by those meant to guard the country's interests.

Toh Syndicate Safe Hai. This is not mere oversight but Congress and the Opposition has been targeting the government over conflict of interest

allegations against Buch and demanding that she be removed from the post. Limited (DFCCIL) on the has played a crucial role to reduce the logistics cost in the country," Vaishnaw said in a video message that was played during the celebration at

Khera briefs Rahul Gandhi

about various conflict of inter-

est allegations against Buch

while travelling with him on a

Khera talks about how the

Congress exposed the claim that Agora Advisory Pvt Ltd became immediately dormant

upon Buch joining SEBI. She still holds a 99 per cent stake in

it, and the company has active-

ly provided consultancy and

advisory services, including to Mahindra & Mahindra, Khera

tells the senior leader in the

video. He also tells Rahul

Gandhi that Buch allegedly

traded and also invested in

Rahul Gandhi also posted the

video on X, and said, Buch Hai

Chinese funds.

flight.

would continue to serve the country, Vaishnaw said that a good integration has taken place in the network of the "We have to take it further so

> ation made by the Parliament by law on this behalf, make to the Board grants of such sums of money as the Union government may think fit for car-

rying out the purposes of the Act.

In the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill, Sivadasan has argued independent media that plays an impartial role in the a ssemination of news and information to the public at large is crucial for the functioning of a healthy democracy, and licensing powers being a monopoly in the hands of the Executive often results in a pliant media, as journalists will hesitate to criticise the ruling dispensation for fear of legal hazards.



the charges.

a coordinated scheme to exploit loopholes, distort regulations, and prioritise corporate profit over public interest, all while ordinary Indians pay the price,

#### NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted people on Guru Nanak Jayanti on Friday and wished that his teachings inspire people to further the spirit of compassion, kindness and humility. "Greetings on the auspicious occasion of Sri Guru Nanak Jayanti. May the teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji inspire us to further the spirit of compassion, kindness and humility," Modi wrote on social media. "May it also motivate us to serve society and make our

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Enforcement **Г**he L Directorate (ED) on Friday seized Rs 8.8 crore in cash from the corporate office of Chennai-based 'lottery king' Santiago Martin, officials said Martin was the single biggest donor to political parties with planet better," the post added. | over Rs 1,300 crore in now-

few others and a lower court The searches were carried out accepted this police plea.

in multiple states as part of a Officials said at least 20 premises linked to Martin, his son-inlaw Aadhav Arjun and associates in Chennai and Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, after the Madras High Court recently allowed the ED to Faridabad in Haryana, proceed against Martin as the Ludhiana in Punjab and Kolkata in West Bengal were ed to close the predicate or pribeing searched as part of a action against his business. mary FIR against him and a

The Indian Media Services (Regulation and Licensing) Bill, 2024, a private member's bill by CPI(M) MP V Sivadasan, provides for establishing an independent authority -- the Indian Board of Media Services -- for the regulation and licensing of media services "to facilitate development of free and inde-

quer require the President's permission through the ministry concerned on whether such bills can be considered by the House.

ing expenditure from the e

The Indian Media Services (Regulation and Licensing) Bill says the Central government shall, within six months of the commencement of the Act, by

Gazette, establish for the purposes of the Act, an autonomous body to be known as the Indian Board for Media Services, to regulate the functioning of media services and foster free and independent media services in the country. It also says the Union government shall, after due appropri-

### Haryana BJP gears up for MCG polls

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

**D**andit Mohanlal Badoli, president of the Bharativa Janata Party (BJP) in Haryana BJP said that the party is all set for the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) election, and with the help of welfare works, organisational strength and blessings of the public. Badoli was in the Gurugram's party office to attend the mem-

party, he said that the public burst the balloon of Congress's lies in the Assembly elections and now the lies of Congress will not work in any election. He said in 2019, 33 lakh primary members were made in the BJP, but this time the target is to make 50 lakh prima-

ry members in Haryana. There are more than 20,000 booths in Haryana and the workers have been given the target of adding 250 new people to the party at every booth," he said

He said that after one election, the BJP starts preparing for the On the question of naming the next election. BJP will win any upcoming election.

MCG elections will be held soon and we will win every election with a clear majority," he added. During the elections, some

people were upset and left the party; apart from this, some workers did anti-party work while being in the party. The organisation has full information about such people, and action will be initiated against

medical college being built in Gurugram after Guru Nanak, the state president said that great men and patriots have worked for the society and the country. We are indebted to the great men. It is a matter of pride that the medical college is named after Guru Nanak. "Congress does not have a leader. Congress lacks policy, leadership and intentions. Congress will decline and BJP will move ahead," he said.

### ECI officials frisk bags of Amit Shah at Hingoli

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a development that sought to blunt the Opposition's criticism that the Election Commission of India (ECI) was targeting the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders, a team

of ECI officials checked the bags of Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader Amit Shah, when he landed in a helicopter in the Hingoli district to address a rally in poll-bound Maharashtra. Posting a video clip on his handle on microblogging site "X", Shah wrote:

"Today, during my election campaign in Hingoli Assembly constituency of Maharashtra, my helicopter was inspected by Election Commission officials. BJP believes in fair elections and a healthy election system and follows all the rules made by the Honourable Election

scrapped electoral bonds.

money laundering investiga-

tion against the 'lottery king',

officials said. The action comes

Tamil Nadu Police had decid-

Commission. We all must contribute to a healthy election system and perform our duties in keeping India as the strongest democracy in the world". Chief Election Officer (CEO) had clarified that the ECI was following the Standard Operating Procedures.

bership campaign on Friday. While attacking the Congress

**Jitendra Singh bats for private-public partnership to tackle Diabetes** 

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Diabetes is too serious to be left solely to the medical professionals, Jitendra Singh, Union minister for earth sciences and science and technology, said as he advocated for increasing public-private partnership in the efforts to achieve truly optimal results.

He made these remarks at the 52nd Annual Conference of the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI), in collaboration with the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), which commenced on the occasion of World Diabetes Day on Thursday.

The two-day conference brought together over 5,000 healthcare professionals,

experts, and prominent speakers to discuss and address the growing diabetes epidemic in

India, where more than 10 crore people are currently affected, according to the latest report from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). "Just as economics is too serious a subject to be left to economists alone, I believe we can say that diabetes is too serious to be left solely to the medical professionals. It is a much

broader issue," Singh said. To tackle the epidemic of diabetes, there is a need for a col-

laborative effort which has to be extended beyond the practitioners of medicine, he said. The minister also said "As rightly pointed out, it's about

breaking barriers and bridging gaps' between individuals and patients, individuals and docnational and international tors, individuals and families,

individuals and society as well as between the private and public sectors.

I have been a strong advocate of increasing private-sector involvement in these efforts. It is only through such partnerships that we can achieve truly optimal results," he added. The conference also marked

the announcement of a joint declaration by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and RSSDI. This declaration underscores the global and regional commitment to diabetes awareness, prevention and treatment.

Meanwhile, Dr B M Makkar. RSSDI president, said this declaration is a testament to the urgent need for collaborative efforts to tackle diabetes.

"By working together with the IDF, we aim to ensure better access to care, promote educa-



tion, and reduce the risks associated with this disease. We believe that by uniting healthcare professionals, governments, and global organizations, we can significantly improve outcomes for those

affected by diabetes worldwide," he added.

Another key aspect of the conference is the Doctors' Pledge or Doctor's Oath, with over 10,000 healthcare professionals from across India taking a

solemn oath to increase awareness of diabetes, advocate for early screenings, and promote healthier lifestyle choices. Dr Sanjay Agrawal, Diabetologist and Secretary General, RSSDI, said, "This

pledge is a vital part of our collective responsibility to make diabetes prevention a national priority. By educating people about early diagnosis and healthy living, we can make a significant difference in preventing the onset of diabetes and managing the condition more effectively.

"Our professionals are comence committee. aegis of the 52nd National Annual Conference of RSSDI to spread awareness about dia-

betes, in which posters and flyers were made and distributed. disseminated online by thousands of doctors all over the country. It saw huge participacannot be overstated. tion by doctors, including Dr "By focusing on prevention, Rajesh Kesari, a diabetologist,

early diagnosis, and patient and benefited lakhs of people education, we empower indiby creating awareness.

epidemic on families and communities," Dr Sahoo said. The program also highlights nationwide activities led by doctors, including the A-Ż Diabetes Awareness Activity campaign organized by RSSDI's Delhi chapter and the confer-The campaign was launched by RSSDI Delhi Chapter under the

viduals to manage their health

more proactively, ultimately

reducing the burden of this

mitted to supporting the pub-lic with resources, education, and advocacy to ensure that diabetes is diagnosed early and effectively managed," he added. Dr Banshi Saboo, Chief Diabetologist and Chairman of Dia Care - Diabetes Care and Hormone Clinic, emphasized the urgency of addressing diabetes as a national priority LUCKNOW | SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 16, 2024

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

# **Right to breathe**

As Delhi air turns toxic, Delhiites face severe health risks; the capital needs long-term solutions, not knee-jerk reactions

elhi's air quality has plummeted to hazardous levels, with the city's Air Quality Index (AQI) soaring to a staggering 428, marking the worst pollution levels in the country. As a result, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has announced the enforcement of stringent Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)-3 restrictions starting at 8 AM on Friday. On Thursday, the 24-hour AQI for the city reached 428, signaling a "severe" air quality category, which poses serious health risks to the population, especially children, the elderly and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions. The current AQI level of 428 puts Delhi in the "Severe" category, indicating that the air is dangerously polluted and immediate action is required to prevent further deterioration of public health. In response to the deteriorating air quality, the CAQM has imposed the following GRAP-3 restrictions to mitigate the pollution levels: All non-essential construction and demolition activities in Delhi and the surrounding National Capital Region



(NCR) are suspended to prevent dust and particulate matter from exacerbating the pollution. Vehicles that do not meet the latest emission norms are banned from the roads. Specifically, petrol vehicles that do not comply with BS-III (Bharat Stage III) standards and diesel vehicles that fall under BS-IV norms are prohibited from operating within Delhi and parts of NCR.

These measures are expected to significantly reduce the amount of pollutants being emitted into the air, especially from construction sites and older vehicles, which are major contributors to air pollution. The current spike in pollution levels to a combination of factors. The calm winds and a sharp drop in temperature have trapped

pollutants in the air, preventing them from dispersing. The weather conditions have created a 'smog blanket' over the city, intensifying the effects of vehicular emissions, industrial pollution, and the burning of crop stubble in neighbouring states. The Supreme Court of India has taken note of the deteriorating air quality and has scheduled a hearing on November 18 to discuss further enforcement measures. The court has emphasised that every citizen has the fundamental right to breathe clean air, as protected under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Delhi's pollution crisis has now drawn significant national and international attention. While the immediate focus is on enforcing short-term measures like the GRAP-3 restrictions, experts argue that lasting solutions require systemic changes, including stricter emissions standards, better waste management, and a push for cleaner public transportation options. As the city continues to grapple with the toxic smog, Delhi residents are urged to stay indoors as much as possible, avoid strenuous outdoor activities, and wear N95 masks to protect themselves from the harmful effects of the air pollution. In the coming days, it is hoped that both weather conditions and Govt interventions will bring some relief, but the long-term health of the city's residents depends on sustained efforts to curb the sources of pollution.



# **US-Iran tensions:** War clouds over West Asia



ILANGAMUWA

With regional stability hanging in the balance, the world watches anxiously as West Asia braces for the potential fallout of escalating hostilities

n July 3, 1988, the US Navy's USS Vincennes, in an act of brazen military overreach, shot down Iran Air Flight 655, a civilian airliner carrying 290 passengers, over the Persian Gulf. The Navy's justification-that this was an "unintentional error"- belies the harsh reality: this was not a mistake, but rather an emblematic instance of Western indifference to the lives of those deemed expendable.

The Navy mistook a commercial flight for an enemy fighter jet, launching two surface-to-air missiles and killing all aboard. Yet, the US response was not to acknowledge a moral failing, but to double down on its denial, offering neither a genuine apology nor reparations to the victims' families. This tragedy was a grim reminder of the West's longstanding practice of dehumanising the peoples of West Asia in its relentless pursuit of geopolitical dominance. For the Iranian people, it was not merely a military blunder; it was a stark dismissal of their humanity, reinforcing the deeply entrenched belief in Western circles that the lives of those beyond its borders are, at best, collateral damage in the pursuit of power.

The echoes of this tragedy persist today, amplified by the volatile relationship between the US and Iran. Just days after Donald Trump's re-election, the US government claimed to have uncovered a plot by Iran to assassinate the president. Iran vehemently rejected these allegations, with Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi dismissing them as a "third-rate comedy" and accusing the US of fabricating a narrative to justify further aggression. Araqchi's derision-mocking the absurdity of an assassin "sitting in Iran and talk-ing online to the FBI"-renewed the deep mistrust that defines the US-Iran relationship.

than ever. These choices reflect a growing alignment with Israel's interests, further inflaming tensions and laying the groundwork for a catastrophic conflict-one that could see a war against Iran as the ultimate culmination of decades of Western intervention. This looming disaster cannot be divorced from the historical legacy of Western interference in West Asia. Iran's relationship with the West has been shaped by centuries of betrayal and manipulation. A defining moment in this

such as Pete Hegseth as

Secretary of Defence, Steven C

Witkoff as Special Envoy on

West Asia Affairs and Mike

Huckabee as Ambassador to

Israel - suggest that peace in

the West Asia is more distant

fraught history was the CIAbacked coup of 1953, which ousted Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh after he sought to nationalise Iran's oil industry.

