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Dharmendra appointed Delhi chief secretary, Naresh Kumar denied third term

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Ending speculations over giving a third term extension to Naresh Kumar, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Saturday appointed Dharmendra as Delhi's next Chief Secretary. He is a 1989 batch of Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer. Incumbent Naresh Kumar, a 1987-batch officer, who was given two extensions in the past, completed his tenure on August 31.

Delhi and posted as chief secretary, GNCTD, wef 01.09.2024 or with effect from the date of joining, whichever is later," according to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs order issued on Saturday. His appointment comes at a time when the administration is focusing on enhancing governance and effective management of the capital. This change comes following Govind Mohan's recent appointment as Union Home Secretary. Dharmendra is among the senior-most AGMUT cadre officers and is taking charge as the Delhi chief secretary ahead of the assembly polls due in February. He who has been serving as the Chief Secretary of Arunachal Pradesh since April 2022, before being transferred to Delhi.

His appointment came on the day his predecessor's three-month extended tenure came to an end. There was speculation over a further extension in view of the polls. In addition to being a bridge between the Centre and the Delhi government, the post of Delhi chief secretary is crucial to the national capital's administration. The post has become more significant since the enactment of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2023 as part of which the chief secretary is one of the three members of the National Capital Civil



Services Authority (NCCSA), which presides over the transfer, posting and vigilance matters of civil servants posted in the city apart from the Delhi chief minister and principal secretary (home). He has served in several posts in the capital in the past, including divisional commissioner-cum-revenue secretary, NDMC chairperson, deputy commissioner (North West Delhi), and deputy commissioner (East Delhi) in addition to secretary of the industries, environment and irrigation and flood control

departments. He has the formidable task of bridging the gap between Delhi's elected government, bureaucracy, and Raj Niwas. Known for his low-key demeanor, maintaining this image could be crucial. He assumes this significant role at a critical juncture, with Delhi assembly elections just months away, making his responsibilities even more crucial. Insiders say some Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) officials expect Kumar to get another six-month term given the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, which are due to be held in early 2025. According to them, Kumar understands the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam

Aadmi Party government best and the role of the Chief Secretary will be critical during the run-up to the elections. Other DoPT officials said it would be a strange situation if he works under the consultative command of the new Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, who is an IAS officer of the 1989 batch from Sikkim cadre and two batches junior to Kumar. On the other hand, his predecessor was consistently at loggerheads with the AAP government in Delhi during his two-year tenure as chief secretary. His tenure, which began in April 2022 and was extended twice by the Centre, ends on August 31. Dharmendra, bureaucrats in the Delhi government asserted,

would require fine balancing skills, being the crucial link between the "warring" AAP dispensation and the Lt Governor's Office. During his previous stint in the Delhi government, Dharmendra -- a civil engineer by training -- held various posts, including secretary in the revenue; irrigation and flood control; and industries departments. He was chairman of the New Delhi Municipal Council before being transferred to Arunachal Pradesh in April 2022. He has also served in the housing and urban affairs and the consumer affairs ministries, as development commissioner for Dadra and Nagar Haveli/Daman and Diu, and resident commissioner of Aizawl.

Minto Bridge closed for repairs till September 2

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Minto Bridge which has been witnessing frequent flooding this monsoon and a key link between New Delhi, Old Delhi and Connaught Place has been closed for repair works till September 2, the Delhi traffic police said in an advisory in a social media post on X. According to an advisory, both the carriageways at Minto Bridge will remain closed till Monday morning due to repair work of deep potholes. It has been closed from August 30 (10 PM) to September 2 (7 am). To minimise any possible inconveniences to travel, travellers have been encouraged to seek other routes. The Ranjeet Singh flyover on Barakhamba Road is the suggested detour. To minimize inconvenience, commuters are highly recommended to schedule their trips appropriately. The advisory asked the general public and motorists to keep patience, observe traffic rules and road discipline and follow direction of traffic personnel deployed at all intersections and remain updated through their social media



channels. The Minto Bridge has frequently been in the news, especially during this monsoon, due to persistent issues of massive waterlogging. There are still substantial issues for commuters as a result of the unresolved issue, despite several initiatives and attempts by civic agencies. The road's condition has deteriorated due to the frequent waterlogging. There are large potholes on Minto Bridge that need to be fixed right now to make trav-

el safer. Minto Bridge connects New Delhi Railway Station with Connaught Place, named after Gilbert Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, 4th Earl of Minto, who was the viceroy and governor-general of India from 1905 to 1910. It was built in 1933, between the flood plains of the Yamuna river and the Delhi Ridge. The Delhi Ridge is the northern extension of the ancient Aravalli hill range, which is surrounded by urban areas. The Minto Bridge underpass

has a catchment area of one kilometre, contributing to the recurring waterlogging issues during heavy rainfall. Water from two roads flows down to the slope, and the DJB sewage line overflows, exacerbating the flooding. Even minimal rain can result in waterlogging, causing buses and other vehicles to get submerged. The Minto Bridge is of historical and strategic importance in the heart of Delhi. Minto Bridge was built in 1933 after the seat of power of the British Raj moved from

Calcutta to Delhi. The underpass below the bridge is a low-lying patch, surrounded on all sides by areas at a higher elevation. This bowl-like depression is a natural receptacle for rainwater. Minto Bridge witnessed violence during the riots at the time of Partition. There are several accounts of how those fleeing the walled city — on foot and in tongas — to refugee camps in Purana Qila and Humanyun's Tomb were ambushed and killed near Minto Bridge. The Bridge hit the headlines first time in the early 1950s for water-logging. In the late 1960s, Minto Bridge area became Delhi's cabaret destination with the opening of Blue Star, a resto-bar. Tucked by the side of the bridge, it soon found thousands of patrons. In 2008, a report emerged of Northern Railways getting verbal approval from the Ministry of Urban Development to demolish the old bridge and make way for a new one for its elaborate redevelopment plans for the New Delhi railway station, but the plan never took off.

Orphaned children to receive education free of cost: Delhi Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has ordered that those children who became orphan or lost a parent due to Covid or otherwise will continue to receive education free of cost in schools. In an effort to ensure that such children continue their education, the order issued on Friday said these students may be adjusted in the same school, if running on DDA or government allotted land under freeship category immediately. Or, such students may be treated as a student studying under Economically Weaker Section/Disadvantaged Group category and reimbursement may be claimed from the Directorate of Education, Delhi up to elementary level and after 8th class such students may be guided/facilitated for admission in any government school for, their interrupted further education. Further, all the DDE (District) are hereby directed to ensure that such cases do not remain pending at School/Zonal/District level. If any case is pending at any level, the proposal of the same will be submitted to PSB for approval of Competent Authority by September 30. "In continuance of the Circular No. DE.(178)/PSB/2021/3739-3743 dated 22.09.2021 issued by DDE (PSB) and in compliance with orders dated 27/07/2021 of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Case SMW(C) No. 4 of 2020, Children who have become orphans or lost a parent after March, 2020 either due to COVID-19 or otherwise, need due attention to enable them to continue their education in Private Unaided/Aided Recognized schools. All District DDEs were directed to ensure the continuation of the study of all such students. These students may be adjusted in the same school, if running on DDA or government allotted land, under freeship category immediately. Or, such students may be treated as a student studying under Economically Weaker

Section/Disadvantaged Group category and reimbursement may be claimed from the Directorate of Education, Delhi upto elementary level and after 8th class such students may be guided/facilitated for admission in any government school for, their interrupted further education. Further, all the DDE (District) are hereby directed to ensure that such cases do not remain pending at School/Zonal/District level. If any case is pending at any level, the proposal of the same will be submitted to PSB for approval of Competent Authority by September 30," the order said. Data from the Delhi government shows that the national capital saw a decline in birth rate after the COVID-19 pandemic as it reduced from 18.35 per 1000 population to 14.85 in 2020, according to the latest report of the government. The 'Annual Report on Registration of Births and Deaths in Delhi-2023' also said that out of 13,919 non-institutional births, 7,216 (51.84 per cent) were females.

LG directs complete makeover of Kashmere Gate ISBT complex



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to reduce congestion at the Kashmere Gate inter-State bus terminal (ISBT), Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday directed complete makeover of the complex. He also ordered that turn-around period of inter-State buses should be reduced from the existing 45 minutes to 30 for faster circulation of buses. Giving details, Raj Niwas officials said Saxena gave these directions after inspecting Kashmere Gate bus terminus and took stock of the passenger amenities as well as the operation of local and inter-state buses from the terminal. He later went on a walking inspection of the Rani Jhansi Road from Azad Market to Pusa Road intersection via the Faiz Road intersection and the Idgha. The LG, who has been for the past one month regularly reviewing the traffic situation in the Capital, was confronted with the issue of massive congestion outside ISBT due to unduly high turn around time of inter-state buses to and from the bus bays inside the Terminal. He was informed that the minimum turn around time for an inter-state bus currently was 45-60 minutes, which led to spilling over of buses on to the adjoining roads outside the ISBT, which in turn led to traffic snarls. To this, Saxena directed the Transport Commissioner and DTC to reduce the turn-around time for inter-state buses to 30 minutes that will increase the circulation of buses by over 50%. At present, ISBT, Kashmere

Gate, with a turn-around period of 45 minutes, caters to over 2,600 buses from its 60 bays, that comprises nearly 1,300 inter-state buses, 1,200 DTC and Cluster buses and nearly a hundred All India Tourist Permit buses. With this turn-around period getting reduced to 30 minutes, ISBT, Kashmere Gate will be able to handle over 1,900 inter-state buses, up from the existing 1300, every day. Upon witnessing the poor upkeep, maintenance, sanitation and encroachment of passenger ways by unauthorized vendors, the Saxena expressed dissatisfaction and directed the concerned officials to carry out a complete makeover of the Terminal. He asked for a thorough sprucing up exercise, which includes repair of the false ceiling, broken tiles, greening of the unutilized spaces and removal of stains and litters, to be carried out within 15 days. MCD and Delhi Police were directed to prevent illegal squatting and clearing of passenger and bus ways. During his walk on Rani Jhansi Road, the LG came across serious problem of encroachment of the road, disrepair of the pavements and central verges, pathetic condition of the road around the Faiz Road intersection, disrepair of the fortification on the side of the Idgha, stray cattle and absence of traffic police. All these gravely affected the circulation of traffic on the road resulting in massive traffic jams. The LG pointed out that the current state-of-affairs was affecting huge areas that include PulBangash, SabziMandi, Azad Market, Sadar Bazar and MalkaGanj amongst others.

Delhiites pollution concern grows as Monsoon drawing to end: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Saturday said as the monsoon is drawing to a close, the anxiety and concern of Delhiites about winter pollution are increasing. In the past decade, due to Arvind Kejriwal government's criminal negligence, winter pollution in Delhi has escalated to such an extent that millions suffer from respiratory issues every year, and many even die unexpectedly, he said. Making these assertions in a news conference, Sachdeva said last year saw the worst pollution levels in Delhi's history. Based on the experience of black pollution in the past decade, especially last year,

Delhiites hoped that the Kejriwal government would wake up in 2024, but it is regrettable that Delhi's Environment Minister Gopal Rai is merely playing with letters to evade responsibility, he said. The Delhi BJP President stated that winter pollution is a very serious issue that requires serious long-term measures to combat. It is necessary to work on a policy plan with neighbouring state governments to combat winter pollution, but it is unfortunate that Environment Minister Gopal Rai wants to wash his hands off the responsibility of winter pollution by playing with letters with the Centre and presenting some rehearsed points through press conferences.



Rai has publicly disclosed two letters written to the Centre in the last fortnight, but he has not disclosed any letter that he might have written to the Punjab government regarding stubble burning, the biggest contributor to winter pollution in Delhi, Sachdeva said.

He said Delhiites want to know from Gopal Rai, who emphasized artificial rain in his letter to the Centre to reduce increasing winter pollution, in which cities artificial rain has helped reduce pollution levels as high as in Delhi. Many environmental experts

have already deemed the suggestion of artificial rain unnecessary and ineffective. Shri Sachdeva said that the first step in fighting pollution is to streamline the working of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee, which is almost defunct today. It is surprising that almost half the positions in the DPCC are vacant, which raises questions about how much work the committee can actually do. Gopal Rai should explain why more than half of the positions in the DPCC have been vacant for years. The Delhi Pollution Control Committee has consistently condemned the Delhi government's symbolic anti-pollution measures, such as the Rs. 24 crore waste on the Connaught Place smog tower

and the Real-Time Source Apportionment Report that came without scientific evidence after spending Rs. 13 crores, he said. Sachdeva questioned why Gopal Rai has not taken concrete steps using the Rs. 38 crore special anti-pollution fund provided by the Centre and more than Rs. 700 crore of the environment cess fund, along with the special stubble management fund. The Delhi BJP President said the Arvind Kejriwal government should stop playing politics in the name of environmental protection and take concrete anti-pollution measures, starting with calling an all-party meeting with the Punjab government's Chief Minister on winter pollution preparations.

Woman kills six-day-old daughter, throws body on adjacent roof in Khyala

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Facing social stigma over the birth of her fourth girl child, a 28-year-old woman killed her six-day-old daughter and threw her body on the roof of an adjacent house in west Delhi's Khayala area. "A PCR call was received around 5.30 am on Friday, reporting that a six-day-old baby girl was missing. Given the sensitivity of the case, officers from the local police station immediately reached the spot," Deputy Commissioner of Police (west) Vichitra Veer. During initial questioning, the girl's mother, Shivani, claimed that she was discharged from the hospital the previous night and had returned to her parental home. She told police that after feeding the baby around 2 am, she slept with the child beside her but when she woke up at 4.30 am, the baby was gone, DCP Veer said. The police officer said a team was constituted to check CCTV footage from the neighbouring area and search nearby houses. "While the search was on,



Shivani said she needs to go to the hospital to get her stitches removed. This raised some suspicion but due to her medical condition, the police allowed her to go," the DCP said. Meanwhile, during the search, a bag was found on the roof of an adjacent house. Upon opening it, the police found the baby, who was immediately taken to the hospital, where the doctors declared her brought dead, Veer said. The DCP said a police team was subsequently sent to a hospital, bus stations and Shivani's residence in Shahdara to trace her, who on being questioned broke down and confessed to the crime. Shivani revealed during initial

interrogation that the deceased was her fourth daughter, two of whom had already died. The accused cited social stigma as the reason for her actions, he said. Overwhelmed by these thoughts while feeding the baby, Shivani smothered her daughter and then disposed of the body on the neighbouring roof. She later claimed the baby was missing as she was uncertain about what to tell her family, the DCP said. Shivani has been arrested and a case of murder has been registered, Veer said. The police are awaiting the results of the postmortem to verify the account of the accused and determine the exact cause of death, he added.