This act, orchestrated by Western powers, reinstated the Shah's brutal regime, sowing the seeds for the 1979 Islamic Revolution. This history of intervention, driven by oil and geopolitics instilled a deep sense of betrayal in the Iranian consciousness a sentiment that still defines Iran's foreign policy today. Divided along sectarian lines and often opportunistic in appointments of hawkish figures their foreign policy, Iran's

DIVIDED ALONG SECTARIAN LINES AND OFTEN **OPPORTUNISTIC IN** THEIR FOREIGN POLICY, IRAN'S NEIGHBOURS HAVE REPEATEDLY FAILED TO PUT REGIONAL UNITY AHEAD OF EXTERNAL

PRESSURES

neighbours have repeatedly failed to put regional unity ahead of external pressures. Yet, the geopolitical manipu-lations that have shaped this region's history are part of a broader pattern: the West's refusal to recognise the sovereignty of nations it deems strategically irrelevant.

The Iranian people have grown ever more resolute in their refusal to capitulate to external demands. This isolation, initially born of necessity, has also transformed into a profound existential struggle. in response, Iran has sought alliances with nations like China and Russia and forged relationships with non-state actors in the region. These alliances-born not of ideology, but of pragmatic necessityhave allowed Iran to exert regional influence, shifting the balance of power in ways the West never anticipated.

In his first term, Trump used a two-pronged strategy to weaken Iran: connecting other Arab nations in favour of Israel through the Abraham Accords, a treaty engineered by his Jewish-origin son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and secondly, targeting key personalities who enabled Iran's influence in the West Asia, must strive to find region while funding efforts by

side the White House-his actions could become far more unpredictable. Consequently, the potential for war against Iran is no longer a distant fear; it is a rapidly approaching reality. It would affirm the West's view that the lives of Iranians, like those across the Global South, are expendable in pursuit of geopolitical dominance, making this a war of choice, not necessity, with existential stakes for Iran.

In this context, the responsibility to avoid war does not lie solely with the U.S. or Iran, but with all the nations of the region, including those of the Arab world.

Despite their differing beliefs, histories, and alliances, it is incumbent upon Arab nations to take a united stand against the spectre of war. The voices of Arab leaders, particularly those who have long been caught in the geopolitical crossfire of the US-Iran conflict, must rise in defence of regional peace and stability. Divisions must be set aside in favour of collective action that prioritises the preservation of life and sovereignty over ideological differences. The world, and particularly the nations of



Devotees take a holy dip in the Ganga river at a ghat on the occasion of 'Kartik Purnima' festival, in Varanasi

second term and will become the 47th President of the USA, it is clear that his foreign policy, especially towards Iran, could become far more aggressive, with disastrous consequences. His planned

low that Trump has

Iranians living abroad working against Iran.

In his second term, which could be more refined and sharpened by the experiences he earned in the last eight years-both in office and outa path of diplomacy and dialogue, to avoid yet another destructive war that will further tear apart the very fabric of the region.

(The writer is a journalist and author; Views *are personal)* 

Wooden pallets: Turning timber into treasure



Circular economy practices are changing the future of wooden pallets, from innovative recycling methods to tech-driven solutions

lifespan and keeping them out

of landfills. This also supports

local economies by providing

artisans with reclaimed wood

to create unique, eco-friend-

ly products. When repurpos-

ing or upcycling are no longer

options, recycling can turn

pallets into products like par-

ticleboard or mulch, which

conserves resources and

reduces the need for new tim-

**A 7**<sup>ooden</sup> pallets are indispensable in modern logistics, widely used to support the transportation and storage of goods across various industries, including fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), pharmaceuticals, automotive, chemicals and more.

These durable platforms are designed to handle heavy loads and protect products during shipping, simplifying the process of storage and handling. The demand for wooden pallets is immense, with countries like India requiring an estimated 207.8 million units. With such extensive use, an important question arises: what happens to these pallets when they reach the end of their lifecycle?

By giving new life to old pallets, industries can reduce waste, conserve resources, and promote economic growth while protecting the environment. There are numerous innovative ways to repurpose and recycle wooden pallets, which contribute to building a more sustainable and efficient supply chain.

Repair and Refurbishment:



One of the most effective ways to enhance sustainability in the wooden pallet industry is through repair and refurbishment. While pallets generally have a lifespan of 12 to 18 months, many can be used longer with regular maintenance.

Instead of discarding damber. Together, these strategies aged pallets, companies can help minimise waste and inspect and repair them by lower environmental impact, replacing broken slats and encouraging responsible use restoring their structural of resources. Sustainable Sourcing as a integrity. This process helps Foundation for Circularity conserve raw materials and lowers the carbon footprint To fully align with circular economy principles, the wood associated with manufacturing new pallets. Adopting used in pallet manufacturing repair programmes also reduces the demand for fresh should be sustainably sourced. Certification protimber, which helps prevent grams, such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC<sup>®</sup>) deforestation and minimises and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), play a waste.

Repurposing, Upcycling, and Recycling

When wooden pallets are no longer fit for their primary purpose, they can still serve ment. These certifications a wide range of functions verify that forests are manthrough repurposing, upcyaged sustainably, protecting cling, or recycling. Repurposing transforms dis-carded pallets into furniture, biodiversity, preventing illegal logging, and minimising environmental impact. decor, or art, extending their

The Role of Technology in Enhancing Circularity

Technology is increasingly central to the transformation of wooden pallets, with advancements like the Internet of Things and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) improving pallet management. These technologies allow pallets to be embedded with sensors, which enable real-time tracking of location, condition, and usage. This visibility optimises inventory management and reduces losses. By tracking pallets through their entire lifecycle, businesses

can maximise reuse, ensuring that pallets are returned, repaired, and repurposed efficiently. Such technology-driven strategies extend the lifespan of pallets, ensuring they remain in the supply chain as long as possible

(The wrier is CEO & MD at Jay Wood Industry; views *are personal)* 

#### LETTERS

iolence against doctors and medical

staff by patients' relatives is a serious

issue that has been on the rise. Hospitals

often deal with life-and-death situations,

leading to heightened emotions; for example,

when a patient's health condition worsens or

dies, relatives may react violently out of grief

and frustration. This can be avoided by

informing the patient's condition when it wors-

under some legal allegations. So far, the

UP government has been popularising

The use of bulldozers to demolish the

house of the culprits, to give them a les-

son, is turning into the way of gover-

nance in Uttar Pradesh. The demolish-

ing of the houses and illegal land

encroachment must be followed by a

legal procedure of waving official legal

by the judiciary will assist the innocent

to save the sweet home from the red

tape bureaucrats and political leaders,

who many times hurt the innocent to

show their political status and power. Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

**POLLUTION FROM WASTE** 

itself with the Buldozer Raaj.

#### **SIMPLIFY TAX SYSTEM**

Madam — The article on simplifying tax structures presents an acceptable argument (14-11-24). The successive governments seem to be under utter confusion and all the changes are found to be further complicating the tax structure rather than making it simple to understand and comply with. GST is further a complicated one in every aspect. The government is not clear even in a matter like what is to be taxed. Essentials are taxed; condoms and bangles are exempted. Falling sick is taxed. Medicines, diagnostic devices and insurance premiums are taxed as if falling sick is a matter of comfort and luxury. Even in the case of direct tax, the government's sense of vengeance over the salaried section is clearly displayed. This section is earning money to spend and save.

Both are good and help build a better economy of the country.But they are made to pay not less than 30 per cent as income tax besides GST on every spending. Besides forgoing a huge part of salary, they have to manage the hardships caused by untamed inflation also. There is no answer on the relevance of toll collections. A road is laid and its expenses are met with one year of toll collection. But collections are carried on for decades and they are never closed. It is this confusion in the mind of the government that drives earners to seek ways and means to avoid tax and accumulate black money. It is high time for the government to overhaul the entire tax system and make it peoplefriendly

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

#### **STOP ILLEGAL DEMOLITIONS**

Madam- The Supreme Court intervened that no government is allowed to rule with a bulldozer, by blazing the houses of the miscreants and culprits like this. The Supreme Court guidelines Madam — Instead of resolving environpace respect to the dreams of the mental problems, Delhi's ambition to home of every single individual, despite convert garbage into energy is creating

### **Ensure doctors' safety**

ens, to prepare the relatives for the worst situation. Sometimes families believe that adequate and proper treatment was not provided, which can be cleared by informing them about the disease and line of treatment being provided. Clear and compassionate commu nication is crucial to satisfying and pacifying them

Some patients or their relatives may have mental health issues or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which can lead to violent tendencies, which need to be noticed and taken care of by the attending medical staff Overcrowded hospitals, long waiting times, and inadequate basic facilities add to the frustration of patients and their families, resulting in violence. Hence, a multifaceted approach is required to tackle violence against medical professionals in hospitals.

O Prasada Rao | Hyderabad

that he was the been charged culprit health risks. The factory is releasing harmful smoke and ash into the surrounding neighborhoods, despite its goal of reducing landfill waste through rubbish incineration. Significant pollution has resulted, exposing locals to dangerously high concentrations of heavy metals like lead, cadmium, manganese, and arsenic-up to 19 times higher than what the EPA recommends.

Cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, as well as developmental hazards for children, are among the health effects. The absence of crucial safety measures at the plant is criticised by experts. Respiratory problems are common among the locals, and ash contamination has reached neighboring residences, schools, and parks. The intended "green" solution might make Delhi's pollution problem worse if regulatory action is not taken.

Divyansh Pal | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

#### notice at least 15 days prior and with full opportunity to appeal by the affected party. The move by the apex court will add more transparency to the justice mechanism, and this intervention

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### **FIRSTCOLUMN THE RISE AND** FALL OF EGO

True success lies not in fame or power but in humility and understanding one's purpose of life

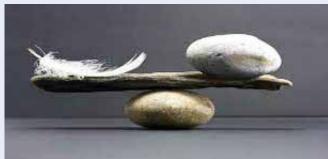


#### RAVI VALLURI

challenging task or an idea normally releases endorphins, which stimulate the human mind to think out of the box, and Awhen endowed with such an attitude, we scale high altitudes and reach the summit. But there is a flip side. We become attached to the product or the activity flow; consequently, the mind gets entrapped by the adulation. A vivacious model with gravitas, known for scorching the ramp, was chosen for a cinematic role. She executed the role with aplomb and was soon nominated for several awards and managed to win some of them, including the Best New Face award.

The actress was bestowed with several honours and in the process bagged prestigious roles. It was indeed a heady feeling. She was feted at various parties and became a celebrity overnight. However, there was no end to her avarice as her mind and body craved more attention. The "I, Me" syndrome dominated her mind and she spent hours before the mirror, taking selfies, adoring her ravishing beauty and success. At her peril, she ignored the alarm bells, the death knell knocking at her door. She got hooked on alcohol, money, drugs and sex. The talented artiste lost her equanimity, equipoise and equilibrium in a state of feverishness and in the process attracted opprobrium.

The meteoric rise of the artiste was short-lived and her obnoxious behaviour was not acceptable to the industry she was soon stripped of meaty roles and sure enough, lost power and fame. Tragedy struck



in a cruel form as her life was snuffed out at a tender age when she succumbed after a car crash in an inebriated state. Who was to be blamed for this irrational behaviour? False egos play havoc on human minds when the power of discrimination gets obfuscated in the razzmatazz and dazzle of "doership". The breed of such people extends among politicians, entrepreneurs and seekers as they are entrapped by doership and cannot let go and remain humble

They focus on certain immediate outcomes and in the bargain, lose the plot and larger picture. In the political sphere too, parties become dependent on the success and megalomania of an individual and lose their core strengths of inner democracy and grassroots contact. The spiritual world is not spared either. Seekers, to begin with, tread the path with great courage and conviction and have immense faith in the Master and the path. They unfailingly participate in sadhana, seva, Satsang, meditation and other activities of the organisation. The Master (Guru) in his magnanimity encourages all his followers. Some progress on the path and others fall aside as the rigour and regimen of spirituality are arduous and crammed with disturbances before the seeker obtains peace of mind. Soon the feverish mind of the seeker feels proximity to the Master and in the process, rubs fellow seekers the wrong way. Some seekers 'like' these photographs on Facebook to ingratiate themselves with those purportedly "close", in anticipation that it could act as a passport to have a glimpse of the Guru. A true spiritual leader or Master cautions the faithful not to be trapped in the guagmire of Guru Mandal. "Under the influence of false ego, one thinks himself to be the doer of activities, while all the activities are carried out by nature as a natural process," expounds Lord Krishna to Arjuna. A genuine seeker should realise that we are infinitesimal in this vast universe. Our acts and deeds, if truly positive and humble, will automatically draw us closer to the Guru and the Laws of the Universe. (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)

# Bangladesh: A nation's press under pressure



analys \$ 07

HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Attacks on media houses and journalists continue notwithstanding the interim Govt's claim that it is committed to upholding media freedom

he media's independence is under severe attack in Bangladesh under the interim government headed by chief advisor Muhammad Yunus. The attack is two-pronged. One of these is directed against media houses and journalists perceived to have been supporters of the Awami League and the government when Sheikh Hasina headed both. The second targets non-aligned media establishments, editors and journalists, including those known for standing up to the Awami League government's repressive media regime. The objective is to pressure them into toeing the line laid down by the young sparks dominating the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement (ADSM) and rabidly anti-Awami League and fundamentalist Islamist elements in sec-

tions of the media and the interim govern-

ment Coming to media houses, eight channels were attacked on August 5, 2024, itself, when Sheikh Hasina left for India. Among them was Ekattor TV's office in Baridhara, Dhaka, which was vandalised and burnt down; also attacked on the same day in Dhaka were the premises of Samay TV, and ATN Bangla. On August 19, an armed mob attacked and severely damaged the establish-ment of East West Media group, which runs Kaler Kantha (Voice of the times) Bangladesh Pratidin (Bangladesh daily), both Bengali-language newspapers, Daily Sun, an English-language daily, News24BD, a television news channel, Radio Capital, a radio station, and Banglanews24, an online Bengali daily. The mob assaulted journal-ists, injured a woman journalist and harassed women employees.

As for journalists, according to Reporters Without Borders, a globally-respected international NGO headquartered in Paris, "baseless accusations of killing protesters have been brought against nearly 140 journalists. Twenty-five have been charged with "crimes against humanity. Many of them have gone into hiding because they fear being arrested and jailed."