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Minor girl raped by 14-year-old neighbour

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A five-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a 14-year-old boy residing in her neighbourhood at a time when the girl child was alone at her house in southwest Delhi's Kapashera area. The incident took place when her parents, who are labourers, had gone to work and she was alone at home on Thursday afternoon. The accused boy, who is a friend of the victim girl's brother, was apprehended and sent to an observation home. According to police, they registered an FIR under section 65 (2) (raping woman under 12 years of age) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and section 6 (Punishment for aggravated penetrative sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The boy was apprehended and sent to an observation home, police said. Sharing details, DCP (southwest) Rohit Meena said a PCR call was received at Kapashera police station regarding the heinous crime



committed with a 5-year-old girl by a 14-year-old boy. Sensing the gravity of the matter, a police team was immediately dispatched to the spot where they met the parents of the victim child who narrated the entire matter. "The parents, who are both labourers, were out on their work. Sensing this as an opportunity, the accused boy went to their house and allegedly raped their daughter," the DCP said. The police took the girl child to a hospital where her medical examination was conducted. The victim was counselled in the presence of her parents.

DU VC inaugurates new facilities at Delhi College of Arts and Commerce

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University Vice Chancellor (VC) Professor Yogesh Singh on Saturday said the future of India rests in the hands of young minds and educators. He also said "We must all work tirelessly, with dedication and innovation, to ensure that India reaches the pinnacle of global development by 2047." Making these assertions after inaugurating state-of-the-art facilities at Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, he also shared a powerful message with the teaching community, urging them to adopt modern teaching-learning systems that can revolutionize the educational landscape.



WORLD 5
BRAZIL BANS X AFTER
DISINFORMATION ROW

SPORT 7
BHAMBRI AND BOPANNA WIN WITH
RESPECTIVE PARTNERS, BALAJI EXITS

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In Memoriam BOSS KAUN THA? DR CHANDAN MITRA

By **SIDHARTH MISHRA**

It has been three years since Chandan Mitra is gone. I left the *Pioneer* in 2012 summer but my phone still has his number saved as Editor. I last met him on January 19, 2019. I presented him a copy of my book *Delhi Political 1947-2013* and clicked a picture together. Since we both had French beards and sported similar glass frames, some commented that I was indeed a true disciple, since I did not simply follow him in his writings but also the style of his beard.

Covid followed, poor health got the better of Chandan's physical charm and our interactions got limited to exchange of messages on the phone. My last message to him was on 24 July 2021, on Guru Purnima. Somewhere I had this gut feeling that he may not be there to receive the customary message on Teachers' Day, September the 5th. It turned out to be true.

In 1992, I was working as a district correspondent in the Patna edition of the *Hindustan Times*. I remember reading a front-page review of Mani Ratnam's film *Roja* sitting in the dingy district bureau office. It was sometime then that somewhere inside me the thought arose, if I were to make a career in journalism, Chandan Mitra was the writer to follow.

Soon after, I came to Delhi and found a job at the newsdesk in *The Pioneer*. The newspaper then had a good number of feature and theme pages. The newspaper's then Editor, Ashok Bhattacharya, gave me somewhat of a license to write on these pages if it would not compromise with my desk work. I grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

In 1996, Chandan came as the Editor to Link House, the office of *The Pioneer*. In the first meeting with the newsdesk, then officiating editor Ajoy Bose introduced me saying that I was some kind of a specimen, who despite working till late in the night on the desk could still find time to write. Chandan responded, "I am surprised as I always thought of you to be in someone in the writing departments."

Soon he made me jump the fence, and I was part of the City reporting team. In less than two years' time I was heading the City unit. When I took over, my friends told me that the job was jinxed as, since the launch of the paper in Delhi, nobody completed a year as the Chief Reporter.

When I completed a year, I wrote a thanksgiving note to the Editor, and Chandan in a hand written reply said I survived not because of his benevolence but because of my work. He said I would have many more years in the office. I worked in *The Pioneer* for 18 years on a trot and of which 16 years were with Chandan.

We were ideologically not much aligned. Given my military school background I was never much amused by the life of glamour which he enjoyed but still we managed to work together. With time I came to look after the newspaper's editions in Dehradun, Chandigarh and Ranchi in addition to the Delhi City unit charge. Those were tumultuous years. The Thapars gave up on the newspaper and Chandan brought it back from the brink of closure. In those years many left for better opportunities; sometimes I ask myself what held me back. The charm of attending the evening news meetings with Chandan in the chair, things never got boring. They used to be great gatherings with Swapan Dasgupta and Kanchan Gupta, all *nahapandits* of right wing ideology, with poor me fighting to justify my sympathies for the then Sheila Dikshit Government. Chandan would face a lot of heat from Delhi BJP leaders like Madanlal Khurana for having me as the head of the paper's City unit.

The majority of the years that Chandan held the reigns of *The Pioneer*, the paper was in an adversarial role vis-à-vis the Government at the Centre. Not that under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government, Chandan mortgaged his right to criticise. There was this instance of a border skirmish with Bangladesh in which a BSF officer was killed. His corpse was returned in a most undignified manner. The images made one balk and at the same time angry even as the Government talked of peace. The front page editorial in the paper said, *Bend, don't genuflect*. Now this was a startling criticism coming from a newspaper known for its ideological proximity to the Government of the day. This must have required a lot of courage on the part of Chandan, and a real large heart on the part of the Government to take the criticism in the right spirit.

During those 16 years, Chandan gave me the freedom to make my team. The team had to be made every sixmonths as someone who had just started to shine would be poached by bigger media houses. Today these 'freshers' are the strength and backbone of many a media house across the country.

Whenever one gets to meet them, they show gratitude for giving them the break but I could do so because Chandan allowed it. That was Chandan!

Sidharth Mishra is author & president Centre for Reforms, Development and Justice



PM Modi assures women of swift action against male predators

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the rape and murder of a Kolkata doctor and sexual assault on two kindergarten girls in Maharashtra's Thane region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday reiterated the need and urgency to ensure safety of women, particularly at the workplace and called for quick disposal of cases of crimes against women. He said, "The faster justice is done in such cases, the greater will be the assurance of safety for half the population."

Speaking at the National Conference of District Judiciary in Delhi, the Prime Minister emphasised that atrocities against women and the safety of children were a serious concern in society today. On this occasion, the Prime Minister also unveiled the stamp and coin commemorating 75 years of the establishment of the Supreme Court of India. The two-day conference was organised by the Supreme Court of India to discuss the issues related to the district judiciary such as infrastructure and human resources, inclusive courtsrooms for all, judicial security and judicial wellness, case management and judicial training.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud during the inauguration of the National Conference of District Judiciary, in New Delhi, on Saturday

Modi pointed out that many strict laws were enacted to ensure the safety of women in the country. He added that in 2019, the Government had planned to establish fast-track special courts. Explaining further, he said that there was a provision for a deposition center for important witnesses under the fast-track special courts. He further emphasised the important role of district monitoring committees under fast-track special courts, consisting of the district judge, district magistrate and superintendent of police. "Judiciary is considered as the

Guardian of our Democracy", said the Prime Minister. Referring to the role of judiciary in protecting the Constitution and the spirit of law, the Prime Minister said the judiciary is considered the guardian of the Constitution, and that the Supreme Court and the judiciary have measured up to this responsibility. He added that the committee's role was important in promoting coordination between various aspects of the criminal justice system. Modi stressed on the need to make these committees more active. He

added that the quicker the decisions in cases related to atrocities against women, the greater will be the assurance of safety for half the population. The Kolkata incident has also become a flashpoint between the TMC Government in West Bengal and the BJP-led NDA Government at the Centre. On Friday, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote to Modi, reiterating her request for stringent Central legislation and exemplary punishment for heinous crimes like rape and murder. **Continued on Page 4**



Anguished women of Kerala cry for help

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Radhika Sarathkumar, a highly respected movie artist in South India, dropped a bombshell on Saturday by accusing some of the leading stars of the Malayalam film industry of making nude visuals of female artists with hidden cameras and blackmailing them later.

Speaking to the media, Radhika, who is married to Tamil superstar Sarath Kumar and is daughter of the iconic Tamil actor M R Radha, said that she has seen these film stars videographing nude visuals with hidden cameras in the caravans hired for exclusive use by the female artists.

"It is done while the artists change their costumes or use the washrooms. I saw this with my own eyes and ever since stopped using the caravans. Though I alerted the director and other crew members, nothing happened. Malayalam film industry is not safe for female artists," said Radhika.

The revelations by the actress come in the wake of the #Me Too movement getting intensified after the release of the Justice K Hema Committee report about the murky happenings in Malayalam film industry. The committee was appointed by the CPI (M)-led Government in 2017 following reports of sexual harassment suffered by female film artists.

It may be recalled that a leading actress of Malayalam films was kidnapped by gangsters led by Pulsor Suni and raped as per the directive of reigning superstar Dileep. **Continued on Page 4**

Haryana polls rescheduled

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

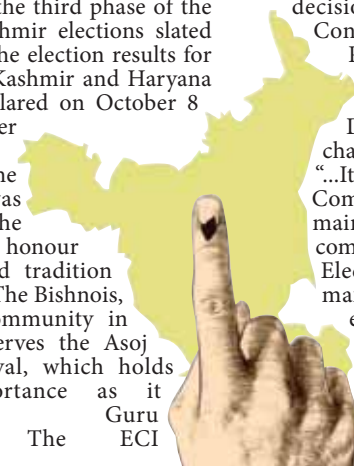
Keeping in mind a centuries-old festival of the Bishnoi community, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Saturday deferred the polling date for Haryana Assembly elections to October 5. Earlier, voting was scheduled to be held on October 1. There has been no change in the polling date for the third phase of the Jammu and Kashmir elections slated for October 1. The election results for both Jammu & Kashmir and Haryana will be now declared on October 8 instead of October 4.

The change in the schedule was prompted by the ECI's decision to honour the centuries-old tradition of the Bishnois. The Bishnois, a prominent community in the region, observes the Asoj Amavasya festival, which holds religious importance as it commemorates the Guru Jambheshwar. The ECI

recognised the need to ensure that the community could fully participate in this important cultural and religious event without forgoing their voting rights. The poll body cited representations from national and State political parties, as well as the All India Bishnoi Mahasabha in this regard.

BJP leaders hailed the poll body's decision while the Opposition Congress and Aam Aadmi Party have slammed the move.

BJP MP Biplab Kumar Deb who is also the in-charge of Haryana BJP said, "...It is the duty of the Election Commission. At that time the main festival of the Bishnoi community takes place, so the Election Commission wants maximum voting in the elections and we welcome it... We have worked honestly in the State and the people will decide who will win..." **Continued on Page 4**



Jammu votes on September 18 in first phase

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

With the completion of the scrutiny of the nomination papers for the first phase of the polling on September 18, the electioneering in Jammu and Kashmir has intensified. Different political parties have stepped up efforts to reach out to the voters to

win their support. Out of 24 Assembly seats going to the polls in the first phase, 16 fall in the Kashmir valley and eight in the erstwhile Doda district of Jammu province.

According to the Election Commission of India, 64 candidates are left in the fray for eight seats in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban

districts. They include 27 in Doda district, 22 in Kishtwar and 15 in Ramban district.

In 2014, the BJP had won four Assembly segments of Kishtwar, Doda, Bhandarwah and Ramban while two Assembly segments of Interdwal and Banihal were won by the Congress party candidates in the region. **Continued on Page 4**



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Remembrance of things past

By **KUSHAN MITRA**

Chandan Mitra, pursuing his doctorate at Oxford, with son Kushan

Three years ago, on the night of the first of September, 2021, my father, Chandan Mitra, breathed his last. The last few months of his life had been hard for him, and also hard for those around him. Watching the cognitive decline of possibly one of the most intelligent human beings you have ever known is extremely tough and when that person happens to be your own father, it is so much worse. I write a lot, but I haven't ever written about Baba's passing or my relationship with him. Three years on, I think it is time.

As I rode with his body in an ambulance to the cremation grounds, those 45 minutes gave me a lot of time to contemplate. Well, 45 minutes is nothing when you're trying to think over a 40-year relationship but there was some solitude inside the vehicle. I recall my fathers childhood friend from La Martiniere, Paranjay Guha Thakurta being in the van with me, but I think that we were both lost in thought.

I will be honest, ours was not a simple relationship. Most sons, particularly in India have deeply complicated



relationships with their fathers, but I would like to think mine was more complex than most. As many know, my parents were divorced and had separated when I was around 13 years old. While that is not something easy for a young teenager to process, as a 45-year old man today, I understand how relationships can wither away and die. But as a result of that, Baba was

not always around. However, my younger brother and I did spend time with him and also stayed nights at his place in Vasant Vihar. I would also like to thank his landlady, the journalist Shymala Shiveshwarkar, who herself passed away earlier this year, for helping him and keeping him on the straight and narrow. That said, through my later teens and early twenties,

we were barely on talking terms. Baba's place was a place I only dropped into to party. Could it have been better or different? I don't know, but I do know that by this time, he had found companionship with the first of his many Labradors, Loin.

As I begun my career as a writer and journalist, Baba was always there to provide advice, and as he went beyond dipping his toes into politics, and started his time as a Member of Parliament, visits to his bungalows at Humayun Road and then Ferozeshah Road were common. He was someone I could always turn to for career advice and also talk about life and love. It was here I decided that I would help him in *The Pioneer*.

This newspaper was his soul by then, he had revived it from a moribund newspaper, to one of Delhi's most reliable and trusted newspapers, and when the rest of the Indian english media had bent over during the UPA-era, which they have all conveniently forgotten today, *The Pioneer*, remained steadfastly right-wing, despite the newspaper

paying a severe commercial price for that, although my father maintained strong relationships with many on the other side of the aisle. Many journalists across the media today got their start with *The Pioneer* and worked with my father and many of those keep on reaching out to me, from India and abroad to have a proper memorial service for 'Boss' because he passed away while Covid restrictions were on. This December would have been his 70th Birthday, and God willing, if things go right, I, along with many of those who loved him, hope to celebrate his life.

A lot of what has happened in the past few years is water under the bridge, and I hope a decision or resolution that honours the memory of my father is found soon. Unfortunately his trusting nature in some people allowed them to take advantage of him. I wish he was that trusting of me and others who had the best interests of the newspaper in mind, but it is what it is. And that is all I will say other than to hope that the stag can jump high again in the near future in memory of the man who kept it going.

Jayarajan ousted as LDF convener; CPI snubbed over Mukesh issue

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The internal group war in the CPI(M) reached new heights on Saturday as EP Jayarajan, former Minister and Kannur strongman of the party was ousted as the Left Democratic Front (LDF) convener and another former Minister TP Ramakrishnan, a sidekick of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Government was appointed to the coveted post. The removal of Jayarajan and appointment of Ramakrishnan was announced by party's Kerala state secretary M V Govindan while briefing the media after

the two-day long State Committee meet of the party held at Thiruvananthapuram. Jayarajan's ouster from the LDF convener is a sequel to his meeting with Prakash Javadekar, the BJP leader who is in charge of party's Kerala affairs. Sobha Surendran, a senior BJP leader had disclosed that Jayarajan, a former industries minister in the first Pinarayi Vijayan Government had held parleys with Javadekar during the run up to the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Govindan did not disclose the reason for Jayarajan's removal in an unambiguous

manner other than saying that the latter was not competent enough to continue as convener of the LDF. But Govindan stated that Jayarajan's meetings with Javadekar was one of the reasons that created a lot of controversy. "I'll react to the decision at the appropriate time," Jayarajan told the media persons. In yet another development, the CPI(M) gave a tight slap on the face of the CPI, its poor cousins, for that party's demand to oust movie actor Mukesh MLA from the party as well as the membership of the legislative assembly. Annie



Raja, former flame of the CPI, had demanded the



expulsion of Mukesh as MLA against whom many female

artists have raised serious charges of rape, sexual abuse and misdemeanor. Mukesh managed to get anticipatory bail from the district sessions judge in Kochi against possible arrest by Kochi City Police and has gone underground since then. Binoy Viswam, the CPI Kerala secretary and the intellectual face of the Communist movement, had called on chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday and demanded that Mukesh should be asked to resign as MLA. "Our learned opinion is that there is no need for Mukesh to resign as MLA in connection with

some allegations. Some artists have accused him of misbehaving with them but these charges are yet to be proved in a court of law. If the court acquits him of all charges, are there any mechanism in the statute books to take back his resignation letter and reinstate him as MLA?" asked Govindan. Close CPI(M) observers like P Sujathan are of the view that the removal of Jayarajan would create a lot of ripples in the CPI(M) as well as in Kerala politics. "But I am not sure whether it would have any repercussions in the BJP in Kerala. This is because the present

BJP leadership in the State is incapable of accommodating him in the party as there are no leaders in the party capable of winning even panchayat election. Jayarajan is a seasoned political leader. Moreover, if rubbed the wrong way, he can put all CPI(M) leaders including Vijayan in major embarrassment," said Sujathan. Jayarajan being a member of the central committee of the party, only the polit bureau members are competent to take further decisions like ousting him from the primary membership of the CPI(M).

Delhi Home Minister visits Tihar jail

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Home Minister Kailash Gahlot on Saturday conducted a comprehensive visit to Tihar Jail, reinforcing the Government's commitment to prison reforms, inmate welfare and staff development. The visit highlighted the Government's dedication to improving the living conditions of inmates, enhancing staff welfare, and ensuring the overall betterment of the correctional facilities under the Government of National Capital Territory (GNCT) of Delhi. The Minister was accompanied by Home Secretary Chanchal Yadav, Director General of Prisons Satish Golcha, Additional Inspector General Ajay Kumar Bisht, Deputy Inspector General (HQ & Tihar Range) Rajeev Singh and other senior offi-



cers of Prison Department during the visit. The minister expressed satisfaction with the progress made so far and assured that the Government will continue to prioritize the welfare of both inmates and staff in all future initiatives. During his visit to Central Jail No. 6 (Women), Kailash Gahlot reviewed the voca-

tional training being imparted by "Chal Charkha Unit", Stitching & Jewellery Unit. He praised the NGO managing the Charkha Unit for providing valuable vocational training to the inmates, which will make them self-reliant after their release from jail. He also appreciated the training being imparted in the

Stitching & Block Printing Unit run with the help of Pearl Academy. In Central Jail No. 3, the minister visited the "Gausala" and observed its activities. He also inspected the "Langar," where food is prepared for inmates, and appreciated the quality and cleanliness of the facility. The Minister stressed the need to expand the capacity as well as the facilities of the hospital in the Tihar jail complex. He also provided his inputs towards overall improvement of general infrastructure of prisons. "I visited Tihar Jail, the largest prison complex in Asia, as part of the Delhi Government's ongoing efforts to improve prison conditions. During my visit, I inspected the basic facilities being provided to the prisoners and issued some corrective direc-

tions. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Delhi Government is committed to prison reform." "Our visit to Tihar Jail is yet another step towards improving prison conditions and ensuring that inmates are given the necessary resources to reform themselves. We believe that every individual has the potential to reform, and it is our responsibility to provide them with the necessary resources to do so. I am confident that with the collective efforts of our government, prison authorities, and citizens, we can create a more just and equitable society," Gahlot said in a statement. Gahlot reiterated the Kejriwal Government's commitment to implement positive interventions in the lives of inmates.

Delhi doctors gather at Jantar Mantar to protest against Kolkata horror

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Doctors in the national Capital gathered at Jantar Mantar on Saturday to protest against the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at a Kolkata hospital, asserting that without a Central law to protect healthcare workers, female doctors would never feel safe during work. Protestors began gathering at Jantar Mantar from 3 pm onwards to demand justice for the victim of the incident at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and press the government to expedite the enactment of the Central Healthcare Protection Act, doctor associations said. Dr Deepika, a protesting doctor said, "I will never allow my daughters to become doctors here... Can you imagine that all of us female doctors are scared now? We feel fearful while

working, and we need protection. Can you imagine if she was raped and murdered at her workplace?" "We want protection so that all female doctors can work again without fear," she said. Chairman of Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) Rohan Krishnan said they had earlier called off the protest due to the Supreme Court's intervention. "...Despite one arrest, there has been no significant progress in the case. That's why we want to continue our silent protest. We want our female doctors and nurses to feel safe again while working, and justice should be served," he said. The apex court constituted a task force, which will take note of suggestions of all stakeholders while formulating a national protocol for the safety of healthcare professionals,

including the associations representing resident doctors. A statement by FAIMA issued on Saturday said it "is profoundly disturbed by this heinous act, which has not only shattered the medical fraternity but also exposed the alarming vulnerabilities that healthcare professionals face daily." "Our fight will continue until justice is served," said Manish Jangra, founder and chief advisor of FAIMA. He added that members of the Resident Doctors of India (RDI) from hospitals around Delhi-NCR, such as Aligarh and Rohtak, will be part of the protest. Earlier this month, resident doctors across the country went on an indefinite strike on August 12 after the body of the trainee doctor was found on the premises of the state-run hospital in Kolkata on the morning of August 9.

PM Modi assures...

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In response, Union minister Annapurna Devi asserted that existing laws were stringent enough to tackle violence and crimes against women and urged the West Bengal Government to implement the same in "letter and spirit". The Government launched the Fast Track Special Court (FTSC) scheme in 2019 to tackle pending cases of crimes against women and those filed under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. Since its inception, these courts have disposed of more than 2.53 lakh cases. Prime Minister Modi highlighted the crucial role of policies and laws along with infrastructural and technological advancements in the transformational journey of the nation. Therefore, Modi said, the nation has made such big and important changes in the legal framework for the first time in 70 years of Independence. Referring to the new Indian judicial system in the form of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Prime Minister said that the spirit of these laws is 'Citizen First, Dignity First and Justice First'. He pointed out that India's criminal laws have been freed from the colonial mindset of rulers and slaves. He gave the example of repealing a colonial-era law like sedition. Throwing light on the idea behind the Nyaya Sanhita being to not punish citizens but protect them, PM Modi mentioned the implementation of stricter laws for crimes against women and children, and provisions of community service as punishment for minor crimes for the first time.

Modi also spoke about Bhartiya Sakshya Adhinyam and said that electronic and digital records have been recognised as evidence under the new laws. He also mentioned the Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita and said that a system is in place to send summons electronically to reduce the burden of pending cases on the judiciary. The Prime Minister also urged to take necessary steps to train the district judiciary in this new system under the guidance of the Supreme Court. He also suggested judges and lawyer colleagues become a part of this campaign. "Our lawyers and bar associations have an important role in making the public familiar with this new system," he added. Throwing light on the efforts in the past 10 years to facilitate delivery of justice, the Prime Minister referred to the work being done for the modernisation of courts at the mission level and highlighted the contributions of the Supreme Court and the judiciary. Pointing out the pendency of about 4.5 crore cases in the district courts, PM Modi said that work has been carried out at multiple levels in the last decade to eliminate this delay in justice. He said that the country has spent about Rs 8,000 crore for the development of judicial infrastructure. He further added that 75 percent of the funds spent on judicial infrastructure in the last 25 years took place only in the last 10 years. "In these 10 years, more than 7.5 thousand court halls and 11 thousand residential units have been built for the district judiciary," he added.

NBCC board recommends bonus share in 1:2 ratio

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Board of Directors of NBCC (India) Limited in its meeting held on 31.08.2024 has recommended the issuance of Bonus Shares to the Shareholders of the Company in the ratio of 1:2 i.e. 1 (One) new fully paid-up Equity Share of ₹ 1/- (Rupees One Only) each for every 2 (Two) existing fully paid-up Equity Share of ₹ 1/- (Rupees One Only) each to the eligible Shareholders of the Company as on Record Date, subject to the approval of the Shareholders in the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. This decision reflects the Company's strong financial health and its commitment to rewarding its shareholders. The Board has also fixed Monday, October 07, 2024 as Record date to

determine the eligibility of members to receive bonus shares. The eligible shareholders, whose names appeared in the Register of Shareholders or the List of Beneficial Owners maintained by the Depositories as of August 31, 2024, will receive these bonus shares. Consequently, the paid-up equity share capital of the company will increase from Rs. 180,00,00,000 to Rs. 270,00,00,000. The newly allotted bonus shares will hold equal status with the existing shares. They will be directly credited to the shareholders' demat accounts. The Company has a balance of Rs. 1,959 Crore being reserves & surplus available for capitalization as per Audited Financial Statements on March 31, 2024.

Yogi Govt to expand contactless e-transport services across UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Government is set to expand modern e-transport services across the state to enhance people's convenience. These services will be entirely faceless and contactless, streamlining the delivery of various services through an online platform. This initiative aims to provide a 'one stop solution' for citizens, eliminating the need to visit government offices for transport-related services. Already, the Transport department of Uttar Pradesh has implemented advanced facilities such as the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) and e-challan services. Building on this foundation, the state is now accelerating efforts to introduce

Aadhaar authentication-based 'Vahan Faceless Services' and 'Sarathi Faceless Services'. The e-Transport Mission, spearheaded by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), is an ambitious initiative aimed at modernising the infrastructure and service delivery in India's transport sector. This mission is designed to enhance the efficiency, transparency, accountability and reliability of transport services, with a key focus on reducing the public's reliance on regional transport offices (RTOs) by expanding the availability of online services. The e-Transport Mission provides automated RTO operations, a nationwide transport database, and over 150 services tailored for citizens and businesses. Flagship programmes

under this mission include Vahan, Sarathi, e-Challan and pollution certificates, which play a crucial role in streamlining transport-related processes across the country. Through Vahan e-services, the project offers a range of services including vehicle homologation, registration, fitness and inspection, vehicle conversion and alteration, taxation modules, national permits, smart card issuance, and online fancy number checks. It also facilitates the management of check posts for vehicles from other states, payment gateway interfaces, and the national register of registration certificates (RCs), among others. Similarly, Sarathi focuses on driver-related solutions, offering services such as new learning licences, online tests, international permits, appoint-

ment management, driver training enrollment, conductor licences, driving test tracks, and access to the national register of driving licences (DLs). The range of initiatives being implemented across the state to modernise its transport infrastructure includes the integration of smart cities such as Saharanpur, Firozabad, Shahjahanpur, Moradabad, Jhansi, Gorakhpur and Ayodhya with the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) and the e-challan portal. Additionally, ITMS-based overloading challan systems are being introduced in key locations like Noida, Agra and Mathura, along with a CCTV-based challan system on the Purvanchal and Agra-Lucknow expressways.

Jammu votes on September 18 in...