A number of journalists have been arrest-ed and jailed. Their ranks include Shakil Ahmed, former head of news at television channel Ekattor TV, and Farzana Rupa, its former chief correspondent who were arrested from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka, on August 21, 2024, when they were about to board a Turkish Airlines flight to Paris via Istanbul, along with their daughter. The two of them remain in prison, as do Mozammel Haque Babu, chief executive officer of Ekattor TV and Shyamal Datta, editor of Bhorer Kagaz (Paper at Dawn) who were arrested on September 15. In a letter emailed recently to Muhammad Yunus, Jodie Ginsburg, chief executive officer of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a respected NGO promoting press freedom and defending the rights of journalists worldwide, urged him to ensure, among other things, respect for the "procedural rights of four incarcerated pro-Awami League journalists: Farzana Rupa, Shakil Ahmed, Mozammel Babu and Shyamal Dutta, including their right to a free trial." The arrests are hardly surprising. According to a report in the Dhaka Tribune dated September 19, 2024, the ADSM leader, Nahid Islam who, besides his other hats, is advisor in charge of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, thundered at a press conference on the previous day that the "instigators" of the July-August massacre



[of protesters] would be brought to justice no matter whether they identified themselves as journalists, writers and artists. Doubtless, the interim government was to decide as to who were to be brought to justice.

Just two examples would show how utterly arbitrary and vindictive EIGHT CHANNELS such decisions have been. The one is the continued incarceration of WERE ATTACKED Shahriar Kabir, an internationallyrespected human rights activist, ON AUGUST 5, champion of secular humanism, 2024, ITSELF, advocate of the bringing war criminals of 1971 to justice, author and WHEN SHEIKH iournalist. The second is the arrest. on November 6, 2024, of the noted HASINA LEFT FOR television actor, Shomi Kaiser, INDIA. AMONG daughter of Shahidullah and Panna Kaiser. Shahidullah, a noted writer THEM WAS and journalists, disappeared after being abducted by Pakistani army EKATTOR TV'S personnel and their collaborators OFFICE IN from the ranks of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and allied organi-BARIDHARA, sations like al-Badr, al-Shams and Razakars. His brother, Zaheer DHAKA, WHICH Raihan, also disappeared while WAS VANDALIZED looking for him. Panna Kaiser was an Awami League Member of AND BURNT Parliament (1996-2001) who worked in the area of youth welfare. DOWN; ALSO Apart from arrests on false charges, ATTACKED ON THE the cancellation of accreditation cards, which has reached a total of SAME DAY IN 167 at the time of writing, is being DHAKA WERE THE used as a weapon against journalists. Such cards are important for PREMISES OF identifying oneself as a journalist, and securing entry into restricted SAMAY TV, AND areas, government offices and meetings. Referring to the matter, Celia ATN BANGLA Mercier, Head of South Asia Office of Reporters Without Borders,

another globally-respected NGO whose mission is to act for freedom, pluralism and independence of journalism, and defend those who embody these ideals, has said,

"The decision to rescind the accreditation cards of journalists considered close to the previous government is politically-motivated and punitive, and has the effect of intimidating the press. It encourages self-censorship and threatens the very existence of opposition media. This decision by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry [of mentary on Sheikh Mujib and Sheikh Hasina, suggesting that these outlets are paving the way for fascism by creating contrasting narratives. He further said that the media had fostered hatred towards Islam, misrepresented societal divisions, and perpetuated a narrative of eternal gratitude towards India for its role in Bangladesh's liberation. Significantly, Mahmudur Rahman said this in the presence of Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus' press secretary, Shafiqul Alam.

Events like this have been creating Bangladesh] is incomprehensible, a climate in which channels and publications, including the two of

Bangladesh's leading paper which

Rahman criticised, are sought to be

coming just a week after it took a positive step by establishing a mechanism for reporting cases of harassment against journalists. We urge the ministry to return to this more constructive path by establishing a regulated procedure for issuing and rescinding press cards, by ensuring that cases of harassment are examined impartially, and by putting a final stop to political reprisals against media professionals." As for pressures on independent media establishments, editors and journalists, the aim is to make them toe the line laid down by the young sparks dominating the ADSM, and rabidly anti-Awami League and fundamentalist Islamist elements in sections of the media

ation and the interim government's role when it said, "In our pursuit of fair, anti-discriminatory and the interim government. The weapons are threats and harangues. At a meeting to discuss "Role of Media in Creating Fascist Narrative: A Review," Mahmudur Rahman, editor of Amar Desh (My Country) criticized two national newspapers, Prothom Alo and The Daily Star, for their coverage and com-

put under compulsion to conform to the kind of reportage and comment the interim government expects of them. All this makes a mockery of the interim government's assertions that it is for the freedom of the press and its moves like the setting up of a commission for hearing allegations of harassment by journalists. An editorial in The Daily Star, datelined November 7, 2024, delivered a damning indictment of the situ-

Bangladesh, few values are as vital as press freedom. We are, therefore, concerned by the persistent intimidation, harassment, and censorship faced by journalists, which shows how the media landscape remains fraught with obstacles." (The author is Consulting Editor,

The Pioneer; the views expressed *are personal)* 

### Punjab by-elections: A Stage for dynastic politics, defections and defamatory rhetoric

In the run-up to the Punjab Assembly by-elections 2024, political leaders seem to have sidestepped pro-people issues

Elections are usually a good opportunity for political leaders to make public statements and seek public feedback on their propeople works and policies. But the scene in the Punjab Assembly by-elections 2024 eludes the expectation.

Along with other states in India, there are by-elections in four Assembly constituencies of Punjab for which voting is to be held on November 20, 2024. In the absence of any public-interest manifestos, political parties rely on the 'candidate-winnability' supporting political apostasy and dynastic politics. Most political leaders in the campaign are relying on defamatory garrulous speeches and irresponsideficit of the people in politi-



SUKHDEV SINGH

cal parties and the confidence deficit in their leaders is so high that the oldest and traditionally strongest political party of the state, Shiromani Akali Dal, has preferred to not contest the elections.

A conglomeration of its disgruntled leaders, the Akali Dal Reform Movement, is also out of the election contest. The contest is triangular among the ble false claims. The trust ruling party in the state- Aam Aadmi Party, the ruling party

in the centre- Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress. In one constituency, the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate is a cousin of the Akali Dal chief and has been a minister in the Akali and the Congress governments. He has apostatised three political tastes before joining the

Bharatiya Janata Party, while the Aam Aadmi Party candidate left the Akali Dal shortly before the current by-elections

The Congress party candi-date is the wife of the Congress State party president and a 2024-elected Member of Parliament. In another constituency, the Aam Aadmi Party candidate is the son of a 2024-elected Member of Parliament from the same party; the MP had defected

from the Congress just before the 2024 parliamentary elections to contest and win as an Aam Aadmi Party candidate, while the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate has defected Shrimoni Akali Dal; he has been a minister in the SAD government.

In the third constituency, the Congress party candidate is the wife of its party MP and a former Deputy Chief Minister. In contrast, the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate is a former Akali MLA and the son of a Punjab Assembly speaker in the SAD government. In the fourth constituency, the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate has been a former senior Vice – President of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee and a Congress MLA before deserting the Congress to join



the Bharatiya Janata Party, while the Aam Aadmi Party candidate is said to be a favourite of an MP and a former minister, ignoring its former district chief who is contesting as a rebel. The four vacancies arose

because the MLAs in all four contested and won parliamentary elections held in June 2024. In three of the four, the

contesting candidates are the immediate family members of the 2024-elected MPs. As the family members of the MPs, they are assumed to be the 'winning' candidates because their mentors have already proved it by winning the Assembly and then parliamentary elections sequential-

The question arises whether the political parties do not have any other members from any other section of society who can be 'winning' candidates or if some leaders have turned electoral politics into a family monopoly aka 'nepotism', in which there is no room for other party workers, however sincere and hard-working they may be.

The current situation is so ridiculous that these leaders

and the political parties criticize each other for dynastic politics, nepotism and party defection. Still, when the opportunity arises, they play the game and present their spouses, children and relatives as the only 'winning' candidates and strengthen political dynasticism justifying it in various ways. Claiming himself the next

Chief Minister of the state during his campaign for the BJP candidate, a Government of India Minister compared 'the peasant leaders in protest' with Talibans' and threatened action against them after the elections. Not only his threat is defamatory and against the spirit of a democracy, but also an unbecoming rambling coercing votes for the candidate of his party.

Addressing an election meeting in favour of an Aam Aadmi Party candidate, its supremo dubs the sitting Congress MP as "corrupt Randhawa" inviting defamatory threat from him. Further he charges him with 'dynastic politics' ignoring the similar practice by AAP in another constituency where he has campaigned for the candidate

on the same day. Thus the Punjab 2024 By-elections are riddled with defection, dynasticism, defamatory rhetoric, irresponsible rambling, bringing with it a sense of deterioration in democracy which both the people and political parties must address.

(The writer is retired professor, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; views *are personal)* 

### nation 08



### Mumbai is a tough nut to crack for the BJP-led MahaYuti

#### TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

After its unimpressive performance in the recent Lok Sabha Election when it managed to win just two out of six seats, the ruling MahaYuti is facing an uphill task in Mumbai -- where the BJP and then united Shiv Sena had together put up a spectacular show by collectively 30 out of total 36 seats.

Though the situation is very fluid in the country's commercial capital and there is no clear indicator on the as to which way the wind blowing. It is quite unlikely that the MahaYuti will repeat the performance of the saffron alliance in 2019 when the BJP won 16 seats, while then united Shiv Sena had walked away with 14 seats in the metropolis.

The electoral situation has changed vastly after the vertical split of the Shiv Sena in June 2022, when the Eknath Shinde-led rebel group toppled the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by Uddhav and formed its government in alliance with the BJP on June 30, 2022.

The two warring Senas - one Shinde and the other by Uddhav Thackeray - are preparing for another massive showdown in the November

20 Assembly polls. The tussle seats it contested in Mumbai. between the two feuding Sena Like in the Lok Sabha polls, Like in the Lok Sabha polls, will have a major bearing on the Assembly poll results in Mumbai.

The tussle should be seen in the backdrop of the fact that the round one involving the Lok Sabha Election, when the Uddhav Sena had captured three out of six seats while its ally Congress had won one seat. On the other hand, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena had managed to win just one seat, while the remaining one seat was bagged by its ally BJP. Of the total 36 seats, the Uddhav Sena is contesting 22

seats as against 19 seats contested by the united Sena in 2019 when it was a part of the BJP-led NDA. Its ally Congress has fielded candidates in 11 constituencies as against 30 seats it had contested in 2019 seats, while the Sharad Pawarled NCP is trying its luck in two seats as against six seats it had contested in 2019 polls. Interestingly, the despite the split in the parent party, the Uddhav Sena has got maximum share in the

Opposition MVA From the Mahayuti seats, the BJP is contesting 18 seats, leaving 16 seats for the led by chief minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena faction and two for Ajit Pawar-led NCP. In the 2019 Assembly

polls, the BJP had romped home by winning 16 out of 17

the two warring Senas are slugging it out bitterly in the singging it out onterly in the country's financial capital. The BJP, which rode the "Modi wave" in the 2019 Assembly polls, is not as formidable as it was five years ago - a factor that is bound to

boost the chances of the rival MVA candidates. What will lead to the division of votes in the 2024 Assembly polls is the fact that the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) has fielded 25 candidates in Mumbai. Though the MNS may not win many seats, it will cut into the traditional vote banks of both the Shiv Senas and to an extent the BJP.

There will be further division in the distribution of votes because of the presence of the candidates belonging to the Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi and Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM.

Significantly enough, a majority of the contests in Mumbai are three-cornered or four-cornered ones and it is a high-stake battle to two alliances involving six Maha Yuti is a high-stake battle for the parties - Maha Yuti comprising BJP, Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar-led NCP and Maha Vikas Aghadi comprising Congress, Uddhav



Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and Sharad Pawarheaded NCP (SP)

Several bigwigs of Maharashtra politics and gen-next leaders including

Aaditya Thackeray, Amit Thackeray, Milind Deora, Rahul Narwekar, Nawab Malik, Ashish Shelar, Sunil Raut, Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Zeeshan Siddique are among the 420 contestants who are in the fray in 36 Assembly constituencies across Mumbai.

Mumbai's three seats - Worli, Mahim and Bandra East -

involve members of the Thackeray family.

In Worli, Uddhav's son and former State minister Aaditya -- who is the sitting MLA, is taking on Murli Deora's son and sitting Rajya Sabha member Milind Deora, who has been fielded by Shiv Sena and MNS candidate Sandeep Deshpande. MNS chief Raj Thackeray has a lot at stake at Mahim, where

his son Amit is making an electoral debut. He is locked in a fierce triangular contest with three-time sitting Shiv Sena MLA Sada Sarvankar

Shiv Sena (UBT)'s and Mahesh Sawant.

In fact, the BJP --which is leading the MahaYuti --Sarvankar to wanted withdraw in favour of Amit Thackeray in favour of Amit Thackeray in lieu of the unconditional support it received from Raj Thackeray in the Lok Sabha polls. However, Sarvankar was in no mood to oblige. Chief minister Eknath Shinde, who heads the Shiv Sena, chose

not to intervene - much to the chagrin of Raj Thackerav. In Bandra West, Aaditya's cousin Varun Sardesai is

Lodge FIR against creators if they

pose safety threat: Railway Board

contesting from Shiv Sena (UBT) and he is taking on against Heera Devasi of the Congress.

NCP's Zeeshan Siddiqui while MNS has fielded former

MLA Trupti Sawant. Zeeshan's father Baba

Siddique was shot dead last

month. Varun is Aaditya's

maternal cousin. He is the son

of Rashmi Thackeray's sister..

on sitting MLA and former minister Aslam Shaikh.

In the much-discussed

In Chandivali, former minister and Maharashtra

Congress working President

Naseem Khan is pitted against Dilip Lande of the Shinde

Shiv Sena. In the 2019 polls, Lande defeated Khan by a

slender margin of 409 votes. From downtown Colaba in

south Mumbai, the BJP has

The BJP's moneybag Mangal Prabhat Lodha is involved in a contest against Shiv Sena (UBT)'s candidate Bhairulal Jain in upmarket Malabar Hill.

Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut's brother and sitting MLA Sunil Raut is re-contesting the polls against Suvarna Karanje of the Eknath Shidne Sena.

of Rashmi Thackeray's sister.. In a key contest being witnessed in Bandra west, Mumbai BJP President Ashish Shelar is fighting Asif Zakaria of the Congress. Elsewhere in Malad west in north Mumbai, Shelar's brother Vinod Shelar is taking on sitting MLA and former In Mumbadevi, the threetime Congress MLA Amin Patil is battling it out against fashion designer Shaina NC, who recently quit BJP to secure a ticket from the Shinde Shiv Sena.

constituency of Dharavi, The NCP (Ajit Pawar) has put up controversial NCP (Ajit Mumbai North-Central MP and Mumbai Congress President Prof Varsha Gaikwad's sister Jyoti Pawar) nominee and former minister Nawab Malik against Gaikwad is locked in a contest Samajwadi Party's state chief and sitting MLA Abu Asim against Rajesh Khandare of the Shinde Shiv Sena. Azmi.

On its part, the BJP has objected to Malik's Malik's objected to Malik's nomination. However, the NCP (SP) has ignored its ally's objection to Malik's candidature. Malik's daughter Sana Malik is contesting the Anushaktinagar seat against NCP (SP)'s Fahad Ahmed, the husband of actor-activist Swara Bhaskar.

put up the controversial Assem,bly Speaker Rahul There are in all 420 Narwekar, who had presided over the disqualification pleas of Shiv Sena and NCP, is up candidates in the fray for 36 seats.

#### Rajnath criticises Cong Dalit man killed in clash in for promise to conduct 'Caste Census'

#### PTI RANCHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday criticised the Congress and its leader Rahul Gandhi for their promise to conduct a "caste census," accusing them of using the issue as a ploy to manipulate voters for political gain.

Speaking at a rally in Jharkhand's Mahagama, Singh challenged the Congress to come up with a concrete plan for distributing reservation benefits among the numerous castes and sub-castes in the country.

"In 2011, a socio-economic caste census was conducted, which revealed the presence of

#### PNS NOIDA A Dalit man died of wounds sustained in stone pelting between two groups in Greater Noida's Bhikhampur village on Friday, police said. According to Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Shivhari Meena, the clash had broken out over the passage of a tractor through the village in the Rabupura Police Station jurisdiction.

Nikhil, and Ashu Tyagi, were arrested following an encounter with police which shot and wounded one of in Bihar, JKNC in Jammu & Kashmir, and now it is the turn of DMK in Tamil Nadu. "Congress uses these alliances them, Meena said. The argument "escalated into to attain power, but ultimately around 46 lakh castes, sub- it harms its partners," he said. stone-pelting, during which castes, and gotras. According to the Ministry of Social Welfare, there are about 1,200 JMM-Congress-RJD coalition Scheduled Castes (SC), over 750 Scheduled Tribes (ST), and around 2,500 Other (CDCa) one person was injured and ACP said. He contrasted this with the BJP's record in the state, stat-The ing, "So far, 13 Chief Ministers have governed Jharkhand, but Samaj none of the three BJP CMs ever faced corruption charges or went to jail.

# Greater Noida

Mayawati, who demanded strict action against the culprits.

"The incident in which one person was killed and several others were seriously injured in violence perpetrated by goons against a Dalit family n Bhikhampur village, Rabupura police station, Gautam Buddha Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh, is extremely sad and condemnable," Mayawati posted on X in Hindi. "The government must take Three of the accused, Nitin,

stringent action against the culprits and culprits and provide assistance to the victim's family," she added.

According to police, an FIR was lodged in the matter under several charges, including rioting, breach of

all its zones to lodge FIR against reel creators if they pose threat to safe rail operations or cause inconvenience to the passengers in the coaches or on

PNS NEW DELHI

The Railway Board has asked

the railway premises. Railway Board's The instruction follows recent cases wherein people, mainly youngsters, compromised rail safety by filming stunt videos on railway tracks and in moving trains using their mobile phones.

"People have crossed all limits for making reels. They not only risk their own lives, but also jeopardise the safety of hundreds of rail passengers by placing objects or running vehicles on the railway tracks or by performing life-



after being hit by train," he division.

added. According to Railway Board officials, the Railwav Protection Force (RPF) and the track, showed alertness and Government Railway Police

causing a chaotic situation at According to railway officials, a loco pilot of a goods train,

the Vvasarpadi Jeeva railwav station in Chennai. After a video went viral showing the students raising

How will Congress manage the distribution of reservation quotas among all these groups?" Singh asked. He further demanded that

Congress present a clear blueprint for implementing such a system.

Singh also took a swipe at Rahul Gandhi, saying, "He should answer how many castes reside in India. Politics should be about serving the people, not just forming a government."

He accused Congress of engaging in opportunistic politics, claiming that the party has historically ruined alliances with regional partners such as RJD

### From Sarai Kale Khan to Birsa Munda...

#### From page 1

Addressing the gathering at the event, Khattar said "Bhagwan Birsa Munda is a very big name for the country's tribal community as he waged a huge struggle against the British for snatching away their natural resources. To preserve the memory of such an inspiring personality, especially for the youth, a statue of Bhagwan Birsa Munda was unveiled by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the ISBT Chowk has been named after him."

Sarai Kale Khan is a historic locality and a Gujjar village of Basista / Bosatta Gotra (član), migrated from Khanpur village situated in South Delhi in 16th-17th Century. In the North-west corner of the village there used to be some which were called 'Mahal' (Mansion), nowadays the area has DDA Flats. The land area there stretched from Purana Qila (Old Fort) in the North-west to daily," the book mentioned.

Singh expressed confidence in the BJP's prospects in the ongo-ing Jharkhand elections, predicting that the party would secure two-thirds of the 43 seats up for election in the first phase.

He pointed to a 3 per cent increase in voter turnout as an indicator of strong support for the NDA government in the state, signaling a stable and corru

South.

JawaharLal Nehru Stadium in the West, Mayur Vihar in the East and Taimoor Nagar in the

'Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Monuments of Delni: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others', compiled by Maulvi Zafar Hasan and first published in 1920, "The sarai of Kale Khan which was constructed of rubble masonry was originally surrounded by arched cells, with their outer walls crowned

The sarai seemed to be one of those which are known to have been built by Sher Shah at the distance of a "Kiroh (nearly 3 km) on the road from Bengal to the Indus", it said. "In each of these sarais, travellers, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were entertained, at remains of old monuments the public expense, by the order of the Emperor, and horse posts were established for of Sarai Kale Khan once communication, so that news

later declared dead by and attempt to peace, doctors at the hospital," the murder.

Charges under the stringent Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Other injured are undergoing Scheduled treatment at a hospital, while police are hunting for the (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, have also been absconding culprits, he said. invoked in the case, which incident drew condemnation from Bahujan has been filed at the Rabupura Police Station. supremo

threatening stunts on moving trains," a senior Railway Board official said.

"Viral videos have shown people getting killed by approaching trains while taking selfies because they went too close to the track without realising how much area a train can cover at a short

(GRP) have been asked to adopt a "zero tolerance" policy towards reel creators flouting norms. Recently, the RPF registered a case against a man for attempting a stunt by unauthorisedly driving a Mahindra Thar SUV on the between railway tracks Kanakpura and Dhanakya

stopped the train at a safe distance after seeing the SUV stuck on the tracks. It is suspected that the man attempted the stunt to get a reel filmed by his friends for a social media post. In another recent incident, the

which was coming on the same

railway police registered an FIR against 10 students of a city college for "dangerously"

slogans at the Vyasarpadi Jeev railway station with one of them trying to climb atop the roof of the train, the police launched a probe after registering a case, railway officials said. "Several such cases have come to light, prompting the Railway Board to deal with them as sternly as possible," an official said.

### JMM's Littipara MLA Dinesh William Marandi joins BJP

#### PNS RANCHI

Party

Dinesh William Marandi, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLA from Littipara constituency, assembly joined the BJP on Friday after being denied a ticket by his party for the elections.

took BJP Marandi Marandi took bjr gove membership during a poll "The rally addressed by Union are Minister Shivraj Singh over Chouhan in Littipara.

Chouhan welcomed Marandi into the BJP fold, emphasising that together they would work towards

According to Volume III of

by battlements". quick

the welfare of its people. He also launched a scathing attack on the Soren-led Hemant government, accusing it of t u r n i n g the state into a hub of corruption, poor governance, and scams. "The people of Jharkhand are determined to overthrow the corrupt

J M M - C o n g r e s s - l e d government," Chouhan said. Marandi, in his remarks, explained that his decision to leave the JMM was due to

advancing the progress of the denial of a ticket and Jharkhand and focusing on alleged threats from the party leadership after he voiced his concerns.

"My father, Simon Marandi, was one of the founders of JMM, and I worked for years to strengthen the party. But now, I've been forced to leave for the sake of Jharkhand's progress," he said.

In the 2019 elections, Marandi had won the Littipara seat in Pakur district by a significant margin, defeating BJP's Daniel Kisku by 13,903 votes.

### Man forcing wife to leave her job is cruelty, says MP HC

#### PNS NEW DELHI

A man forcing his wife to quit her job and live according to his wishes is cruelty, the Madhya Pradesh High Court said while allowing a woman's divorce plea. The 33-year-old woman works as a manager with a Central government undertaking. She moved the HC after the Family Court dismissed her divorce plea, which claimed her husband was mentally harassing her to leave her job and live with him in Bhopal. In its order of November 13, a division bench of MP High Court his wish and style amounts to

comprising Chief Justice Suresh Kumar Kait and Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari overturned the family court's decision and allowed the woman's plea for divorce. "Whether husband or wife wants to live together, it is their wish. Neither husband nor wife can force the other side not to do a job or do any job as per the choice of the spouse. In the present case, the husband compelled his wife to leave the government job till he gets a job. In this manner, forcing the wife to leave her job and live as per

cruelty," the bench said. After getting married in 2014, the couple started preparing for government recruitment exams while staying in Bhopal, her lawver Raghavendra Singh Raghuvanshi told PTI. "In 2017, my client got a job in a government undertaking but her husband did not. This hurt his ego. He then started harassing her to quit her job and stay with him in Bhopal. He told her not to take up any job until he finds one. However, she refused, which created differences among the couple," he said.

### 700 Kg drugs seized off Gujarat...

#### From page 1

"A huge consignment of about 700 kg of Methamphetamine was intercepted in Indian Territorial waters. During this operation, eight foreign nationals were arrested who claim to be Iranians," the NCB said. The eight men do not have any identity documents, it said. The operation was carried out jointly by the NCB, Navy and Gujarat Police Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS).

The Indian Navy in a "coordinated operation" with the NCB and Gujarat Police intercepted a suspicious boat leading to the seizure of the drugs, a Navy spokesperson said

in New Delhi. "This is the second major successful coordinated anti-narcotics operation at sea by the Navy this year," he said.

The Navy said it is committed to ensuring a safe and secure maritime environment while preventing illegal use of the seas. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the operation stands out as a stellar example of the government's commitment to the vision and the seamless coordination among our agencies in achieving the same.

"Pursuing PM Shri @narendramodi Ji's vision for a drug-free Bharat, our agencies today busted an international drug trafficking cartel and seized

over approx. 700 kg of contraband meth in Gujarat," Shah wrote on 'X'.

As much as 3,500 kgs of drugs being trafficked through the maritime route has been seized by these agencies this year with the arrest of 11 Iranians and 14 Pakistani nationals in three cases. All these foreigners are currently lodged in jail awaiting court trial, as per the NCB. "These significant operational achievements in the Indian territorial waters are a testament to our resolve to eradicate the scourge of drugs from India to realise our vision of a 'Nasha Mukt Bharat' (drugs-free India) by 2047," it said.

### AQI 817, Delhi is most...

#### From page 1

Low visibility due to smog has affected flight and rail operations across India. Several IndiGo flights to and from Amritsar are affected. Many SpiceJet flights to and from Delhi and Darbanga are running late.

Various trains are running late by over two hours. More than 25 trains arriving at New Delhi railway station are also delayed. The Air Quality Warning System under the Ministry of Earth Sciences warned that with slow wind speeds, the meteorological conditions are likely to remain recommendations, extremely unfavourable for effective dispersion of pollutants.

Transport Forum on Friday wrote to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) requesting the introduction of a 'Clean Air Concession' on metro fares during severe air pollution days. In the letter, the organisations highlighted the need for an efficient and affordable transportation system that could bring down emission levels in the city. "This initiative could play a transformative role in making clean, efficient transit affordable, thus encouraging the citizen to shift to sustainable public transport," the letter said.

The organisations proposed several including reducing metro fares by 20-30 per cent on high-pollution days and In a related development, encouraging people to use public Greenpeace India and Public transport instead of private vehicles.

### world 09



## Trump vows to end Russia-Ukraine war Sri Lankan president's NPP

#### PTI WASHINGTON

U<sup>S</sup> President-elect Donald Trump has said his administration will focus on ending the Russia-Ukraine war, as he lamented the killing of people in the conflict. He also said his administration

will also work on bringing peace to West Asia. "We're going to work on the

Middle East, and we're going to work very hard on Russia and Ukraine. It's got to stop," Trump said during a gala for the America First Policy Institute held at his Mar-a-Lago estate on Thursday.