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This time, the BJP will have to walk a tightrope to cross the hurdles before hitting the victory milestone. On the other hand, alliance partners Congress and the National Conference are trying their level best to put

up a united front to defeat the BJP. The candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party are also gearing up to improve their past performance while the rebel candidate of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party, GM Saroori, who won the Inderwal seat in 2014, is also aiming to retain the seat despite facing a credibility crisis after failing to get the mandate from the DPAP. The Kishtwar Assembly segment is turning out to be the real battleground as it is witnessing the most interesting contest in the poll arena. Kishtwar is set to witness a triangular fight between

BJP's Shagun Parihar, Sajjad Kitchloo of the National Conference and Firdous Tak of PDP. Shagun Parihar is the daughter of Ajeet Parihar, the elder brother of BJP leader Anil Parihar. Both the brothers were killed by terrorists in November 2018. While the BJP is hoping to retain the seat, Kitchloo, on the other hand, is aiming to wrest the seat from the BJP. He remained a two-time MLA in 2002 and 2008 but lost to BJP's Sunil Sharma in 2014. After delimitation, Sharma has shifted to the newly created seat of Paddar-Nagseni. A straight contest is on the

cards between Sunil Sharma and NC's Pooja Thakur, the sitting chairperson of District Development Council (DDC) Kishtwar though the PDP has also fielded Sandesh Kumar. Rakesh Goswami, a BJP rebel is also in the fray and he refused to withdraw on the last date of filing of nomination papers. The Inderwal Assembly segment in Kishtwar is also gearing up for the multi-cornered contest. Three-time MLA and former Minister GM Saroori is contesting the election as an Independent candidate after being denied the mandate by Azad's DPAP.

Saroori is facing Sheikh Zafarullah of Congress, Tariq Hussain Keen (BJP), Nasir Ahmed Sheikh (PDP) and National Conference rebel Pyare Lal Sharma. Saroori scored a hat-trick from the Inderwal seat by winning Assembly polls of 2002, 2008 and 2014 in a row. On the Baderwah seat, the contest is expected to be triangular among 2014 BJP MLA Daleep Singh Parihar, Nadeem Sharief (Congress) and Sheikh Mehboob Iqbal (NC). Vikram Rathore of Jammu Kashmir Apni Party and Meenakshi Bhagat of BSP are also in the fray. Nadeem Sharief is the son of

Mohammad Sharief Niaz, who won the Baderwah seat in 2002 for the Congress and was made the Cabinet Minister. Later, Niaz quit the seat and Ghulam Nabi Azad won it in the by-poll. NC's Mehboob Iqbal is a retired IAS officer. BJP's 2014 MLA and former Minister Shakti Raj Parihar is facing Pardeep Kumar (Congress), Tanveer Hussain (PDP) and Abdul Ghani (DPAP) among others in the multi-cornered contest from the newly created seat of Doda West. Doda Assembly segment also is facing a multi-cornered contest with two former Ministers Khalid

Najib Suhrawardy (NC) and Abdul Muejed Wani (DPAP) in the fray along with Gajay Singh Rana (BJP), Riaz Ahmed (Congress) and the PDP. Suhrawardy won the seat in a by-election after the death of his father and NC strongman Attaullah Suhrawardy. However, he failed to retain it in 2002 when Majid Wani won the seat as an Independent candidate and in 2008 as the Congress candidate. BJP's Shakti Parihar wrested the seat in 2014. Parihar this time has shifted to the newly created seat of Doda West. He had lost the District Development

Council election from two seats in Doda in 2020. In Ramban district, eight candidates are now left in the fray but the main contest is expected to be among Rakesh Singh Thakur (BJP), Arjun Singh Raju (NC) and Suraj Singh Parihar, a BJP rebel contesting the election as an Independent candidate. Banihal constituency in Ramban district is also expected to witness a four-cornered contest among Vikar Rasool Wani, a two-time MLA of Congress, Sajjad Shaheen (National Conference), Mohammad Saleem Bhat (BJP) and Imtiaz Shan (PDP).

Brazil bans X after disinformation row

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Brazil started blocking Elon Musk's social media platform X early Saturday, making it largely inaccessible on both the web and through its mobile app after the company refused to comply with a judge's order.

X missed a deadline imposed by Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes to name a legal representative in Brazil, triggering the suspension. It marks an escalation in the monthslong feud between Musk and de Moraes over free speech, far-right accounts and misinformation.

To block X, Brazil's telecommunications regulator, Anatel, told internet service providers to suspend users' access to the social media platform. As of Saturday after midnight local time, major operators had begun doing so. De Moraes had warned Musk on Wednesday night that X could be blocked in Brazil if he failed to comply with his order to name a representative, and established a 24-hour deadline. The company hasn't had a representative in the country since earlier this month.

"Elon Musk showed his total disrespect for Brazilian sovereignty and, in particular, for the judiciary, setting himself up as a true supranational entity and immune to the laws of each

country," de Moraes wrote in his decision on Friday.

The justice said the platform will stay suspended until it complies with his orders, and also set a daily fine of 50,000 reais (\$8,900) for people or companies using VPNs to access it. In a later ruling, he backtracked on his initial decision to establish a 5-day deadline for internet service providers themselves — and not just the telecommunications regulator — to block access to X, as well as his directive for app stores to remove virtual private networks, or VPNs.

Brazil is one of the biggest markets for X, which has struggled with the loss of advertisers since Musk purchased the former Twitter in 2022. Market research group EMarketer says some 40 million Brazilians, roughly one-fifth of the population, access X at least once per month. "This is a sad day for X users around the world, especially those in Brazil, who are being denied access to our platform. I wish it did not have to come to this — it breaks my heart," X's CEO Linda Yaccarino said Friday night, adding that Brazil is failing to uphold its constitution's pledge to forbid censorship.

X had posted on its official Global Government Affairs page late Thursday that it expected X to be shut down by de Moraes, "simply because we would not comply with his illegal

STANDOFF CONTINUES



orders to censor his political opponents."

"When we attempted to defend ourselves in court, Judge de Moraes threatened our Brazilian legal representative with imprisonment. Even after she resigned, he froze all of her bank accounts," the company wrote. X has clashed with de Moraes over its reluctance to comply with orders to block users.

Accounts that the platform previously has shut down on Brazilian orders include lawmakers affiliated with former President Jair Bolsonaro's right-wing party and activists accused of undermining Brazilian democracy. X's lawyers in April sent a document to the Supreme Court in April, saying that since 2019 it had suspended or blocked 226 users.

In his decision Friday, de Moraes cited Musk's statements as evidence that X's

conduct "clearly intends to continue to encourage posts with extremism, hate speech and anti-democratic discourse, and to try to withdraw them from jurisdictional control."

In April, de Moraes included Musk as a target in an ongoing investigation over the dissemination of fake news and opened a separate investigation into the executive for alleged obstruction. Musk, a self-proclaimed "free speech absolutist," has repeatedly claimed the justice's actions amount to censorship, and his argument has been echoed by Brazil's political right. He has often insulted de Moraes on his platform, characterizing him as a dictator and tyrant.

De Moraes' defenders have said his actions aimed at X have been lawful, supported by most of the court's full bench and have served to protect democracy at a time it is imperiled. He wrote Friday that his ruling is based on Brazilian law requiring internet services companies to have representation in the country so they can be notified when there are relevant court decisions and take requisite action — specifying the takedown of illicit content posted by users, and an anticipated churn of misinformation during October municipal elections.

The looming shutdown is not unprecedented in Brazil. Lone Brazilian judges shut down

Meta's WhatsApp, the nation's most widely used messaging app, several times in 2015 and 2016 due to the company's refusal to comply with police requests for user data. In 2022, de Moraes threatened the messaging app Telegram with a nationwide shutdown, arguing it had repeatedly ignored Brazilian authorities' requests to block profiles and provide information. He ordered Telegram to appoint a local representative; the company ultimately complied and stayed online. X and its former incarnation, Twitter, have been banned in several countries — mostly authoritarian regimes such as Russia, China, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Venezuela and Turkmenistan. Other countries, such as Pakistan, Turkey and Egypt, have also temporarily suspended X before, usually to quell dissent and unrest. Twitter was banned in Egypt after the Arab Spring uprisings, which some dubbed the "Twitter revolution," but it has since been restored.

A search Friday on X showed hundreds of Brazilian users inquiring about VPNs that could potentially enable them to continue using the platform by making it appear they were logging on from outside the country. It was not immediately clear how Brazilian authorities would police this practice and impose fines cited by de Moraes.

Indian embassy in Laos rescues 47 Indians from cyberscam centres

PTI ■ VIENTIANE

At least 47 Indians trapped in cyber scam centres in Laos have been rescued from the Bokeo province of the country, the Indian embassy in the Southeast Asian country said on Saturday.

Indian authorities have been cautioning its nationals against fake job offers in Laos and urged them to conduct thorough due diligence to avoid being deceived. The Indian mission has so far rescued 635 Indians from the country and ensured their safe return to India. In the latest case, the embassy rescued 47 Indians trapped in cyber scam centres at the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Bokeo province, a statement from the Indian Embassy in Laos said.

"Of these, 29 were handed over to the Embassy by Laos authorities after their crackdown on illegal activities in Golden Triangle SEZ, while other 18 had approached the Embassy in distress, seeking help," the statement, which was posted on X, said. It said the embassy officials travelled from the capital Vientiane to Bokeo to liaise with local authorities for their rescue.

The statement added that

Prashant Agrawal, the Ambassador of India to Laos, met the group upon their arrival to discuss the challenges they faced and to advise further course of action.

The embassy has undertaken and completed all procedural requirements of Laos authorities for their repatriation to India, the statement said, adding that 30 of those have already safely returned to India or are on their way, while the remaining 17 are only awaiting travel arrangements to be firmed up and would be leaving the country soon.

Agrawal emphasised that "ensuring safety and well-being" of Indians was a matter of top priority for the Embassy, the statement said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar last month discussed the issue of trafficking of Indian nationals with Laos Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone during his visit to the Southeast Asian nation. The Indian embassy in Laos last month rescued 13 Indians, who were lured into certain cyber-scaming centres in the country and sent them back home.

In Saturday's statement, the Indian Embassy urged the Laos government to take action at their end against unscrupulous elements.

Trump continues personal attacks against Harris

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has launched a fresh personal attack on his Democratic rival Kamala Harris, calling her "defective".

His latest attacks come after Harris sat for her first major interview with CNN as her party's presidential nominee on Thursday.

Fifty-nine-year-old Harris, who is of Indian and African descent, is the Democratic Party candidate in the November 5 presidential election in which she will contest against Trump, 78.

"I think she would've been better off if she just did interviews, even if they weren't great it would have been better ... because now everyone's

watching and now we see, she's defective," Trump said on Friday at the annual gathering of Moms for Liberty, a conservative nonprofit.

"She's a defective person." "And we don't need another defective person as president of the United States," Trump said, likely referring to President Joe Biden who dropped out of the race last month and endorsed Harris. He also said Biden was "sharp as a tack" during the presidential debate in June and complained that it was "unfair" he had to spend millions going after the wrong person during the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee (RNC) last month. Trump has unleashed personal attacks on Vice President Harris as her political star has

risen since she rose to the top of the Democratic ticket in recent weeks.

Earlier, Trump disparaged Harris' physical appearance and insisted that he was "much better looking than her".

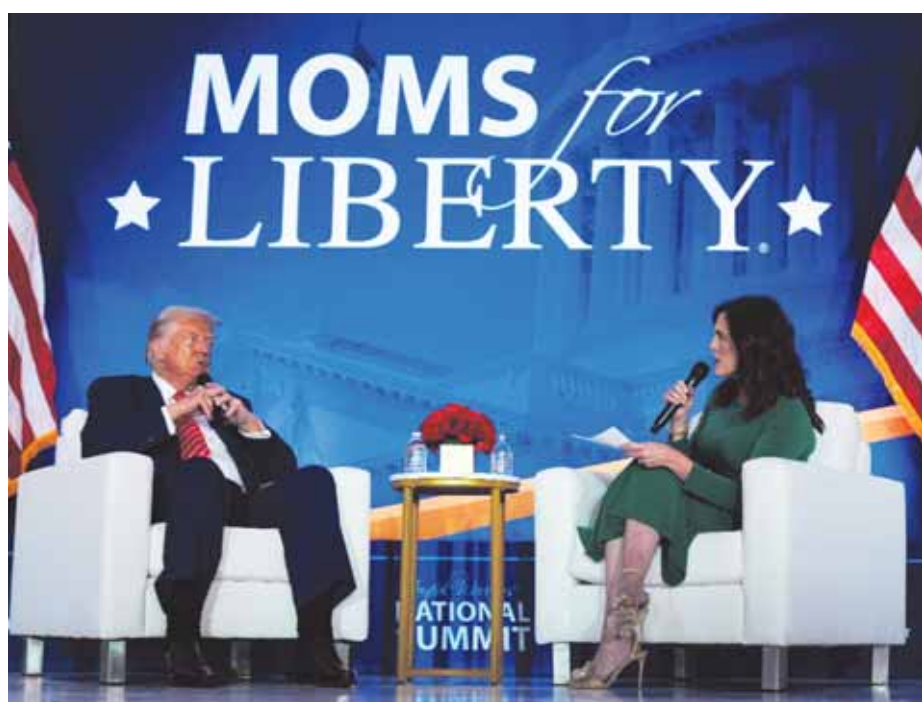
Trump earlier this month said he was "entitled" to personally attack Harris because he doesn't "have a lot of respect for her".

He has also questioned her racial identity.

Harris in the interview with CNN on Thursday brushed off Trump's remarks questioning her race.

"Same old, tired playbook. Next question, please," Harris responded.

During an election campaign in Pennsylvania earlier Friday, Trump briefly commented on



Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump speaks with Moms for Liberty co-founder Tiffany Justice during an event at the group's annual convention in Washington. AP/PTI

the interview. "Did you see her on television last night? This is gonna be the president of our country?"