This was his first major speech and public appearance after his stunning electoral victory in the November 5 presidential elections.

stop. I saw a report today. Thousands of people over the last three days were killed. Thousands and thousands of people were killed. They happened to be soldiers, but whether they're soldiers or they're people sitting in towns, we're going to work it," he

said. The President-elect has consistently said his priority is to end the war and stem what he characterises as a drain on US resources, in the form of military aid to Ukraine. Meanwhile, Lisa Curtis, who

served as deputy assistant to Trump in his previous term and National Security Council senior director for South and Central Asia from 2017 to

"Russia and Ukraine's got to 2021, said the war in Ukraine needs to end in a way that does not encourage other nations to invade their neighbours illegal-

President (elect) Trump has in the past talked more favourably about (Russian) President (Vladimir) Putin than most US presidents. He has also talked about trying to end the war between Russia and Ukraine. We haven't seen yet how he's going to do that," Curtis said. I would just simply say that it needs to be done in a way that Russia faces some conse-quences for its actions," Curtis

told PTI in an interview. It needs to be done in a way that Russia doesn't try to do the same thing two or three years down the line, she said.

people," she added.

"It needs to be done in a way that doesn't encourage other US adversaries to try to illegally invade their neighbour's territory," said Curtis, who is currently a Senior Fellow and Director of the Indo-Pacific Security Programme at Center for a New American Security

think-tank. Some of Trump's top advisors were present at the Mar-a-Lago event. He praised Tesla owner Elon Musk and Indian-American entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, who are tapped to lead the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) in his second term. Trump also praised Hindu-American Tulsi Gabbard, his pick for Director of National Intelligence.

#### PTI COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's National People's Power of President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Thursday secured a majority in parliament, according to official results announced by the election commission. The NPP contesting under the

Malimawa (compass) symbol secured 123 seats out of the 171 declared seats, as per the results by 11 am. The results for 25 out of total 196 seats were left to be declared. Another 29 seats were expect-

ed to be allocated to all parties based on the cumulative national polling. The NPP has received 6.8 mil-

lion or 61 per cent of the votes counted, taking a commanding lead over its rivals. The party is on track to get a

two thirds majority as it is expected to add to its tally a bulk from the 29 seats, taking the party to the absolute majority of 150 seats in the 225member assembly

In the northern Jaffna district,



secures parliamentary majority

Tilvin Silva , general secretary of the Sri Lanka's marxist political party people's liberation front speaks to media following their win in the parliamentary election in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Friday. AP/PTI

**Downing Street apologises for menu** 

the cultural capital of the Tamil minority, NPP — the predomstunning the traditional Tamil parties which dominated the inant Sinhala majority party scene. from the south of the country -- won the entire district over the traditional Tamil national-

No Sinhala majority parties have won Jaffna ever before. The grand old United National Party (UNP) had previously won an odd solitary seat in The NPP won three out of the six seats in Jaffna province, Jaffna. The NPP won the Jaffna

district with over 80,000 votes and the grand old Tamil party trailed by a little over 63,000 in the final count of Thursday's

This resonated pre-election comments by President Dissanayake who said his party was being accepted as a truly national party by all communi-ties. "The era of dividing and setting one community against the other has ended as people are embracing the NPP," Dissanayake, the NPP leader, said.

The NPP under its original Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) violently opposed any attempt of power sharing — a key Tamil demand during the armed separatist campaign of the LTTE. The Tamils only saw them as Sinhala majority racists.

The election came a year ahead of schedule as Dissanyaake dismissed the parliament immediately after taking charge as the president in September. The new parliament is set to meet next week.

### Trump will pick up from where he left off with India, says his former admin official

#### PTI WASHINGTON

US president-elect Donald Trump, who enjoys very good relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is expected to build on the progress made during his first term and continue strengthening ties with India, his South Asia point-person at the White House during his first term has said. Speaking to PTI in an interview, Lisa Curtis, who served as deputy assistant to president Trump and as National Security Council senior director for South and Central Asia from 2017 to 2021, also said she expected the same bumps for India and the US, as in Trump's first term, including tariff, dependence on Russia over arms supply and oil purchase from Iran.

"I think that President (elect) Trump will pick up where he left off with India. He clearly has good feelings, goodwill toward India, and I really see this as an opportunity to just continue building the relationship and really solidifying that partnership," Curtis said.

During Trump's first term (2017-2021), there was an "elevation of the US-India relationship" because of the importance of India and its role in dealing

1500

with challenges from China,

she said. Curtis pointed out that there was also a notable mutual respect and personal connection between Trump and Prime Minister Modi.

"We could see that during the event when Prime Minister Modi addressed 50,000 Americans at the Astrodome in Houston. We saw that when President Trump addressed 100,000 Indians in a stadium in Ahmedabad. That relationship really helped cement a lot of the progress that was made," said tionship," she said. Curtis, who is currently a Senior Fellow and Director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program at Center for a New American Security, a thinktank.

"Technology controls were lifted on India. India gained access to armed drone technology. Now it's buying 31 Sea Guardian predators. We saw the building up of not only the defence and security relationship, but also confidence and trust," she said, adding that the Quad was started during that period.

At the same time, there were a couple of bumps on this road during Trump's first term, she said.

"There were a couple of bumps hegemon in Asia. Neither

to

in the road, and this was main-ly when President Trump India, nor the United States want that to happen. So, they have a deep mutual interest in would tweet about the Indian tariffs. He really wanted American companies to have

cooperating." "But I don't think we have more access to the Indian marrealised the full potential of that ket. He would often, before a kind of defence and security cooperation for various reameeting, tweet out something. sons. Both have major bureau-It was almost a negotiating tactic, I think, that he was doing. cracies, their democracies, He did this with many coun-tries. That did cause some irriwhich can cause things to stall, to defense sales to stall. I think that that would be my hope, tation in the relationship. But I don't think these tweeting that there is a particular focus on really solidifying the defence incidents about Indian tariffs overwhelmed the broader relaand security relationship," she said.

Curtis, however, said both We could probably expect similar things to happen in the future as well. But I think countries could never enter an alliance but develop a part-nership that is "short of an alliance". She hoped them to achieve a cooperation that deters China, but also preeverybody's more prepared for Trump's style and his negotiation style. His very transactional approach, trying to get a good deal for the American pares both countries in case of a crisis or conflict, be it in the Responding to a question, Curtis said the priority this time needs to be on the secu-Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, or another flare-up on the India-China border.

rity partnership between the two countries. She added, "This She applauded Trump for picking Congressman Mike Waltz as his National Security is an area where the interests of both sides converge. Both the Advisor and Senator Marco Rubio as Secretary of State, both China-hawk. She felt the United States and India have a lot of concerns when it comes to China, such as its attempts second Trump term is unlikedominate the technology ly to focus on Pakistan and one market and efforts to be the should not expect a major change on his Afghan policy.

PTI 📕 LONDON Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office on Friday apologised for a "mistake" in the organisation of its Diwali reception at 10 Downing Street after some British Hindus objected to non-vegetarian

food and alcohol being served at the gathering. While the statement did not make a direct reference to the menu, a spokesperson for Starmer's office said the team acknowledged the strength of feeling on the issue and assured the community that it would not be repeated in future.

'The Prime Minister was pleased to welcome a range of communities celebrating Diwali to a reception in Downing Street," a Downing Street spokesperson said. "He paid tribute to the huge

contribution the British Hindu. Sikh and Jain communities make to our country and how the government is driven by the shared values of hard work, ambition and aspiration. A mistake was made in the organisation of the event," the spokesperson said.

'mistake' at Diwali reception

ist parties.

We understand the strength of feeling on this issue and so would apologise to the commu-nity and assure them it will not happen again," the spokesper-son added. The statement came a day after British Indian Conservative Party MP Shivani Raja issued a formal letter to Starmer expressing concerns over the reception not being "in keeping with the customs of many Hindus".

"I feel it speaks poorly against the organisation of this year's event – with a disappointing lack of knowledge of the cus-

toms and traditions that many British citizens hold dear," reads her letter posted on social media.

"As a practising Hindu repre-senting thousands of Hindus within my own constituency of Leicester East, I have been deeply saddened to hear that this year's festivities were overshadowed in the greatest Office of State by negativity, as a result of this oversight," said the first-time Tory member of Parliament elected in July from the city of Leicester. The Opposition MP went on to

offer her "assistance and guidance" to the Labour Party gov-ernment for all future Hindu celebrations to ensure they are celebrated in a "respectful manner".

The Downing Street event held on October 29 marked the first Diwali reception since

Labour was elected to government in the general election four months ago. It brought together British Indian community leaders, professionals and parliamentarians.

However, community organisation Insight UK questioned the "appalling lack of under-standing" of the spiritual aspect of the Hindu festival and a few others pointed out that greater consultation is required ahead of such religious events after reports emerged of meat and alcohol being served at the gathering. The reception has been held regularly over the years at Downing Street and insiders indicated Starmer was keen to follow in the footsteps of Rishi Sunak as the first British Hindu Prime Minister of Britain and light candles on the doorstep of 10 Downing Street to mark Diwali.

### Israeli strikes kill at least 12 Lebanese rescuers

state-run health centre", one of their offices, and sever- between civilians and combat- building in Baalbek, killing at

"it is the second al members were killed The Israeli attack on a health emerofficial spoke on condition of gency facility in less than two anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to the hours." In southern Lebanon, an Israeli strike on Arabsalim media. village targeted the Health The airstrikes came shortly Authority Association, a civil before Ali Larijani, an advisdefense and rescue group linked to Hezbollah, killing six er to Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei, was scheduled to Agency said. people, including four para-medics, the Health Ministry meet in the Syrian capital with representatives of Palestinian factions at the Iranian Embassy in Mazzeh. Earlier, Israel carried out at Israel's military says Islamic Jihad participated alongside least two airstrikes on the western Mazzeh neighbourthe Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Oct. 7, 2023 hood of Damascus and one of the suburbs of Syria's capital, Qudsaya, killing at least 15 and wounding another 16, Syria's attacks from Gaza into Israel that killed some 1,200 people state news agency said. An Associated Press journalist at — mostly civilians — and saw 250 others abducted. The ensuing Israel-Hamas war has spilled into the wider the scene in Mazzeh said that a five-story building was damregion, affecting Lebanon, Syria and leading to strikes between Israel and Iran. The war has left much of Gaza in ruins and has killed over 43,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to local health authorities

ants, Israeli warplanes intensi least 1 fied airstrikes in Lebanon on ing five others. The strike came without warning. The Thursday, targeting various areas in southern and eastern Israeli military did not imme-Lebanon, including the outdiately comment and the tarskirts of the southern port city of Tyre and the Nabatieh get was unclear. A report by the World Bank on province, the National News



hick smoke and flames erupt from an Israeli airstrike on Tavouneh. Beirut on Friday

n Israeli airstrike killed at Aleast 12 Lebanese rescue workers on Thursday inside a civil defence centre in the eastern city of Baalbek, according to health and rescue officials, hours after state media in Syria said Israeli strikes in and around the capital killed at least 15 people. Lebanese emergency workers were digging through the rubble Thursday evening to search for more of their colleagues still trapped under the destroyed rescue centre, the group said in a statement. At least three civil defence mem-

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military. Lebanon's civil defence forces have no affiliation with the militant group Hezbollah, and they provide crucial rescue and medical services in one of the world's most war-torn nations.

bers were wounded.

The Health Ministry con-demned what it called a "barbaric attack on a Lebanese

aged by a missile that hit the basement. The Israeli military said it hit infrastructure sites and com-

mand centres of the Islamic Jihad militant group. In Syria, an official with Palestinian Islamic Jihad said

the strike in Mazzeh targeted who do not distinguish

Throughout the day, sporadic airstrikes targeted Beirut's southern suburbs in a clear uptick in attacks on the district over the past two days, with the Israeli military issuing evacuation warnings for several locations and buildings in the suburbs.

The Israeli military said it struck Hezbollah targets in the Dahiyeh area, including weapons storage facilities and command centers. Military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said that over the past week, Israel had "struck more than 300 targets from the air across Lebanon, including about 40 targets in the heart of the Dahiveh in Beirut."

Lebanon's state media said an earlier Israeli airstrike hit a

Thursday estimated that Lebanon has suffered USD 8.5 billion in physical damages and economic losses from 13 months of war. Hezbollah began firing into Israel on Oct. 8, 2023, in solidarity with Hamas in Gaza. Since then, Israeli strikes and

bombardment in Lebanon have killed at least 3,380 people while the number of wounded has surpassed 14,400, the Health Ministry said Thursday. Among the dead were 658 women and 220 children.

In Israel, 76 people have been killed, including 31 soldiers. Before the war intensified on Sept. 23, Hezbollah said that it had lost nearly 500 members but the group has stopped releasing statements about their killed fighters since.

# **Concerns in US over growing extremism in Bangladesh**

#### PTI WASHINGTON

 $T^{\rm here\ are\ serious\ concerns\ in}_{\rm the\ US\ over\ growing\ extrem-}$ ism in Bangladesh, a former White House official has said, observing that deposed former Prime Minister Sheikh did a good job in controlling it. Lisa Curtis, who served as President-elect Donald Trump's South Asia point-person in his first term, has said there is concern about the future and what

it could bring to Bangladesh. "We are at a critical juncture in Bangladesh. With the overthrow of Sheikh Hasina and efforts to reform the political system, there is a lot of hope. People are hopeful that the democratic process will get stronger," she said on Thursday. The Awami League regime led by Hasian was toppled

#### on August 5 in the face of a mass

upsurge originating from a quota reform campaign by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement. Three days later Nobel laureate Muhammad assumed office as the chief advis-Bangladesh, she said.

er of the interim government. But there's also a lot of concern. Some Islamist extremists have been released from jails. There have been some attacks on minorities, Hindus, Christians," Curtis, who served as National Security Council senior director for South and Central Asia from 2017 to 2021, told PTI in an interview. "We've seen a history of terrorism in Bangladesh. You had the Holy (Artisan) Bakery attacks in 2016. Very serious incident. You've had some ISIS (Islamic State) elements in Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina had done a good

job of controlling the extremist problem in Bangladesh," said Curtis. There is understandably some concern that these elements return to the political scene, which would not be helpful for

"It would not be helpful for the region, the United States, anyone. We are at a delicate time in Bangladesh. So even though it might not be the number one priority of (President-elect) Trump, I think his team, his national security team, will have to pay attention to what's happening (there)," she said.