I don't think so," he said. While the outlet aired the interview in its entirety, Trump and his allies criticised

CNN for pre-taping the interview instead of airing it live as a way to cover up potential Harris slipups.

Polio vaccine campaign begins in Gaza

AP ■ JERUSALEM

A campaign to inoculate children in Gaza against polio and prevent the spread of the virus began on Saturday as Palestinians in both the Hamas-governed coastal enclave and in the occupied West Bank reeled from Israel's ongoing campaigns in both regions.

Children in Gaza began receiving vaccines on Saturday, the Strip's health ministry announced in a news conference, a day before the large-scale rollout and planned pause in fighting agreed to by Israel and the United Nations World Health Organisation.

Associated Press reporters saw roughly ten infants receiving doses of vaccine in the Nasser hospital in Khan Younis on Saturday afternoon.

Hours earlier, Gaza's Health Ministry said hospitals received 89 dead on Saturday, including 26 who died in an overnight Israeli bombardment, and 205 wounded — one of the highest daily tolls in months.

Meanwhile, parts of the West Bank remained on edge Saturday as Israel's military continued its largescale military campaign, the deadliest since the Israel-Hamas war began, and two car bombings by Palestinian militants near Israeli settlements left three soldiers injured.

Two car bombs exploded early Saturday in Gush Etzion, a bloc of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Israel's military killed both Palestinian attackers after the bombs exploded in a compound in Karnei Zur and at a gas station, Israel's military said. Three Israeli soldiers sustained minor injuries.

Palestinian health officials said Israel was holding the bodies of the attackers, naming the men as Muhammad Marqa and Zoodhi Afifeh.

Hamas did not claim the men as its fighters but called the attack a "heroic operation" and a "new slap to the occupation's security system" in a statement early Saturday. The Palestinian militant group said earlier this month after a bombing attack in Tel Aviv that it would continue such attacks. The bombings took place as Israel continued its largescale raid — which includes destruction of infrastructure, airstrikes and gunbattles — into urban refugee camps in the cities of Jenin and Tulkarem, in the north of the volatile West Bank. About 20 Palestinians have been killed since Israel's incursion started Tuesday, causing alarm among the international community that the war might widen beyond the Gaza Strip. Israel has described the operation as a strategy to prevent attacks on Israeli civilians, which since the start of the war have increased in the West Bank, including near settlements that the international community largely considers illegal. In return, the Palestinian Health Ministry noted a surge in Palestinian deaths by Israeli forces, with 663 killed in the West Bank in the nearly 11 months since the war began. In central Gaza, Israeli airstrikes hit a multi-story building housing displaced people in and around Nuseirat, a built-up refugee camp in central Gaza, further south in Khan Younis and northward in Gaza City, officials at hospitals in the three areas said on Saturday morning.

Among the dead were a physician and his family and a child whose right leg had been previously amputated, according to an initial list of casualties from the hospital and footage released on Saturday by civil defense officials who operated under Gaza's Hamas-run government.

7 US troops hurt in raid with Iraqi forces targeting Islamic State group militants

AP ■ DUBAI

The United States military and Iraq launched a joint raid targeting suspected Islamic State group militants in the country's western desert that killed at least 15 people and saw seven American troops hurt, officials said Saturday.

For years after dislodging the militants from their self-declared caliphate across Iraq and Syria, US forces have fought the Islamic State group, though the casualties from this raid were higher than in previous ones.

The US military's Central Command allowed the militants were armed with "numerous weapons, grenades, and explosive suicide belts" during the attack Thursday, which Iraqi forces said happened in the country's Anbar Desert.

"This operation targeted ISIS leaders to disrupt and degrade ISIS' ability to plan, organise, and conduct attacks against

Iraqi civilians, as well as US citizens, allies, and partners throughout the region and beyond," Central Command said, using an acronym for the militant group. "Iraqi Security Forces continue to further exploit the locations raided." It added: "There is no indication of civilian casualties."

An Iraqi military statement said "airstrikes targeted the hideouts, followed by an airborne operation."

"Among the dead were key ISIS leaders," Iraq's military said, without identifying them. "All hideouts, weapons and logistical support were destroyed, explosive belts were safely detonated and important documents, identification papers and communication devices were seized."

A US defence official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss details of the operation yet to be made public, told The Associated Press that five American troops were found

in the raid, while two others suffered injuries from falls during the operation. One who suffered a fall was transported out of the region, while one of the wounded was evacuated for further treatment, the official said.

"All personnel are in stable condition," the official said. It wasn't immediately clear why it took two days for the US to acknowledge it took part in the raid. Iraq did not say the US took part in the operation when initially announcing it, as politicians debate the future of having American troops in the country. There are approximately 2,500 US troops in Iraq. Since the US toppled dictator Saddam Hussein with its 2003 invasion of Iraq, the country has struggled to balance relations between America and neighbouring Iran. Since the Israel-Hamas war broke out, Iraqi militias allied to Iran have targeted US forces there, leading to American airstrikes

targeting them.

At its peak, the Islamic State group ruled an area half the size of the UK. It attempted to enforce its extreme interpretation of Islam, which included attacks on religious minority groups and harsh punishment of Muslims deemed to be apostates.

A coalition of more than 80 countries led by the United States was formed to fight the group, which lost its hold on the territory it controlled in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria in 2019.

However, the militants have continued to operate in the Anbar Desert in Iraq and Syria, while claiming attacks carried out by others elsewhere in the world inspired by the group. That includes the two suspects in a foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift shows in Vienna. Meanwhile, the IS branch in Afghanistan is known to carry out intensely bloody assaults.

British Sikh MP defends record as landlord amid tenant complaints

PTI ■ LONDON

A newly elected British Sikh Labour Member of Parliament has defended his record as a landlord after UK media reports highlighted anonymous complaints from his tenants of being subjected to poor living conditions in properties owned by him.

Jas Athwal, elected to Parliament in last month's general election from Ilford South constituency in east London, said he was "shocked" and "profoundly sorry" to hear of residents' issues after the BBC reported on mould and ant infestations on Friday.

Athwal, 60, is said to own 15 rental flats and says he had not been aware of the issues due to the properties being managed by an agency. He has now promised that repairs and maintenance will

be completed through immediate action. "I am a renters champion. I'm proud to rent out homes with secure tenancies at below-market rents," Athwal said in a detailed statement.

"I want every one of my tenants to have excellent accommodation; I'm shocked at the reported condition of a number of the properties and have asked the managing agent for an explanation and immediate action to rectify any issues. I know it's my responsibility to have issues addressed as soon as they arise and have met with the property management company to understand failures in communication," he said. "I'm profoundly sorry that tenants have been let down and will be reviewing the property management and how matters are escalated going forward," he added.

Athwal, previously a local politician as leader of Redbridge Council, is also required to have a selective property licence in order to rent out a block of seven flats — a system he introduced in 2017 when he was in charge of the council. However, the BBC found the council's public licence register indicated that none of the seven properties had a licence. Athwal admitted that he had "recently seen an email" which said the licences were due to expire. He added: "I am in the process of renewing all licences. As council leader I implemented the most rigorous landlord licencing scheme in London in 2017, and expanded the scheme in 2023 and 2024 — the scheme would've been even stronger if Conservative housing secretaries had not repeatedly watered it down. "In 2019, I led a campaign

calling on the government to abolish Section 21 evictions, further protecting tenants' rights, which was again blocked by the Conservatives."

According to the BBC investigation, in one block of seven flats owned by Athwal nearly half the tenants said they had to regularly clean their bathroom ceilings to remove mould.

The news corporation said it also saw evidence of ant infestations in a number of the seven properties. Andrew Boff, a Conservative member of the London Assembly who also visited the flats, is calling on the governing Labour Party and local Redbridge Council to investigate as the party's 2024 general election manifesto included a commitment to "prevent private renters being exploited and discriminated against".

Houthi rebels fire missiles at container ship

AP ■ DUBAI

Two missiles suspected to have been fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a Liberian-flagged container ship in the Gulf of Aden late Friday, splashing down nearby without causing any damage, authorities said.

The attack comes after the Houthis repeatedly assaulted and then boarded a Greek-flagged oil tanker in the nearby Red Sea, planting explosives on it they later detonated. That attack, the worst in weeks, risked a major oil spill as the rebels' campaign disrupts the USD 1 trillion in goods that pass through the Red Sea each year over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, as well as halting some aid shipments to conflict-ravaged Sudan and

Yemen.

The attack Friday saw two missiles "exploding in close proximity to the vessel" some 240 kilometres east of Aden, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre said.

The ship "reports all crew are safe and proceeding to next port of call," the UKMTO said. "Investigations are ongoing."

The Joint Maritime Information Centre, a multinational body overseen by the US Navy, on Saturday identified the vessel targeted as the Liberian-flagged container ship Groton. The Groton came under attack August 3 as well in a similar Houthi assault off Aden that included two missiles fired at the vessel, with one causing minor damage.

5 killed by Russian strike in Donetsk region

AP ■ MOSCOW

Five people were killed by Russian shelling in the town of Chasiv Yar on Saturday as Moscow's troops continue their push on Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region.

The attack struck a high-rise building and a private home, said regional governor Vadym Filashkin, who said the victims were men aged between 24 and 38. He urged the last remaining residents to leave the frontline town, which had a pre-war population of 12,000.

"Normal life has been impossible in Chasiv Yar for more than two years," Filashkin wrote on social media. "Do not become a Russian target — evacuate."

Meanwhile, Russia's Ministry of Defence said that it had captured the town of Pivnichne, also in Ukraine's Donetsk region. The Associated Press could not independently verify the claim.

Russian forces have been driving deeper into the partly occupied eastern region, the total capture of which is one of the Kremlin's primary ambitions. Russia's army is closing in on Pokrovsk, a critical logistics hub for the Ukrainian defence in the area.

At the same time, Ukraine has sent its forces into Russia's Kursk region in recent weeks in the largest incursion into Russian soil since World War II. The move is partly an effort to force Russia to draw troops away from the Donetsk front. Elsewhere, the number of injured following a Russian attack on the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on Friday continued to rise.

Six people were killed, including a 14-year-old girl, when glide bombs struck five locations across the city, said regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. Writing on social media Saturday, he said that the number of injured had risen from 47 to 96.

Syniehubov also confirmed that the 12-story apartment block that was hit by one bomb strike, setting the building ablaze and trapping at least one person on an upper floor, would be partly demolished.

The number of injured also continued to rise in the Russian border region of Belgorod, where five people were killed Friday by Ukrainian shelling, said Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov. He said Sunday that 46 people had been injured, of whom 37 were in the hospital, including seven children.

Helicopter with 22 onboard missing

Moscow (AP): Rescuers are searching for a helicopter that went missing in Russia's far east on Saturday with 22 people on board. The Mi-8 helicopter took off close to the Vachkazhets volcano in the Kamchatka region, but did not arrive at its destination as scheduled, Russia's Federal Air Transport Agency said in a statement. It said it believed that 19 passengers and three crew members were on board.

The Mi-8 is a two-engine helicopter designed in the 1960s. It is widely used in Russia, where crashes have been frequent, as well as in neighbouring countries and many other nations.

PM Modi flags off three new Vande Bharat trains, says nation advancing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI The railways have made big strides in addressing long-standing issues and will not stop till it becomes a guarantee of comfortable travel for all sections of society, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday. Flagging off three new Vande Bharat Express trains via video-conferencing, the Prime Minister said the nation was inching towards the goal of Viksit Bharat with modernisation and expansion of Vande Bharat trains. The three trains flagged off by the Prime Minister connect Meerut with Lucknow, Madurai with

Bengaluru, and Chennai with Nagercoil. "Through its hard work over the years, the railways have made big strides in addressing long-standing issues and offered new hopes and solutions. We will not stop until the Indian Railways becomes a guarantee of comfortable travel for everyone," Modi said. The Prime Minister said modern rail infrastructure was a strong pillar of the vision of Viksit Bharat. He said more than Rs 2.5 lakh crore was allocated to the railways in this year's Budget and the Government was connecting Indian Railways with high-tech services to transform its old image.



He underlined that the rapid development of southern States was imperative to accomplish the goal of Viksit Bharat. "Southern India is the land of immense talent, resources and opportunities," the Prime Minister said adding that the development of Tamil Nadu,

along with the entire southern India, was the Government's priority. He said the development journey of the railways was an example of the Government's commitment. Modi said more than Rs 6,000 crore was allocated for Tamil Nadu's rail Budget this year, seven times more than in 2014. Similarly, a Budget of more than Rs 7,000 crore was allocated for Karnataka in this year's Budget, which was nine times higher than in 2014. Eight Vande Bharat trains are connecting different parts of Karnataka, he added. The Prime Minister drew parallels from Budgets of the past and said the multiple-fold

increase in allocations further strengthened rail traffic in southern States, including Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. He said railway tracks were being improved, electrification of tracks taking place, and stations modernised. The Meerut City-Lucknow Vande Bharat Express will help passengers save around an hour compared to the current fastest train between the two cities. The Chennai Egmore-Nagercoil Vande Bharat Express and the Madurai-Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express will cut down travel time by more than two hours and around one-and-a-half hours, respectively. The Prime Minister said while the Regional Rapid Transit

System (RRTS) has helped connect Meerut with New Delhi, the distance to Lucknow has also been reduced with the introduction of the Vande Bharat Express. "The National Capital Region (NCR) is becoming an example of how PM Gatsahkti's vision will change the country's infrastructure with modern trains, network of expressways, and expansion of air services," Modi said. Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, her Tamil Nadu counterpart RN Ravi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, among others, were virtually present on the occasion.