Curtis also said the incoming administration should work with India, which also has concerns about the future direction of Bangladesh and is more directlv impacted by what happens because of its proximity.

Fire at Spanish nursing home, kills 10 people AP 📕 MADRID

A t least 10 people died in a blaze at a nursing home in Zaragoza, Spain, before firefighters managed to extinguish it, local authorities reported on Friday.

Authorities were alerted of the blaze early Friday morning in Villa Franca de Ebro, about 30 minutes from the northeastern city.

The cause of the fire was not yet known, local media reported. Jorge Azcon, head of the regional government of Aragon, whose capital city is Zaragoza, confirmed the deaths and said on X, formerly Twitter, that all government events in the region were cancelled for the day.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez also expressed his shock over the fire and deaths.

### **UK Treasury chief not satisfied** by paltry 3rd quarter growth

the first time in 14 years, the

government described its eco-

nomic inheritance from the

"talking the economy down."

#### AP LONDON

said.

Britain's Treasury chief Rachel Reeves said Friday that she is "not satisfied" by official figures showing the British economy's rebound from recession slowed down sharply in the third quarter of the year, with

ly shrank, a development that has further fueled accusations from critics of the new Labour

on investments.

"Improving economic growth is at the heart of everything I am seeking to achieve, which is why I am not satisfied with these numbers," Reeves said following Friday's figures.

former Conservative administration as the bleakest in Prime Minister Keir Starmer decades, requiring urgent action to fix the public finances. has said raising economic growth is his government's The Conservatives' Treasury number one priority over the spokesperson, Mel Stride, next five years. Since the globsought to pin the blame for the al financial crisis in 2008-9, the slowdown on the new govern-British economy has underperment, saying the deterioration formed relative to previous vears and actually slipped into in business and consumer cona modest recession in 2023. fidence was a direct result of it The Resolution Foundation Reeves used the budget to raise think tank said the British economy has been a "rollertaxes sharply, mainly on busicoaster" over the past year and ness, as well as increasing spending on public services, that its medium-term perforsuch as the state-run National mance has been "staid and Health Service, and borrowing stagnant

slowdown, the think tank said the UK has fallen below the US at the top of the growth leaderboard of the Group of Seven leading industrial economies. This all serves to highlight that the government's mission to renew strong economic growth is both extremely hard, and absolutely necessary," said Simon Pittaway, the think tank's senior economist.

As a result of the third-quarter

One factor hobbling the economy, many economists say, is Britain's departure from the European Union in 2020, which has made trade more difficult. Though the post-Brexit trade agreement between the two sides ensured there would be no tariffs placed on goods, exporters are finding life tough.

#### dragged the economy down in its first few weeks in office. On coming to power in July for

most sectors stagnating. The Office for National Statistics said growth during the July to September period was just 0.1 per cent. That was lower than the 0.5 per cent recorded in the previous threemonth period and below market expectations for 0.2 per cent. The statistics agency said overall output in September actual-

government that its pessimism

### money 10



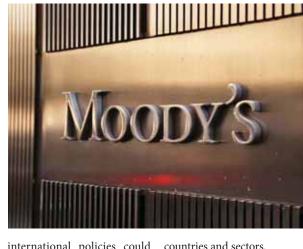
# Indian economy in sweet spot, forecasts 7.2 per cent growth in 2024: Moody's Ratings

#### PTI NEW DELHI

Tndian economy is in a sweet spot, with a mix of solid growth and moderating inflation, Moody's Ratings said, forecasting a 7.2 per cent GDP growth in the 2024 calendar year and 6.6 per cent in the next.

In its Global Macro Outlook 2025-26, the rating agency said the global economy has shown remarkable resilience in bouncing back from supply chain disruptions during the pandemic, an energy and food crisis after the Russia-Ukraine war began, high inflation and consequent monetary policy

tightening. "Most G-20 economies will experience steady growth and continue to benefit from stabilisation. The aggregate policy easing and supportive commodity prices," it said.



potentially accelerate global fragmentation, economic complicating ongoing and net effects of trade, fiscal, immigration and regulatory However, post-election policy changes will expand the changes in US domestic and range of outcomes for

countries and sectors. On India, Moody's said the real GDP expanded 6.7 per cent year-over-year in the second quarter (April-June) of 2024, driven by a revival in household consumption. robust investment and strong manufacturing activity.

rued.

High-frequency indicators -including expanding including expanding manufacturing and services PMIs, robust credit growth and consumer optimism signal steady economic momentum in Q3.

from "Indeed, а macroeconomic perspective, the Indian economy is in a sweet spot, with the mix of solid growth and moderating inflation. We forecast 7.2 per cent growth for calendar year 2024, followed by 6.6 per cent in 2025 and 6.5 per cent in 2026," it said.

Moody's said household consumption in India is poised to grow, fuelled by increased spending during the ongoing festive season and a sustained pickup in rural demand on the back of an improved agricultural outlook. Additionally, rising capacity utilisation, upbeat business and sentiment the government's continued thrust

on infrastructure spending should support private investment.

economic "Sound including fundamentals, healthy corporate and bank balance sheets, a stronger external position, and ample foreign exchange reserves also bode well for the growth outlook," it added.

Sporadic food price pressures continue to inject volatility in the disinflation trajectory. Headline inflation breached the upper end of the RBI's 4 per cent (+/-2 per cent) tolerance band for the first time in more than a year in October, accelerating to 6.2 per cent amid a sharp jump in vegetable prices.

"Despite the near-term uptick, inflation should moderate toward the RBI's target in the coming months as food prices ease amid higher sowing and adequate food grain buffer stocks," the agency said.

### Centre urges states to fill 663 vacant posts in consumer forums

#### PTI NEW DELHI

The Union government on Friday directed states to accelerate the appointment process for 663 vacant positions across state and district consumer commissions, expressing concern over mounting vacancies that threaten to undermine consumer rights protection.

Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare, who reviewed the situation with state

government officials, expressed "deep concern" about increasing vacancies in consumer commissions compared to previous years. According to official data, 18 posts of President and 56 posts of members are lying vacant in state commissions as of October 2024.

At district level, 162 posts of President and 427 posts of members are vacant across the country, the consumer affairs ministry said in a statement.



"It is imperative that vacancies are filled up at the earliest possible to ensure that consumer disputes/cases are handled promptly and efficiently," Khare said during the meeting.

The secretary urged state representatives to prioritize these appointments, emphasizing that effective functioning of consumer commissions is vital for protecting consumer rights. address immediate To Khare concerns, drew

attention to Section 32 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which permits assigning additional charge to another District Commission to ensure continuity in consumer dispute resolution. State officials agreed that filling vacancies is crucial to avoid delays in hearings and

reduce case backlog. The ministry has committed to work with stakeholders to ensure an efficient and transparent process for filling these vacancies.

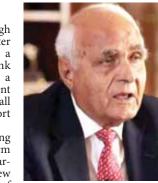
### PM Modi should set up panel on urban Government proposes task infra development in major cities: KP Singh

#### PTI NEW DELHI

Real estate doyen K P Singh has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to set up a high-powered cabinet rank committee to prepare a blueprint for the development of urban infrastructure in all major cities that can support USD 5 trillion economy. The urban master planning

should not be for a short-term but for 100 years, the 95-yearold Singh said in an interview with PTI on the occasion of the launch of his second book 'Why the Heck Not?'. His autobiography 'Whatever the Odds' was released by Jack Welch, the former Chairman and CEO of GE, in November 2011.

Chairman Singh, the Emeritus of realty major DLF, described the current state of urban infrastructure as steps" as India is growing and



third largest economy in the world.

Referring to traffic mess in cities including IT city Gurugram which he built and high pollution level, Singh said these are large issues and "it needs attention in my view of the highest person in the country"

'So, you plan in advance, well "horribly wrong" and said there was a need for "drastic and growth is going to take place. Therefore, what urban soon going to become the infrastructure is necessary in book, co-authored with

advance for the growth, here Aparna Jain and published by that is not happening," he Penguin.

"Unless drastic actions are taken" the problem cannot be solved," he said. Singh said there is a need to

change the thinking process which he said remains "myopic" since the 1950s. Thinking small and managing shortages will not help, he asserted.

In his book, he said there is a need to focus on rapid development of urban including infrastructure, roads, sewage lines and water

supply. "To build a resilient nation and to ascend a USD 5 trillion, we must wield our collective might to fortify the foundation of our cities. We must focus on rapid urban infrastructure development. The declining state of our cities is akin to a ticking time bomb signalling their devastation," Singh said in his

He appealed to the prime

minister to intervene to correct the situation. With a clarion call, I beseech our Honourable Prime

Minister Narendra Modi to urgently convene a highpowered cabinet ranking committee, composed of farsighted planners and developers from the private sector in every major city, along with environmentalists of repute, all of whom should possess the experience or capability of envisioning India 100 years from now,"

Singh said. The members in the committee must work with the foresight of Edwin Lutyens, who planned what is known as New Delhi almost a century ago, he added.

"These futurists, planners and a collective of individuals with wisdom and experience should then craft an enduring blueprint of the urban

at least all the major metro cities of India that will last a century," Singh suggested. The PMO should ideally monitor the committee

monthly, with the PM personally overseeing it once a quarter, he added. Singh said the committee

findings should also be made public regularly so that people are informed of plans that will fortify their children's lives through the development of India's urban infrastructure. "Our cities are crumbling, and whv? Because urban infrastructure has neither planned nor kept up with the growth of cities. Because of illegal encroachments and settlements. Because no one is being held responsible. It all gnawed at me. When I envisioned a new city, it sprawling metropolis, a blueprint for future

infrastructure development of in the book. During the interview, Singh

spoke about his decision to leave an army posting in 1961 to join DLF, a company started by his father-in-law, Chaudharv Raghvendra Singh, in 1946. He not only revived DLF Ltd

but made it the largest publicly listed real estate company in India.

Singh spoke about challenges in the acquisition of land and getting approvals from the government for development of real estate projects.

The DLF Chairman Emeritus, however, asserted he never paid any bribe and rather used industry chambers and media to convince political leadership and bureaucrats that what DLF intended to do was for the public interest. Singh also emphasised the wasn't just about bricks and concrete. It was a dream for a retirement and sharing wealth with children when they are young as well as extended generations," he pointed out family.

### force to push for 500 GW renewable energy capacity

PTI NEW DELHI

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi has proposed formation of a task force in consultation with the Ministry of Power to push efforts to meet India's ambitious target of having 500 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030.

The minister for new and renewable energy has also urged industry players and stakeholders to devise strategies which would help the country meet the target in a time-bound manner. Speaking at an event in Bhubaneswar, the minister proposed the formation of a task force, in consultation with the Ministry of Power, to align efforts of all the stakeholders meeting the 500 GW target, 540 GW of renewable the ministry for new and energy projects,"

said in a statement on Thursday. India has already achieved

212 GW of energy from non-fossil fuel sources and is on track to exceed the 2030 target, he said.

The minister stressed the importance of concerted, collaborative efforts among all stakeholders to overcome challenges and expedite progress in the renewable energy sector.

Joshi further assured that the government will continue to support technological advancements and innovations in the clean energy sector.

"Joshi also expressed optimism regarding the commitments made during the RE-Invest Summit, which collectively amount towards to over Rs 32 lakh crore and the renewable energy (MNRE) statement said.

**ABB** India

### Air India announces 230 weekly flights from Kolkata

#### PTI KOLKATA

A<sup>ir</sup> India Express on Friday announced announced expansion of its services from West Bengal's Kolkata and Bagdogra, increasing the number of weekly flights to over 230 this winter, from 168 in the same season last

year. The growth includes new direct routes connecting Kolkata with Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) and Indore, and Bagdogra with Chennai, the airline said.

"Our new winter schedule, featuring over 230 weekly flights from Kolkata and Bagdogra, underscores our dedication to fostering trade and tourism in the region," heritage of West Bengal, the Dr Ankur Garg, Chief statement said. Commercial Officer of Air Jamdani is a renowned India Express, said in a statement.

flight next month, just in geometric motifs.



time for the holiday season, offering our guests more travel options," he said.

Additionally, two brand new

aircraft, with liveries inspired by "Jamdani" and "Kantha" designs, invite guests to experience the rich cultural

pattern from Bengal, known for its delicate handloom "We are thrilled to introduce creations, typically featuring a new Kolkata-Port Blair intricate floral, vine, leaf, and

Kantha, also from Bengal, originated as a method of repurposing old saris and clothes into quilts and

blankets. "As we expand our services with a 37 per cent increase in flights from West Bengal, Air India Express reaffirms its commitment to connecting this vibrant state with the rest of India," Garg said.

According to the statement, Air India Express' winter schedule across its expanding network has grown by 30 per

cent from last year, supported by the airline's growing fleet, which now includes over 90 aircraft. This winter, the airline will operate more than 400 daily flights compared to over 325 daily flights during the same period last year.

The enhanced schedule includes new routes such as Chennai-Goa, Chennai-Jaipur, Chennai-Pune, Delhi-Indore, Hyderabad-Gwalior, Kochi-Pune, and

Visakhapatnam-Vijayawada. Additionally, the airline will commence operations to two new destinations, Jammu and Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair), starting December 1, 2024.

The airline has also increased the frequency of flights on the Bengaluru-Hyderabad Kochi-Hyderabad and along routes. with international routes connecting Abu Dhabi, Ras al-Khaimah, and Muscat.

### Niti Aayog's WEP partners with Urban Company to empower women

uc Urban Company

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Niti Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) has partnered with Urban Company to empower women salon and beauty parlour owners, an official statement said on Friday.

According to the statement, mentorship and networking, WEP, under its award-toit added. reward initiative, launched the pilot to support women MSMEs to scale up their businesses in the beauty and wellness sector. Women entrepreneurs will be offered training across six key ecosystem needs, including skilling, legal and compliance, access to

market, and development

with

A baseline study conducted by MicroSave Consulting identified four key sectors with more than 1,00,000 women MSMEs - beauty & wellness, textile

the

programme

manufacturing, retail trade and food & beverages. The statement said this pilot

initiative aims to develop process templates by leveraging insights and learnings gathered through



BB India on Friday said it ABB India on Friday said it has received a warning letter from stock markets regulator Sebi for violation of insider trading rules by two of its employees.

The warning letter dated November 8, 2024 has been received on November 14, 2024, ABB India said in an exchange filing.

upscaling women MSMEs nationwide. Urban Company will spearhead the programme, "The company secretary has administrative received collaborating with other key stakeholders to identify warning letter from Deputy General Manager SEBI for violation of SEBI (Prohibition women working in microof Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015 by two designated persons of the company," it said.

aggregator platform, transitioned into a public-private partnership in 2022. ABB is a global technology leader in electrification and

### Japan's economy grows for second straight quarter on back of consumer spending

#### АР ТОКУО

Tapan's economy eked out an annual rate of 0.9% growth in the July-September period as consumer spending held up, government data showed Friday.

The world's fourth-largest economy grew 0.2% in the and April-June.

Seasonally adjusted gross domestic product, or GDP, measures the value of a nation's products and services.

The annual rate shows how much the economy would have grown or contracted, if the quarterly rate continued for a year.

Private consumption, which makes up more than half of Japan's GDP, grew 3.6% on the back of healthy household consumption, according to preliminary Cabinet Office data. Recent data show wages employment are fiscal second quarter, marking the second straight following 0.5% growth in spending and shut down some factories. Recent income tax reductions helped

boost spending. Exports grew 1.5%. The weakening yen is a plus for exports, tending to make Japanese products cheaper overseas. But the impact was relatively limited in the latest quarter.

Domestic demand grew at an The Japanese yen was trading annualized rate of 2.5%. at 160-yen levels earlier this year. It's now trading at 150ven levels.

Prior to the last two quarters, the economy contracted 0.6% in the January-March quarter after recording a 0.1% growth in October-December in 2023 highlighting how Japan's economy recently slipped into periods of contraction in between weak expansion. "We believe the Japanese

economy will continue to grow gradually, supported by growth in overseas economies," said Katsutoshi Inadome, senior strategist at SuMi Trust. He noted winter

bonuses many Japanese get in coming months should also help strengthen domestic demand.

### Mercedes-Benz India to hike prices by up to three per cent

along

finance.

business

services,

#### PTI NEW DELHI

German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz on Friday said it will hike prices of its vehicles in India by up to 3 per cent on its entire model range in the portfolio from January 1, 2025, citing a rise in input costs, inflationary pressures and higher operational expenses.

Prices of Mercedes-Benz cars in India will be revised by Rs 2 lakh for the GLC to Rs 9 lakh for the top-end Mercedes-Maybach S 680 luxury limousine, Mercedes-Benz India said in a statement.

higher operational expenses exerting been has considerable pressure on Mercedes-Benz India's business operations and the company has been absorbing the rise in operational cost since the last three quarters, it added.

"Over the past three quarters, we have been facing increased pressure on our cost structure primarily driven by escalating material cost, fluctuating commodity pricing, increased logistics expenses and inflationary cost," Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director & CEO Santosh Iyer said.

The combination of rising He further said, "While we 45 lakh for the A-Class to input costs, inflation, and have been absorbing these 3.6 crore for the G63 SUV.

cost pressures by optimising our operational costs and driving higher efficiencies, the overall bottom line is getting impacted, considering the current challenges. To ensure the sustainability of our business, we have decided for a nominal price correction."

This price correction will apply to those vehicles currently not in stock, offering price protection for all existing and future bookings until December 31, 2024, Iyer said.

Currently, Mercedes-Benz India sells a range of vehicles with prices starting from Rs 45 lakh for the A-Člass to Rs

**AMARAVATI:** As part of the National Library Week celebrations from November 14 to 20, 2024, VIT-AP University organised an event at ZPHS Mandadam. The programme, titled "Improving Reading Habits Among School Children," was organised by University Librarian, Dean was the chief guest for the occasion.



### RECPDCL HANDOVERS 1 NO. SPV VIZ. ERES-XXXIX POWER TRANSMISSION LIMITED TO TATA

**GURUGRAM:** REC Power Development and Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL), a wholly owned subsidiary of REC Limited, the Maharatna CPSU under the aegis of Ministry of Power, has handed over the project specific SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle).



INBRIEF

units and support their business growth, it noted. WEP, incubated in Niti Aayog in 2018 as an

VIT-AP UNIVERSITY ORGANISES 57TH NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK CELEBRATIONS

and



www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/

# TO SOUL THE SOUL

The KNMA Theatre Festival offers a fresh take on theatre, exploring vulnerability and human connection. With productions like 'Love and Information,' it challenges traditional narratives and invites audiences to reflect on the complexities of identity and emotion, says SAKSHI PRIYA

heatre is a mirror of the human condition." This timeless quote captures the essence of why we turn to the stage - to reflect on who we are, how we live and the world we inhabit. Theatre has the power to make us confront uncomfortable truths, question our beliefs and reimagine the possibilities of human connection. It's a place where vulnerability, in all its forms, becomes not just a theme, but the lens through which we view the world. At the inaugural KNMA Theatre Festival, I was reminded of this power in the most profound way. Held at the serene Sunder Nursery in New Delhi, the festival celebrated contemporary theatre and its ability to speak to the issues that matter most today. Curated by Kirtana Kumar, the festival's theme, The Power of Vulnerability, couldn't have been more fitting. It was a celebration of the delicate, yet potent, human experiences that shape us. From class and gender to sexuality and identity, the performances unearthed the quiet, often overlooked s that define our societ struggl One of the most thoughtprovoking performances I experienced was Love and *Information*, a play that stripped back the complexities of modern life, revealing the raw emotions beneath. Presented by the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in with Aasakta association Theatre, this production, directed by *Mohit Takalkar*, took

a unique approach to storytelling. Adapted from *Caryl Churchill's* original, Love and Information is a radical departure from traditional theatre, with no central characters and no linear plot. Instead, the play is made up of over fifty short scenes, each one fleeting and fragmented, much like the way we experience life today in an age of endless scrolling and information overload. The play delves into questions of how we make sense of our lives, how we connect

with others and ultimately, how we love. In an era dominated by social media and constant connectivity, these questions seem more urgent than

ever. As I sat in the audience, I couldn't help but reflect on the themes of the play, which mirrored the very nature of our times. alienation in the face of constant exposure, the erosion of privacy, and the blurring of boundaries between the self and the digital world.

What struck me most about Love and Information was its non-linear structure. Each scene, often lasting only a few seconds, felt like a snapshot of a fleeting moment in time. There central characters to follow, no clear narrative to grasp, just a series of disconnected vignettes that came together to form a larger, more complex picture. It was as if we were channel-surfing through different lives, only catching a glimpse of each before moving on to the next. Yet, in this chaotic rush, the play's true message emerged: that in a world overflowing with data and distractions, it is our emotional connections that truly define us.

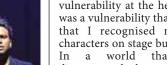


As I watched the actors move effortlessly between characters, it became clear how much we, as individuals, are shaped by the constant flow of information and the pressure to stay connected. Each actor brought something unique to their role, embodying the vulnerability of a generation struggling to balance their digital lives with their real-world emotions. Visually, the production was nothing short of stunning. The lighting design by Vikrant Thakar was minimalist yet powerful, shifting seamlessly to enhance the emotional tone of each scene. The sound design by Anita Kushwaha further amplified the experience, creating an atmosphere that was both intimate and intense. Saurabh *Bhalerao's* music punctuated the narrative, adding another layer of depth to the performance. Love and Information isn't just a play about the times we live in; it's a reflection of the human condition in a world overwhelmed by information. It speaks to the anxiety of living in an age where we are constantly flooded with











**[ART & CULTURE]** 

vivacity 1

a space for dialogue, for conversation and for collective reflection on the role of theatre in today's society.

Beyond the performances, the festival also included a symposium, a workshop and lecture demonstrations that delved deeper into the themes of vulnerability in contemporary theatre. These discussions, led by scholars and practitioners like Dr. Anuradha Kapur, Vivek Madan and Dr. Abhilash Pillai, explored how the pandemic has shifted the landscape of theatre and how artists are grappling with new ways of telling stories in a post-pandemic world. The entire experience was a reminder of how theatre is a living, breathing entity, always evolving, always challenging us. The festival brought together artists, audiences, and scholars, all united by the belief that theatre is not just a form of entertainment, but a mirror to society, a space where we can reflect on who we are and who we want to become.

Information, I found myself contemplating the profound vulnerability at the heart of the play. It profound was a vulnerability that felt familiar, one that I recognised not only in the characters on stage but in myself. in a world that's increas disconnected, theatre offers a space to explore our shared humanity, to embrace the discomfort, the uncertainty, and, ultimately, the beauty of being human. The KNMA Theatre Festival was not just a showcase of performances, it was a celebration of the power of vulnerability, a theme that will continue to resonate with me long after the curtains have fallen.

Leaving the amphitheatre after Love and

emotional connections. The rapid-fire scenes, with their fragmented glimpses into people's lives, forced me to reconsider the way we view love and information and the spaces in between. Theatre like this is what makes us sit up and pay attention, it forces us to question, to reflect and to confront the uncomfortable truths about the world around us. And that is precisely what the KNMA Theatre Festival set out to do. It didn't just offer performances; it created



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

### **Cultural Legacy Brought Alive**



#### BY TEAM VIVA

The dance drama Producation -Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram, presented by the Urvashi Dance Music Art & Cultural Society in collaboration with the Tapasaya Foundation, beautifully combined three distinct Indian dance forms Kathak, Chhau and Manipuri to tell the epic story of Lord Ram. Directed by the renowned Kathak maestro Dr. Rekha Mehra, the performance offered a deeply emotional and artistic tribute to Lord Rama's virtues of courage, compassion, and integrity.

Kathak, with its intricate footwork and expressive storytelling, formed the foundation of the performance. The dancers' graceful spins, precise footwork, and emotional expressions conveyed the key events in Ram's journey.



life, from his exile to his victory over Ravana. The Kathak sequences captured Lord Ram's inner strength and resilience, drawing the audience into his

Chhau, a dynamic and martial dance form, added a vibrant energy to the production. The fierce battle scenes, particularly Ram's confrontation with Ravan, were brought to life through powerful, swift movements and acrobatic leaps. The physicality of Chhau showcased Ram's qualities, warrior-like intensifying the dramatic moments of the story. Manipuri, with its flowing and graceful movements, provided a contrast to the more intense dances. The serene and spiritual quality of Manipuri was used to depict the divine connection between Lord Rama and Sita, with the delicate gestures and soft footwork creating a peaceful, almost

ethereal atmosphere. Choreographed by Guru Ajay Bhatt and Aamrapali Bhandari, the integration of these three dance styles was seamless, each adding its own unique layer to the narrative. The dancers, dressed in costumes used elaborate expressive hand gestures and facial expressions to embody the characters and deepen the emotional impact of the performance. Props such as the giant bow, peacock feathers and diya lighting added visual splendour and spiritual depth, making the production a truly immersive experience. The dance forms together captured the essence of *Lord Rama's* journey, creating a powerful and unforgettable performance that resonated deeply with the audience.

Faces in My Window.

### Beyond the Window

'Faces in My Window' by Nelofar Currimbhoy is a photography exhibition that shows the lives of people seen through a car window. The photos capture emotions and moments of resilience, highlighting the faces of those often overlooked in the busy city. The exhibition encourages viewers to pause and reflect on these everyday encounters, writes SAKSHI PRIYA





Have you ever noticed the faces that peer in through your car inside a car creates a sense of window as you drive through the emotional proximity while bustling streets of the city? The maintaining a subtle boundary faces of strangers who, for a one that allows the viewer to fleeting moment, are so close to truly observe the raw emotions of the individuals, yet from a safe you yet often go unnoticed. Each face tells a story of joy, pain, distance.

resilience and survival. These One photograph features a moments, so easily overlooked in young girl staring intently the rush of urban life, have been through the window of a car, thoughtfully captured by Nelofar her eyes full of curiosity, hope and perhaps a hint of longing, Currimbhoy in her exhibition creating an intimate connection The exhibition presents a with the viewer. Another powerful series of photographs striking image captures a taken from within Currimbhoy's mother holding her child, both car. Each image is framed through the glass of her window, of care and resilience. There is also a powerful photograph of a offering an intimate yet distant man holding a bundle of view of the lives unfolding on the streets. The unique perspective

of capturing these moments from expression reflecting the daily struggles of many who walk the streets. The series also includes an image of a young girl selling flowers, her face a mixture of innocence and determination as range of emotions: grief, joy, she tries to make a living amidst the chaos of the city.

Currimbhoy, a multi-talented individual, author, theatre Faces in My Window is an producer, philanthropist and exhibition that calls to pause and long been dedicated to capturing who, though they may go the essence of life in her beloved country. Her passion for faces exuding a profound sense camera, shines through in this empathy, understanding and the exhibition. As a photographer, need to support those who are she is deeply attuned to the resilience of the human spirit, flowers, his tired yet hopeful particularly those who live on the

fringes of society, yet continue to find strength and meaning in their daily lives.

The faces captured in this exhibition reveal an astonishing defiance and longing, each one reflecting the survival instincts that define the human experience. now a sensitive photographer has acknowledge the lives of those unnoticed, are an integral part of the city's fabric. Through storytelling, whether through the Currimbhoy's lens, we are written word or the lens of a reminded of the importance of struggling to survive in a world that often overlooks them.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar





# My aim is to get back into T20 team: KL Rahul

#### PTI PERTH

The beleaguered KL Rahul is seeking to use the next IPL as a vehicle the next IPL as a vehicle to stage a comeback to the Indian T20I side as he wants to remain involved in all three formats of the game. The 32-year-old is in line to open the innings if skipper Rohit Sharma does not play in the first Test of the upcoming five-match Border-Gayaskar

five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy series at Perth.