Government to set up 10 new AYUSH institutes in 5 years

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI The Government on Saturday said 10 new AYUSH institutes will be set up over the next five years to expand traditional medical systems with an aim to improve healthcare access in underserved areas, enhance the doctor-patient ratio, and ensure that more citizens benefit from it in the country. Announcing the Government's plan, Union Minister of Ayush Prataprajadhadh, noted that "Ayurveda and our traditional medical system suffered significant damage during the colonial period and foreign inroads but today, there has been a global shift in perception towards Yoga and Ayurveda, and their acceptance



is rapidly increasing. He was at the All-India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), at Sarita Vihar here where he reviewed the facilities and the treatments being provided to the patients. Professor Tanuja Nesari, AIIA Director, said Minister Jadhav has played a significant role in promoting Ayurveda, and

"his guidance and support will continue to help in taking Ayurveda to the masses and establishing it on the global stage." According to AIIA officials, President Droupadi Murmu is expected to visit the institute, highlighting the sector's rising prominence and the Prime Minister's ambitious initiative to make Ayurveda accessible to every household. Minister Jadhav also announced an international conference, titled 'AAROHA-2024', scheduled to be held from October 17-19. According to a report by Ayurveda tech startup NirogStreet, India's Ayurveda product market is expected to grow to USD 16.27 billion by fiscal 2028, up from the current USD 7 billion.

IMA urges NTF for Central law to protect doctors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has once again written to the Supreme Court-appointed National Task Force (NTF), for a central law, seeking protection of healthcare professionals and declaring hospitals as 'Safe Zones' across the States. The NTF is tasked with creating protocols to ensure the safety and security of medical personnel. The IMA's request comes in response to the suggestions sought by the NTF, which is tasked with creating protocols to ensure the safety and security of medical personnel. The NTF has been set up following a series of protests by doctors, triggered by the tragic rape and murder of a female trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. In their letter to the NTF, the IMA called for a uniform central law arguing that it acts as a deterrent and ensures

consistent handling of violence across all states. They provided several documents to support their case, including a survey of 3,885 doctors, a draft legislation - "The Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of violence and damage to property) Bill, 2019", the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Act September 2020 among others as annexures, and related legislative amendments. "The only preventive strategy that could be applied across the board and across all the States is deterrent central law in statute. Absence of such law has resulted in half-hearted actions by the police and less than optimum investigations and prosecution of the incident," it said. The IMA which is the largest body of the medical professionals from across the country contended that the lack of a national law leads to inconsistent enforcement and inadequate protection. The IMA has proposed that hospitals be designated as safe zones, with enhanced security measures. This designation, they argue, should be incorporated into the proposed central law, ensuring hospitals receive necessary security while maintaining a patient-friendly and culturally sensitive approach.



UNICEF issues urgent alert on Mpox risk for children

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI As the World Health Organization (WHO) has called for increased vigilance against Monkeypox (Mpox), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has issued an urgent alert regarding the heightened risk for children, especially those who are malnourished or suffering from other illnesses. The new variant of Mpox (clade Ib) is particularly concerning due to its potential for broader transmission, including among young children, especially in Africa. The Unicef said that in the fight against the outbreak, prioritising the needs of children is not only necessary but urgent. The children's body warned that children can be exposed to Mpox through close contact with symptomatic individuals, including parents or caregivers. The virus spreads via contact with skin lesions, infectious bodily fluids, contaminated materials, respiratory droplets, and infected animals. Pregnant women can also pass the virus to their unborn babies. Mpox symptoms are similar to but less severe than smallpox and include skin rash, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes. The virus poses a significant threat in areas with widespread malnutrition, crowded living con-

ditions, other infectious diseases, and limited healthcare access. In India, while there have been no reported cases of Mpox so far this year, authorities are taking precautionary measures with the AIMS, RML and LNJP already allocating designated sites for the treatment of the patients in case if any. A 2022 study by Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Delhi, noted the potential for Mpox resurgence in India due to the discontinuation of the smallpox vaccine, which had historically provided 85% protection. The study was published in the Indian Journal of Medical Microbiology. In 2022, at least 14 people with the disease were reported in the country out of which 9 were reported in the National Capital. Dr Chand Wattal, corresponding author and chairperson, ICMI, had said that waning immunity in humans due to the discontinuation of the smallpox vaccine established the scope for the resurgence of Monkeypox, demonstrated by the re-emergence of the outbreak after a break of 30-40 years. India declared itself smallpox-free in 1979 while it was officially eradicated all over the world around 1979-80. The study highlighted concerns about waning immunity and the potential for Mpox to re-emerge after a long absence.

STORES E-PROCUREMENT Tender Notice No.: S/17/2024-25, Dtd: 29-08-2024. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following works. SI.No.:1; Tender No.: 30/24/1162/OT/138/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 16-09-2024. Brief Description: Glass unit for fixed window for AC two tier to RCF Drg no. LW 54104, ALT-g Mat. Spec.: As per Drawing. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. 1) Qty- 1200 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 600 Nos for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty- 700 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 4) Qty- 100 Nos for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), 5) Qty- Kathihar/GSD, NFR (Bihar). P.L.No-33564103. SI.No.:2; Tender No.: 30/24/5040A/OT/139/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 16-09-2024. Brief Description: Nickel-Cadmium Batteries Set for WDP4 HHP Locomotives to DLW Pt. No. 17051472 & DRG No. 10609375 and conforming to RDSO Specn No. MP.0.51.01.02(Rev-02) June 2009 (Each set consist 10 Nos=50 Nos). [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. Qty-50 Nos for SSE/D/New Guwahati, NFR (Assam). P.L.No- 336800100010. SI.No.:3; Tender No.: 37/24/0708A/OT/140/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 16-09-2024. Brief Description: "Bogie Centre Pivot Bottom for Casnub Bogie." RDSO Drawing No: WD-85079-S/2, Item-1, Alt-27. Material Spec: As Per Drawing. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. 1) Qty- 478 Nos for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), 2) Qty- 428 Nos for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty-275 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 4) Qty- 57 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-38106334. SI.No.:4; Tender No.: 30/24/1181/OT/141/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 18-09-2024. Brief Description: HIGH TENSILE AAR 'H' TYPE TIGHTLOCK CBC FOR BG LHB PASSENGER COACHES. MAT. SPEC.: RDSO/2011/CG-03 (Rev-03). [Warranty Period: 84 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. 1) Qty-150 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 150 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-33681200. SI.No.:5; Tender No.: 61/24/5259/OT/142/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 18-09-2024. Brief Description: Manufacturing & supply of High Viscous Nylon-66 Insulating Liner (HVN Liner) to RDSO Drg. No. T-3707 & 3708 for use with PSC Sleeper to Drg. No. RT-2496 suitable to 60kg UIC/60EI/52 Kg Rail. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. Qty- 600000 Set for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-60065059. SI.No.:6; Tender No.: 61/24/5287/OT/143/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 20-09-2024. Brief Description: (1) in 8.5 WCMSC, 1-in-8 1/2, BG 60 Kg Weldable CMS Crossing on PSC sleepers in accordance with RDSOs standard drawing. T-6441 including supply of 6mm thick grooved rubber sole plates (drawing no.RDSO/T-6198 to RDSO/T-6203, RDSO/T-6800, 6800/1, 6801, 6801/1/1), excluding standard fish plates, fish bolts and nuts, E.R. Clips, insulating liner etc. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: Yes, Stages:1]. Qty-145 Set for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-60060281. SI.No.:7; Tender No.: 61/24/5164/OT/144/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 23-09-2024. Brief Description: Elastic Rail Clip MK.III with flat toe 60 kg UIC/52 kg rail sections to Drg. No. RDSO T-3701 with specification conforming to IRS-T-31-2021 with latest amendment, if any, with alt no. 7 with latest alterations, if any. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: CONSG, Stage Insp.: NA, Stages: 0]. Qty-778987 Nos for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-80110016. SI.No.:8; Tender No.: 61/24/5293/OT/145/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 23-09-2024. Brief Description: Manufacture and Supply of Improved Switch Expansion Joint, 52 Kg with RDSO Drg. No. T-6930 with all fittings complete but excluding ERC, GRSP, Fish Plates, Fish Bolts and Nuts and GFN/Metal Liners having IRS Specification T-10-2000 with the latest alteration up to date of opening of tender. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: Yes, Stages:1]. Qty-145 Set for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam). P.L.No- 60090169. SI.No.:9; Tender No.: 30/24/1471/OT/146/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 23-09-2024. Brief Description: Glass unit for emergency window to RCF's drg. No. LW-54138, alt no. 'd' Mat. Spec.: As Per Drawing. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. 1) Qty- 1040 Nos for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 1510 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty-34 Nos for Kathihar/GSD, NFR (Bihar), 4) Qty- 494 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 5) Qty- 89 Nos for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal). P.L.No- 33566756. SI.No.:10; Tender No.: 30/24/0662/OT/147/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 23-09-2024. Brief Description: BRAKE CYLINDER WITH HAND BRAKE ARRANGEMENT FOR LHB COACHES. PART NO. M/S KNORR BREMSE PART NO.II 82516/1204 LP OR BRAKE CYLINDER WITH HAND BRAKE ATTACHMENT (PBACM 254-130) FOR LHB COACHES. PART NO. M/S FAIVELEY PART NO 4F-125187 or Similar. Mat. Spec.-RDSO/2011/CG-04 Rev-03. [Warranty Period: 36 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. 1) Qty - 10 Nos for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 38 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty- Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam). P.L.No-33510192. SI.No.:11; Tender No.: ML245110/OT/148/24-25; Closing/Opening Date: 03-10-2024. Brief Description: Supply, erection, installation, testing and commissioning of 3 ton pillar mounted JIB Crane with Electric Hoist as per MLDT Spec No DLS/MLDT/EL/JIB Crane/004/2024. Qty-2 Nos. SI.No.:12; Tender No.: 37/24/0643/OT/149/2024-25; Closing/Opening Date: 11-09-2024. Brief Description: "Boister Spring Outer for Casnub 22HS Bogie." Material Spec: Big Spec.IS: 3195 Gr-60 S17 & RDSO Spec No:WD-01-HLS-94(Rev04) RDSO Drawing No WD- 92058-S-5, item -1, alt-13. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0]. i) Qty- 2719 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), ii) Qty- 1498 Nos for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), iii)Qty-837 Nos for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), iv) Qty-82 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR(Assam). P.L.No-38040177. Note :- For full details of Tender Notice and Tender Documents, Tenderer may log on to the website (www.ireps.gov.in) prospective bidder who intend to participate in above tenders are required to log in themselves with the above website and submit their offer electronically, if they are already registered with IREPS. In case they are not registered with IREPS, they are advised to obtain class-III Digital Signature Certificate from the certifying agencies under Govt. of India IT Act 2000 and participate in the above tenders. PCMM, Maligaon

PUBLIC NOTICE It is informed to the public at large that Mr.Lokesh Kumar Sharma and Mrs.Anugama Sharma are absolute 'Title holders' in possession of DDA Built up Flat no.472, Third Floor, Sector-03, Pocket-16, Dwarka, New Delhi. That the Original Allotment cum demand letter dated 12.03.1985 and Handing over Possession letter dated 25.08.2000 issued by DDA in favour of Sh.Arvadh Bihari Chandra have been lost/misplaced and are untraceable. The Fry's Lock report to this effect has already been lodged dated 30.08.2024 with LR No.20/1800/2024. Any Person(s)/company(ies)/authority(ies)/society(ies)/organisation(s)/financial institution(s)/ bank(s) claiming any rights/interests having any objection or claim in possession of the original document may write down to the above name and address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, post received. Any claim(s) or objection(s) if raised or received shall be treated as null and void. Mr. Lokesh Kumar Sharma, Block-11, Sector-16, Dwarka, New Delhi-110029. Mr. Rajesh Kumar Singh, Block-11, Sector-16, Dwarka, New Delhi-110029. Mr. Vishal Mehan, Advocate, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092. Mobile No. 9811215181

FORM NO.3 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DT) 1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional place allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also) Case No.: OA/857/2024 Exh.No.23685 [Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993] ICICI BANK LIMITED VS CHAUDHARY CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORT COMPANY To, (1) CHAUDHARY CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORT COMPANY, SHOP NO. 1, BALLABGARH, SUBHASH COLONY, SIKRI, INDUSTRIAL AREA, FARIDABAD- 121004, HARYANA. THROUGH ITS PROPRIETOR, BUNTY CHAUDHARY. (2) BUNTY CHAUDHARY SON OF JAGVEER CHAUDHARY SOLE PROPRIETOR OF CHAUDHARY CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORT COMPANY, R/O HOUSE NO. 121, GALI NO. 3, SUBHASH COLONY, BALLABGARH, FARIDABAD- 121004 HARYANA. (3) CHANCHAL WIFE OF BUNTY CHAUDHARY, R/O HOUSE NO. 121, GALI NO. 3, SUBHASH COLONY, BALLABGARH, FARIDABAD- 121004 HARYANA. SUMMONS WHEREAS, OA/857/2024 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 14/08/2024. WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/ notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 2848147/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed). In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:- (i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief/proceeds should not be granted; (ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application; (iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties; (iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business, any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal; (v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets. You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 08/11/2024 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence. Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 17/08/2024. Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue summons.