Rahul's form has been a cause of concern for the Indian team as he was recently dropped for the last two Tests against New Zealand at home with Sarfaraz Khan replacing him.

But the batter, who is pleasing to watch when in full flow, remains unperturbed by his lean run of form.

"My aim is to obviously get back into the T20 team. I've always wanted to be an allformat player, and that desire and drive haven't changed over the years. I want to still play for India in all three

for many years," Rahul told Star Sports. "I've been out of the T20 team formats and have done that for a while, and I know where

I stand as a player and what I

platform to enjoy my cricket and play the way I want to," he added.

runs in Tests from 12 matches (21 innings) at an average of 25.7, having registered three half-centuries and a century. During the interaction, Rahul emphasised on always keeping the team ahead of his individual appirations.

keeping the team ahead of his individual aspirations. "All of us as players want to play with freedom, and everyone would think that the way I batted, I'm enjoying playing that. But like I said, my thought process and motivation have always been team first. It doesn't matter what I want to do or what my natural game is.

natural game is. "We play a team sport. If I played tennis, it would be different; I could stick to saying, 'This is my natural game. But in a team sport, it's very different. Each game, you'll have a different role and remonsibility given to you to responsibility given to you to find a way to deliver for the team," he said. The Bengaluru man's last Test

hundred was against South Africa at Centurion in December 2023 and since

### Prajnesh Gunneswaran announces retirement from professional tennis

#### PTI CHENNAI

Asian Games bronze medal Winner Prajnesh Prajnesh Gunneswaran on Friday announced his retirement from professional tennis. The 35-year-old Indian, who won singles bronze in the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games, wrote on

Jakarta Asian Games, wrote on his Instagram account: "Hanging up my racquet. Thank you." Gunneswaran, who rose to world No.75 in the ATP rankings in 2019, expressed his deep gratitude for being able to compete at the top level for several years.

"As I write this, my heart swells with gratitude, pride, and a touch of nostalgia. Today, I step off the competitive tennis court for the last time.

"For over three decades, this game has been my sanctuary, my greatest teacher, and my most faithful companion. most faithful companion. From the first swing of my racquet to representing India on the grandest stages, the journey has been nothing short of extraordinary," he wrote. The Chennai-born player, who turned pro in 2010, finished with a single record of 11.28

with a singles record of 11-28 and a doubles record of 1-1. His highest doubles ranking was 248 which he attained in 2018.

Gunneswaran also competed



in all four Grand Slams, bowing out in the opening round in all instances. The Australian Open was the only Slam in which he competed on multiple occasions -- 2019 and 2020.

"Every drop of sweat, every victory, every setback - it's all woven into the fabric of who I am. Tennis taught me discipline, resilience, and the power of dreaming big" he

further wrote in his post. "It gave me friendships that transcend borders and memories that will last a lifetime. It challenged me to dig deep, to grow, and to be better - not just as a player but as a human being," he noted. He had success in the ATP Challenger Tour and in ITF Futures Tour, possessing a record of 2-7 and 9-9

category. He won only a title in the doubles -- Egypt F25, Sharm El Sheikh (ITF Futures Tour) -- in 2018 with his Egyptian partner Issam Haitham Taweel. Gunneswaran's biggest win against a top-20 player came in 2019 when he beat the then-18th-ranked Nikoloz

single

respectively in the

Basilashvili of Georgia during the Indian Wells Masters in the second round.

"To my coaches, teammates, and most of all, my family -you have been my backbone. To my fans who cheered me on through the highs and lows-I'm deeply grateful.

"And to the sport that gave me everything - I owe you my heart. Thank you, tennis, for the ride of a lifetime," he concluded.



### Ajaz Patel, hero of New Zealand's clean sweep in India, dropped for England series

#### AP WELLINGTON

 $S_{11}^{\mathrm{pinner Ajaz}}$  Patel, whose in the third Test against India this month helped New Zealand to an unprecedented clean sweep series against England Patel had match figures of 11/160 as New Zealand won sweep India in a three-match Test series at home.

recent form and all-round ability while Glenn Phillips provides another spin option.

has often been Patel overlooked for Test series in New Zealand conditions. of that series, has been omitted from the Black Caps squad for the upcoming Test 2021, he also was left out of defeat Romania 2-1. Shuko Aoyama defeated Monica the following home series against Bangladesh. In other squad features, the third Test by 25 runs to Kane Williamson, who become the first team to missed the India series with a groin injury, returns, but Tom Latham retains the captaincy, and uncapped all-rounder Nathan Harris has AP PARIS been called in. "Nathan is an exciting talent France coach Didier Deschamps said that there with a proven first-class record," Wells said. are both physical and psychological reasons for The opening Test at Christchurch begins on November 28. The second Kylian Mbappé's rough patch Test is scheduled for of form. December 6 in Wellington and the third from After France drew 0-0 with Israel in the Nations League, December 14 in Hamilton. Deschamps was again asked New Zealand squad for about the reasons behind the England Tests: Tom Latham Real Madrid striker's absence (c), Tom Blundell, Devon from his squad. Conway, Jacob Duffy, Matt Henry, Daryl Mitchell, Will "It's a fact that he is in a difficult situation," Deschamps told broadcaster O'Rourke, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell TF1. Santner, Nathan Smith, Tim "Obviously, he is going through a period which is not the happiest of his career." leave out Patel but Santner Southee, Kane Williamson

need to do to get back. So, I look forward to this IPL then made just two fifties in Since 2022, he has scored 514 nine innings. season to give me that

### Slovakia beats United States to advance in Billie Jean King Cup Finals, Japan defeats Romania

#### AP MALAGA (SPAIN)

shlyn Krueger and Taylor Townsend A shlyn Krueger and Taylor Townsend saved six match points but ultimately lost the decisive doubles match as the United States was defeated 6-3, 3-6, 10-8 by Slovakia and was eliminated 2-1 in the first round of the Billie Jean King Cup Finals early Friday.

Krueger and Townsend lost after rallying from 9-2 down in the third set against against Tereza Mihalikova and Viktoria Hruncakova in a match that ended close to 1 a.M. In Spain.

Townsend have given the U.S. The first point by defeating 17-year-old Renata Jamrichova 7-5 6-4, but Rebecca Sramkova evened the tie with a 6-2, 7-5 win over Danielle Collins in the second singles match.

Slovakia will face Australia in the quarterfinals on Sunday. Japan reached the quarterfinals for the first time since 2013 after rallying to

Japan advanced when Eri Hozumi and



deciding doubles match.

Ana Bogdan had put Romania ahead until early in the day.

The weather alert had already forced the Poland to be pushed back from Wednesday to Friday, when Germany is

wednesday to Friday, when Germany is also facing Britain. The Billie Jean King Cup Finals is taking place about two weeks after a powerful storm caused flash floods that killed more than 200 people in the Valencia region, east of Malaga. The International Tennis Federation appropried a donation to the Spanish

announced a donation to the Spanish Red Cross to support relief and recovery efforts in the region, and Spanish player Paula Badosa said she will donate half of

Paula Badosa said she will donate half of her prize money to help the victims. Both the Billie Jean King Cup Finals and the Davis Cup Finals are taking place in the southern Spanish city, with the men's competition beginning next week, also at the Palacio de Deportes. It is the first time that the women's team

to unational time that the women's team tournament is taking place at the same venue as the Davis Cup and with overlapping dates. And for the second wear in a new iter it of year in a row, it will offer equivalent prize money to the men's competition.



Snooker player Mark King banned for five years for fixing match, providing inside information

#### **AP** ■ SHEFFIELD (ENGLAND)

English snooker player Mark King was handed a Wenbo and Li Hang were five-year ban on Friday after handed lifetime bans rom being found guilty of match-fixing and providing inside information in the latest corruption scandal to blight snooker last year for their role in a match-fixing scandal involving eight more of their countrymen. "I have known Mark King the sport. The punishment for the 50since he was very young, he year-old King, who reached a career-high ranking of No. is a very experienced player who has enjoyed great success, and I am deeply 11 in 2003, related to a match against Joe Perry at the saddened to read the finding Welsh Open played on Feb. 13 last year that was flagged in this case," said Jason Ferguson, a former player following suspicious betting who is now chairman of the World Professional Billiards patterns. King was suspended by and Snooker Association. snooker's world governing body a month later and an "However, the integrity of this sport will always be our independent disciplinary No. 1 priority." commission has ruled that King had also been charged with fixing the outcome of a he fixed the result of the match, while giving information to others about that match for betting purposes. He had denied the match against John Higgins played on Dec. 13, 2022, and for providing inside information on it. Those charges were dismissed. charges. His ban ends after March 17, The governing body said 2028, and King was also Perry and Higgins were not ordered to pay more than accused of any m 68,000 pounds (\$86,000) in related to the case. accused of any misconduct

costs. King's suspension comes

Niculescu and Elena Ruse 6-1, 7-5 in the

with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Nao Hibino in the first singles match of the day but Ena Shibahara pulled Japan level with a 6-4, 7-6 (2) victory over Jaqueline Cristian. Japan will face Italy in the quarterfinals. The first match between Japan and Romania had been moved back two hours because of a severe weather alert that was in effect in the Malaga region

The selectors have found no place for him in a 14-man squad named Friday for the three-Test series against England.

Mitchell Santner, who took 13-157 in the second Test against India, is the only frontline spinner in the squad, though he will play only in the second and third Tests.

"Mitch has performed superbly since his recall to the Test team last year and I am sure he will take a lot of confidence out of his matchwinning performance in the Pune Test," selector Sam Wells said.

Wells said it was difficult to had been preferred for his and Will Young.

France coach says Mbappé's dip in form is due to both psychological and physical reasons

psychological one." Mbappé's performances have been below par in recent weeks after he joined Madrid from PSG this summer. He has one goal in his last seven club games and hasn't added to his 48 goals for France since June.

Deschamps last week did not elaborate about his choice to do without Mbappé but said it was not related to recent reports in Swedish media that the former Paris Saint-Germain star was the subject of a rape investigation in Stockholm.

Mbappé's representatives have rejected the reports as "false and irresponsible.

### Messi, Vinicius have frustrating nights as Argentina loses, Brazil draws in World Cup qualifying

#### AP ASUNCION (PARAGUAY)

Argentina's Lionel Messi and Brazil's Vinicius Júnior had frustrating nights in South American World Cup qualifying. While Messi could not help his team avoid a 2-1 defeat at Paraguay, Vinicius Junior missed a second-half penalty as Brazil was held to a 1-1 draw at Venezuela on Thursday.

Argentina will remain on the top of the 10-team round robin competition with a 22 points in 11 matches, Brazil is provisionally in third place in the standings with 17 points.

Also on Thursday, Ecuador beat Bolivia 4-0. The Ecuadorians remain in fifth position with 16 points, while Bolivia is in eighth place with 12 points.

American World Cup qualifying will continue on Friday with second-place Colombia visiting Uruguay and the bottom two teams in the standings, Peru and Chile, facing off in Lima. Argentina played at Paraguay with

the hosts having banned local fans from wearing any Messi shirts in the home crowd. TV footage of the match in Asuncion showed that the vast majority of the local crowd was wearing Paraguay's red and white colours, with no Messi shirts visible in the local

broadcasts. Messi had few opportunities to touch the ball during the first half, but saw Lautaro Martínez open the scoring in the 11th minute with a crossed shot. The goal was allowed

after a video review. Paraguay scored the equalizer with The 11th round of South a bicycle kick by Antonio Sanabria

in the 19th minute, shortly after defender Gustavo Gómez hit the bar with a header.

The hosts continued to apply pressure, and gave the Argentine star some heavy marking. Messi showed he was upset with Brazilian referee Anderson Daronco for not sending off Paraguay's Omar Alderete for his aggressive tackles.

It was Alderete who scored Paraguay's winner with a header in the 47th minute, which puts Paraguay back in contention for a spot in the next World Cup.

"We came to a hard place where the national team always struggled," said Martínez. "We have to correct a lot of things

we did wrong in this match, but generally speaking we are playing well. We are still in the lead, and we have to look forward."



Vinicius Júnior is still without a goal in six matches of World Cup

qualifying. He had the chance to score a potential winner after he earned the penalty in the 67th minute but his low spot kick was saved by goalkeeper Rafael Romo and the Brazil forward then shot wide from the rebound.

Brazil had the best chances in the first half, with Vinicius hitting the post once after dribbling three from a free kick in the 43rd minute.

Venezuela brought on 21-year-old Telasco Segovia at half time and the substitution had an immediate effect as he equalised in the 46th minute with a powerful shot from the edge of the box.

Venezuela went down to 10 men in the 89th minute after Alexander Gonzalez was sent off for hitting both Gabriel Martinelli and Vinicius Júnior in the face.

The irrigation system then came on two minutes before the final whistle at the Monumental Stadium in the city of Maturin, 500 kilometers (310 miles) west of the capital Caracas, which angered Brazil players.

When we don't win I leave Venezuelans and shooting from the pitch a bit disappointed, the edge of the box. But it was Raphinha who opened the scoring one," Raphinha said after the match.

'But it is an important point playing away, we are working hard to win the next one at home?

Ecuador beat Bolivia with goals by Enner Valencia (26th minute), Gonzalo Plata (28th and 49th) and Alan Minda (61st).

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Mbappé was not included in Deschamps' list for the match against Israel and a game in Italy later this this week.

Mbappé was also absent from the previous France gathering because of a minor thigh injury. This time he is not

injured. "He wanted to come." Deschamps said. "I think it's better for him (not

to be selected) at the moment. Everybody can go through a difficult period. There is a physical element, and a