PUBLIC NOTICE My client Smt. Sharda W/o Sh. Balram Singh is the owner of a residential house, northern side, with roof rights, total area measuring 500 sq. yds. i.e. 418.05 sq. mtrs. out of Kharsa no. 575, situated in the village of Roza Jalapur, Pargana and Tehsil District Ghazibad, District Ghazibad, through registered GFI Deed dated 02.12.2022 executed by Smt. Rameshwari W/o Late Sh. Bhagat Singh in favour of Smt. Sharda W/o Sh. Balram Singh, No. 41807 at SRO-11022. The above-mentioned property is going to be mortgaged with Fed Bank Financial Services Limited. If any person / bank / financial institution having any claim / right / lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim / lien / objection shall be deemed to have been waived. VISHAL MEHAN, ADVOCATE E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092. Mobile No. 9811215181

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS CHANGE OF NAME My Name Tara Devi (DOB) 1/3/1963, W/o, Lallan Singh. Mother of Service No. 18013801p, have Upendra Singh wrongly written in my Sons's service documents, as per my Govt. documents my Name is Tara Singh. (dob) 1/1/1959. PD(716)C

PUBLIC NOTICE Re: Built-up Ground Floor without its roof (i.e. the said floor), built-on DLF's Freehold Property Bearing No. B-5/25, measuring area of plot 97.74 sq. mtrs. in Village Ghazipur, situated at Colony No. 3, Krishna Nagar, B-Block, Ilaqa Shauhdara, Delhi-110051; hereinafter referred to as 'said property'. Notice is hereby given to the general public including Banks, Financial Institutions, etc. that, as informed by our clients, Mrs. Kiran Thareja, is the sole and absolute owner of the said floor vide Sale Deed executed by Mr. Gurabakh Lal in her favour. The said Deed is registered as Document No. 2521, Book No. 1, Volume No. 7193, on pages 166-175 on 14.02.2013. (SRO-VIII). In this connection, our clients has further informed us that the following original documents namely (1) Sale Deed executed by Mr. Ashok Kumar in favour of Mrs. Kaushalya Devi bearing Document No. 14724, Book No. 1, Volume No. 2070 pages 31-36 dated 28/11/2005; (2) Surviving Member Certificate in favour of legal heirs of Mrs. Kaushalya Devi; and (3) Relinquishment Deed executed by the legal heirs of Mrs. Kaushalya Devi viz. Mrs. Sushila Rani, Ms. Sangeta Rani, Mrs. Seema, Ms. Neetu Gujrani, Mr. Rajesh Kumar in favour of Mr. Gurabakh Lal, and registered as Doc No. 8451 Book No. 1, Volume No. 4101, pages 69-74 on 15/07/2009; forming part of the chain documents and hereinafter called the 'said documents' have been lost, misplaced and not traceable. An FIR regarding loss of these said documents has been lodged with Delhi Police Crime Branch vide No. 2069719/2024 dated 22/08/2024. Now our clients intends to mortgage the said floor with IDFC FIRST Bank Limited, for availing loan facility. If the aforesaid original said documents or any of their are lost or have been found by any person, the same may be returned and delivered to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below. Further, if any person, body, institution is having any claim and/or objection in respect of the said floor, he/she/they may raise his/her/their objections, in writing, with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned below within 15 days of publication of this notice. Otherwise, after expiry of 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, no objection shall be acceptable and the said floor shall be mortgageable by our clients in favour of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited, and no objection shall be acceptable against such mortgage. General Public may also take note that any deal or transaction done by anybody on the basis of the said documents or any of them shall be illegal and not binding on our clients. The person doing so shall be liable to be prosecuted under the law. SHIVKANT ARORA, ADVOCATE FOR M/S INTELECTIVE LAW OFFICES A-74, LOWER GROUND FLOOR, DEFENCE COLONY, NEW DELHI-110024

PUBLIC NOTICE Notice is hereby given to the public at large, on behalf of our client, Mr. Abhishek Rana S/o- Mr. Ravindra Pal Singh Rana R/o H. No. A-34, Indrapuri, Loni Dehat, Ghazabad, U. P. 201102 (Mortgagor), that Mrs. Seema Rana was the owner/GFI holder of the Scheduled Property, and Mrs. Seema Rana Gifted the Scheduled Property to Mr. Abhishek Rana, vide GFI Deed dated 29.08.2024 Doc. No. 15713, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 6173, Pages 173-196 dated 29.08.2024 SRO-1, Loni, Ghazabad. Same property Mr. Abhishek Rana (Mortgagor) mortgaged the scheduled property with Fed Bank Financial Services Ltd. Kirti Nagar Branch, New Delhi. If any person raise any objection for mortgaging the scheduled property please raise your objection with documentary proof within 7 days of Publication below address:- Schedule of Property Plot No. 94 (Part) area measuring 50 sq. yds. out of area 200 sq. yds. Block-A, Out of Kharsa No. 396 Situated in Residential Colony, Indrapuri, A. B. C. D. Village Dharoti Khuri, Pargana & Tehsil Loni & Distt. Ghazabad hereinafter referred to as "said property". Sachin Maheshwari & Associates (SMA) Law Offices, Sachin Maheshwari Advocate New Delhi Ph. - 011-45653588, Mob. - 9911380378

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, (यांत्रिकी शाखा), भोपाल क्रमांक.115/वॉ.वि./24 भोपाल, दिनांक 30.08.2024 निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निम्न कार्य हेतु म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंचोक्त टेकेदारों से ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। विस्तृत विवरण Website https://www.mptenders.gov.in पर है।

क्र.	निविदा क्र.	कार्य का संक्षिप्त विवरण	अनुमानित लागत (रु. में)	निविदा क्रय करने का	
				दिनांक	समय
01	2024 UAD 366683-1	ASPHALTING WORK AT RETGHAT SQUARE TO LALGHATI SQUARE WARD NO. 7 VIP ROAD Z-02	3,56,35,749/-	30-SEP-2024	05:30 PM

नोट - संशोधन केवल वेबसाईट पर ही देखे जा सकेंगे, समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित नहीं होंगे। अधीक्षण यंत्री (सिविल) नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल

निक्र. 393/024/025

CAN FIN HOMES LTD. CIN - L85110KA1987PLC008693 Above Canara Bank Building First Floor, Plot No. C-3, Sector-1, Noida Pincode-201301 E-mail : noida@canfinhomes.com Ph. : 0120-2970164/65/67 Mob.: 7625079126

APPENDIX-IV-A (See proviso to rule 9 (1)) Notice for sale of immovable properties

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

NOTICE is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd., Noida Branch, will be sold by holding e-auction on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 21-09-2024, for recovery of Rs. 31,00,498/- (Rupees Thirty One Lakh Four Hundred Ninety Eight Only) due to Can Fin Homes Ltd. from Mr. Vinod Kumar and Mrs. Soniya (Borrowers) and Mr. Dalbir Singh (Guarantors), as on 31-08-2024, together with further interest and other charges thereon. The reserve price will be Rs. 8,10,000/- (Rupees Eight Lakh Ten Thousand Only) and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 81,000/- (Rupees Eighty One Thousand Only)

(Description of the immovable property)

Residential Flat No. FF-4, Back Side, First Floor (L.I.G. Type, Without Roof Right), Plot No. G-52 & 53, Kharsa No. 1458, Balaji Enclave Colony Hadbast Village- Raispur, Pargana-Dasnra, Tehsil and District Ghazibad

Known Encumbrance- Nil

The detailed terms and conditions of the sale are provided in the official website of Can Fin Homes Ltd., (https://www.canfinhomes.com/SearchAuction.aspx). Link for participating in e-auction: https://sarfaesi.auction/jgnet

Date : 31-08-2024 Place : Noida Authorised Officer Can Fin Homes Ltd.

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Serving Customers With A Smile



Defending champion Novak Djokovic is shocked at the US Open one night after Carlos Alcaraz's loss

AP ■ NEW YORK

Novak Djokovic did not go easy on himself when assessing the listless way he performed from the start of the U.S. Open, pointing to his sloppy serving as the main reason the defense of his 2023 title surprisingly ended in the third round.

"I have played some of the worst tennis I have ever played, honestly," Djokovic said, just after midnight as Friday turned to Saturday. "Serving - by far - the worst ever."

With 14 double-faults, raising his tournament total to 32, Djokovic bowed out with a 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 loss to 28th-seeded Alexei Popyrin of Australia, another shocking result at Flushing Meadows one night after Carlos Alcaraz exited.

"It was just an awful match for me," the No. 2-seeded Djokovic said. "I wasn't playing even close to my best. It's not good to be in that kind of state where you feel OK physically, and of course you're motivated because it's a Grand Slam, but you just are not able to find your game. That's it. The game is falling apart, and I guess you have to accept that tournaments like this happen." Not often for him, though.

After all, Djokovic was trying to become the first player in tennis history with 25 Grand Slam singles titles. Instead, after knee surgery in June, he finishes a year without claiming at least one major championship for the first time since 2017. Before that, it hadn't happened since 2010.

Also of note: 2024 now becomes the first season since 2002 in which none of the Big Three of men's tennis - Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer - earned a Slam trophy.

The third-round exit equals Djokovic's worst showing at Flushing Meadows; the only other occasions he was beaten



that early at the U.S. Open came in 2005 and 2006. The man who defeated Djokovic 18 years ago, International Tennis Hall of Fame member Lleyton Hewitt, is now Australia's Davis Cup captain and was sitting in Popyrin's guest box in Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Djokovic, who is 37, has reached the final in Ashe 10 times, leaving with the title in 2011, 2015, 2018 and 2023.

On Friday, though, he was sluggish and emotionally flat, perhaps residual fatigue after collecting his first Olympic gold medal for Serbia by beating Alcaraz in the final at the Paris Games earlier in August.

"Obviously, it had an effect," Djokovic said. "I spent a lot of energy winning

the gold, and I did arrive to New York just not feeling fresh mentally and physically. But because it's the U.S. Open, I gave it a shot and I tried my best. I mean, I didn't have any physical issues. I just felt out of gas. And you could see that with the way I played."

The No. 3-seeded Alcaraz entered the U.S. Open as the tournament favorite having won the French Open and Wimbledon, and acknowledged his energy was lower than he realized after getting eliminated by 74th-ranked Botić van de Zandschulp 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 on Thursday night.

Djokovic then replaced Alcaraz as the money-line pick to take the men's title, according to BetMGM Sportsbook, but

that status didn't last long at all.

For the 25-year-old Popyrin, this represents a real breakthrough: He had been 0-3 against Djokovic and 0-6 in third-round matches at majors.

But the strong-serving Popyrin is playing as well as ever, coming off the biggest title of his career less than three weeks ago at a hard-court tournament in Montreal, where he picked up five wins against opponents ranked in the top 20.

Everything was working against Djokovic.

Popyrin was terrific at the net, going 10 for 10 on serve-and-volley approaches and 25 for 36 overall on points when he pushed forward. Djokovic, in contrast, only won the point on 19 of his 40 trips to the net, in part because Popyrin kept flipping passing shots by him.

Popyrin took big cuts with his powerful forehand, accumulating 22 of his 50 total winners with that shot.

And he broke Djokovic five times, including for a lead of 3-2 in the fourth. That game felt titanic, lasting more than 10 minutes and including four break chances for Popyrin, who converted the last with an inside-out forehand to close a 22-stroke exchange, then rocked back on his heels, clenched both fists and let out a roar. He took Djokovic's next service game, too, to make it 5-2.

The first time Popyrin served for the match, he faltered, allowing Djokovic to break. The second time, Popyrin finished the deal, holding at love when Djokovic sent a forehand long.

Now Popyrin will try to reach his first Grand Slam quarterfinal by getting past No. 20 Frances Tiafoe, who advanced Friday with a 4-6, 7-5, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-3 win over No. 13 Ben Shelton in a matchup between two Americans.

"If he serves well, plays well, he can beat anybody," Djokovic said about Popyrin. "Look, Alcaraz is out."

Bhambri and Bopanna win with respective partners, Balaji exits

PTI ■ NEW YORK

India's Yuki Bhambri and Albano Olivetti advanced to the men's doubles third round of the US Open with a hard-fought win over 15th seeds Austin Krajicek and Jean-Julien Roger here.

The Indo-French pair defeated the USA-Dutch team 4-6 6-3 7-5 in the second round that lasted two hours and five minutes on Friday.

This is only the second time that Bhambri has reached the third round at a Grand Slam, having reached the same stage at the Australian Open back in 2014.

Second seeds Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden also moved to third round with a 6-2 6-4 win over Spain's

Roberto Carballes Baena and Federico Coria from Argentina.

Bopanna also won in the mixed doubles with Indonesian partner Aldila Sutjiadi. Seeded eighth, they won 7-6 (7) 7-6 (5) against Germany's Tim Puetz and Dutch player Demi Schuurs in the opening round.

However, another Indian in the fray, N Sriram Balaji and his Argentine partner Guido Andreozzi exited the US Open after losing to Michael Venus of New Zealand and Neal Skupski of Great Britain.

The Indo-Argentine pair lost 6-7 (4), 4-6 in the second-round match that featured just one break of serve in the second set.

In total, Venus and Skupski

received seven break points, and converted one, while Balaji and Andreozzi failed to capitalise on their lone opportunity for a service break.

"The first step is to consistently play at this level. It's starting from here. Now the next step is to get my ranking higher slowly," Balaji told PTI, reflecting upon his campaign.

"Game wise I'm feeling confident and moving in the right direction. I also have to keep working on certain aspects of my game and keep getting better. This year the main difference was a coach/trainer travelling with me almost every other week, thanks to the doubles program," he said.



Samit Dravid in India U19 squad to face Australia in multi format series

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Samit Dravid, son of former India captain and head coach Rahul Dravid, was on Saturday drafted into the India under-19 squad for the upcoming multi-format series against Australia.

The three-match one-day series will be held in Puducherry on September 21, 23 and 26, and India will be led by Uttar Pradesh's Mohammad Amaan.

The series will then roll to Chennai for two four-day matches beginning on September 30 and October 7.

The India squad for this leg of the tour will be captained by Soham Patwardhan of Madhya Pradesh.

Samit, a pace-bowling all-rounder, is currently playing for Mysore Warriors in the ongoing KSCA Maharaja T20 trophy in Bengaluru.

However, his outings so far have been underwhelming with the bat - 82 runs from seven innings with a highest of 33, and he is yet to bowl in the tournament.

But earlier this year, Samit had a productive time in the Cooch Behar Trophy, playing an

important role in Karnataka's maiden title triumph in the event.

The 18-year-old made 362 runs from eight matches and his 98 against Jammu and Kashmir stood out for its quality and fluency.

Samit also had a memorable tournament with the ball, where he claimed 16 scalps in eight matches, including two in the final against Mumbai.

INDIA U19 SQUAD FOR ONE-DAY SERIES: Rudra Patel, Sahil Parakh, Kartikeya KP, Mohd Amaan (Captain), Kiran Chormale, Abhigyan Kundu (wk), Harvansh Singh Pangalia (WK), Samit Dravid, Yudhajit Guha, Samarth N, Nikhil Kumar, Chetan Sharma, Hardik Raj, Rohit Rajawat, Mohd Enaan.

INDIA U19 SQUAD FOR FOUR-DAY SERIES: Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Nitya Pandya, Vihan Malhotra, Soham Patwardhan (Captain), Kartikeya KP, Samit Dravid, Abhigyan Kundu (WK), Harvansh Singh Pangalia (WK), Chetan Sharma, Samarth N, Aditya Rawat, Nikhil Kumar, Anmoljeet Singh, Aditya Singh, Mohd Enaan.

Man United signs Uruguay midfielder Ugarte from PSG for \$55M to take summer spending to \$240M

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United signed Uruguay defensive midfielder Manuel Ugarte from Paris Saint-Germain for an initial 50 million euros (\$55.7 million) on Friday, with the transfer announced only in the final hour of the summer transfer window.

Ugarte is United's fifth signing of the window - after striker Joshua Zirkzee, center backs Leny Yoro and Matthijs de Ligt, and full back Noussair Mazraoui - and takes the club's summer spending on new players to around \$240 million.

The 23-year-old Ugarte, who has signed a contract until 2029, has been a target of United throughout the summer and looks set to be the long-term replacement for Casemiro, who is 32.

"Signing Manuel was another of our primary targets for this summer. He is among the very

best ball-winning midfield players in the world," United sporting director Dan Ashworth said. United manager Erik ten Hag said Ugarte will bring "controlled aggression" to the team. "I will sacrifice and give everything for my teammates," Ugarte said. "Together we will fight to win trophies and reach the level where this club needs to be."

The deal for Ugarte includes the potential for 10 million euros (\$11 million) in bonuses, subject to performance and success.

Ugarte spent just one year at PSG after joining from Portuguese team Sporting. Earlier Friday, United sold Scotland midfielder Scott McTominay to Napoli for 30 million euros (\$33 million), a transfer which created space in the squad for Ugarte.

Mali youth international Sekou Kone also joined United from Guisars FC in his homeland and will initially play in the academy.

Shuttler Mandeep wins first match in Group B, enters SL3 singles quarterfinals

PTI ■ PARIS

Indian shuttler Mandeep Kaur entered the quarterfinals of the women's singles SL 3 category in the Paris Paralympics after defeating Australia's Vintot Celine Aurelie in the women's singles SL 3 event on Saturday.

Mandeep regrouped to win her last group B match 21-23 21-10 21-17 against her Australian rival. She had lost her opening match to Nigeria's Bolaji Mariam.

The Indian finished second in the three-player group B to book a quarterfinal spot. Mariam topped the group to enter the semifinals.

The toppers of group A and C directly advanced to the semifinals. The top two teams in group B as well as second-place finishers in group A and C compete in the quarterfinal for the two remaining semifinal spots.

SL3 class is for players with



severe lower limb disability. They compete on half-width court.

In Friday's late night matches, Suhas Yathiraj and Palak Kohli lost their opening mixed doubles SL3 contest 11-21 17-21 to top seeded Indonesian pair of Hikmat Ramdani and Leani Ratri Oktika.

In another group A SL3 mixed doubles contest involving Indians, Nitesh Kumar and Thulasimathi Murugesan lost 22-24 19-21 to the French team of Faustine Noel and Lucas Mazur.

The only win in the mixed doubles came through Nithya Sivan Sumathy and Sivarajan Solaimalai, who defeated Thailand's Natthapong Meechai and Chai Saeyang 21-7 21-17 in group B.

Later on Saturday, Nitesh Kumar, Krishna Nagar, Manoj Sarkar, Sukant Kadam, Sivarajan Solaimalai and Tarun will compete in different categories of men's singles.

In women's singles, Manisha Ramdass and Nithya Sivan Sumathy will present their challenge.

Pistol shooter Swaroop finishes 14th, fails to qualify for final at Paralympics

PTI ■ CHATEAURoux

Indian shooter Swaroop Unhalkar finished a dismal 14th in the men's 10m air rifle standing (SH1) qualification round to miss the eight-player final by quite a distance at the Paralympic Games here on Saturday.

The 38-year-old Unhalkar, who had missed a bronze medal by a whisker at the Tokyo Paralympics three years ago, was far from impressive in an 18-shooter field on Saturday, aggregating 613.4 points.

South Korea's Park Jinho topped the qualification with a score of 624.4, a clear 10.5 points ahead of Unhalkar.

Unhalkar never rose beyond the 13th rank, and at one point during the contest had slipped to 16th.

The Kolhapur marksman, who was diagnosed with polio at an early age that left him paralysed in both the legs, did manage a decent second series of 103.0 but again slipped back into mediocrity.

He had scores of 101.8, 103.0, 101.7, 101.8, 102.4, 102.7 to aggregate 613.4.

The SH1 category is for para shooters who can hold their gun without difficulty and shoot from a standing or sitting position (in a wheelchair or chair).

The disappointment comes just a day after women's 10m air rifle shooter Avani Lekhara came up with an extraordinary performance to become the first Indian woman to win two Paralympic gold medals with a record-breaking performance.

India had also won a silver medal through Manish Narwal in the men's 10m air pistol (SH1) final, and a bronze through 37-year-old late-bloomer Mona Agarwal, who finished third in the same event as Avani, on Friday.

Jadeja is a complete all-round fielder, Raina too was brilliant: Rhodes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

South African cricket legend Jonty Rhodes on Saturday called Ravindra Jadeja a "complete all-round" fielder in the world right now, and also spoke highly about former India player Suresh Raina's abilities on the ground.

The 55-year-old Rhodes, regarded as one of the greatest fielders of all time who became the first South African cricketer to take 100 ODI catches, played for the national team from 1992 till 2003.

Post retirement, Rhodes became associated with several IPL teams, including Mumbai Indians, Punjab Kings and most recently Lucknow Super Giants, as fielding coach.

"I am a big fan of Suresh Raina. I enjoyed his playing days but now he has retired. In the past in India, the cricketing infrastructure wasn't there to support the passion and love for cricket. Suresh Raina was someone who used to throw himself around the field," said



Rhodes, who was roped in as the brand ambassador of Hero Pro Corporate League cricket tournament on Saturday.

"Unlike Raina, I had a very fortunate upbringing. I played football, hockey and cricket on good grounds. So I was very fortunate.

"I think Jadeja is at the next level, he doesn't dive as much but he is so fast to

the ball. And his accuracy at throwing down the stumps is somewhat like Ricky Ponting. He fields on the boundary, he fields on the circle. He is a complete all-round fielder," added Rhodes. Rhodes also gave a meaningful insight on what it takes to become a good fielder.

"It has nothing to do with the hands; it's actually all about the legs because if you

use your legs and be there at the right time, you can get your hands in good position. You can have the best hands in the world and the most magnetic hands but if you don't have the legs you cannot get there.

"It's more about quick body positions. It's all about technique," he added.

Rhodes said that at 55 he still doesn't think twice about diving on the field.

"Flying is not the problem for me right now, the landing is the problem. When I am on the field I am not thinking about 'should I dive or should I not'. I think that's what made me successful on the field," he said.

"So, if you are thinking about (not) diving you can never stop the ball. My father, who was my coach, and at a school principal used to tell me that the saying 'practice makes perfect' is not correct but what matters is perfect practice. Practice like you play in the match," he added.

Former India pacer Chetan Sharma is the commissioner of the league.

Kimi Antonelli named as Lewis Hamilton's replacement at Formula 1's Mercedes

AP ■ MONZA (ITALY)

Teenager Kimi Antonelli has been named as Lewis Hamilton's replacement next year at Mercedes, a day after his Formula One debut ended in the 18-year-old Italian driver hitting the wall.

Antonelli took over for George Russell in the opening practice session for Sunday's Italian Grand Prix at Monza.

But his much-anticipated first appearance lasted fewer than two laps, and only 10 minutes, after he lost control

of his Mercedes at the Parabolica, sliding backward through the gravel and into the tire barrier.

Team principal Toto Wolff said Saturday the crash would have no impact on Antonelli's F1 chances, and confirmation of his elevation as a junior driver with the team was confirmed ahead of final practice at his home event.

"It is an amazing feeling to be announced as a Mercedes works driver alongside George for 2025," Antonelli said in Saturday's announcement. "Reaching F1

is a dream I've had since I was a small boy."

Antonelli has been with Mercedes since he joined its junior program when he was 12.

"I want to thank the team for the support they've given me in my career so far and the faith they've shown in me. I am still learning a lot, but I feel ready for the opportunity," said Antonelli, who only turned 18 last Sunday.

"I'm also really excited to become George's teammate. He came through the team's



junior program just like myself and is someone I have a huge amount of respect for."

After titles in Karting and Formula 4, Antonelli only made the step up to F2 this year, winning two races.

There were promising signs for the limited time he was on the track on Friday, with Wolff labelling it "astonishing." But Antonelli was keen to impress, perhaps too keen, and he crashed after seemingly taking too much speed into the final corner of his second lap.

The debutant had just set the

fastest middle sector of the session and was looking to reclaim the fastest time from Hamilton, who had just beaten Antonelli's first lap by 0.6 seconds.

It is Hamilton he is replacing, with the seven-time F1 champion departing for Ferrari at the end of the season.

"Our new lineup is perfect to open the next chapter in our story," Wolff said. "It is also a testament to the strength of our junior program and our belief in homegrown talent.

"Kimi has consistently shown

the talent and speed needed to compete at the very top of our sport," Wolff added. "We know it will be another big step up, but he has impressed us in his F1 testing this year and we will be supporting him every step of the way in the learning process."

Excitement had been growing at Monza over the prospect of a first Italian F1 driver in three years.

Italy has had to wait since 2006 for a win in F1 and much longer for the title, as the last Italian champion was Alberto Ascari in 1953.



ISLAND HOPPING IN THE MALDIVES



Traveling within the Maldives proves that the journey can be just as enchanting as the destination itself say

RUPALI & BAKSHISH DEAN

Just a quick 20-minute speedboat ride from the capital, Male, transforms us from weary travellers to relaxed coconut sippers in an instant. That's no small feat, especially when many islands require lengthy boat and seaplane journeys just to begin the island experience. But don't be misled despite its proximity to the capital, this island captures the enchanting 'island feel' and sets the perfect tone for arriving at this tropical paradise resort on its own private island. Four Seasons Kuda Huraa truly embodies the essence of Maldivian luxury. Since opening its doors in 1998, it has set the standard for other hoteliers hoping to offer a taste of paradise to their discerning guests. After undergoing several renovations, it's no surprise that this island boasts a remarkably high rate of returning visitors. Its positioning grants us uninterrupted views of the mesmerizing Indian Ocean, stretching as far as the eye can see. We are delighted by the choice of accommodations, whether overwater or on the beach. For our trip, we opt for a Sunset Overwater Villa with Pool, and it is simply magnificent. If it's your first time in the Maldives, we wholeheartedly recommend staying overwater—it's an experience you won't want to miss. The villa features a cloud-like bed, expansive bathroom, a magnificent bathtub, plus an infinity pool and the spacious terrace boasts an infinity pool and hammocks for relaxing while watching the fish below. Every amenity I could wish for is provided, and we especially appreciate the nightly replenishment of cooling Aloe Vera, which we slather on each evening to soothe my skin after a day in the sun. With so many amazing amenities available, it would be easy to spend your entire stay exploring the island's quarter-mile stretch. However, just a short 20-minute boat ride away, you'll find incredible world-class dive sites and renowned surf breaks waiting to be discovered.

LANDAA GIRAVARU

The Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru boasts a prime location in Baa Atoll, easily reached via one of the hotel's charming private seaplanes: the delightful yellow-and-black polka-dotted Flying Boxfish or the vibrant Flying Triggerfish. From our window, we are treated to a breath-taking aerial view, gazing down at the atolls from a lofty 5,000 feet. Below me lies the expansive 44-acre Four Seasons Resort on Baa Atoll, nestled within a serene 1.5-mile lagoon. Here, nature takes centre stage, with two stretches of pristine beaches calling me to explore their untouched beauty. As we step off the pier, we are instantly captivated by the ethereal blue waters and sweeping stretches of white sand. Towering 50-foot palm trees line a grand boulevard while mature gardens burst with the vibrant colours of banyan trees, lemongrass, frangipani, and orchids. The island feels completely untouched by time, offering plenty of space for leisurely strolls or even a solid 10,000 steps a day. If we ever need a break, we can easily hop on one of the electric bicycles available for everyone, or simply call for a buggy to whisk me away in comfort. The 102 thatched beach and water bungalows, more spacious than accommodations found elsewhere in the islands, blend seamlessly into the lush jungle, vibrant gardens, and soft sands. The bungalows, set in private gated enclosures, offer an intimate retreat.

This remote island is a sanctuary for conservation, led by the Marine Research Centre's vital efforts to protect marine life. As nature enthusiasts, we truly appreciate this commitment to preserving the Maldives' natural treasures. Upon arrival, guests are greeted by a lively lagoon bustling with marine life, including eagle rays, stingrays, reef sharks, clownfish, and parrotfish—just in the house reef! As part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, visitors can also experience vast pods of



dolphins, nests of sea turtles (some even lay their eggs on the island), and the spectacular Hanifaru Bay, where massive swarms of manta rays feed the plankton-rich monsoon season from May to November. For those eager to delve into local culture, nearby inhabited islands offer an inviting glimpse into the vibrant tapestry of Maldivian village life, providing an opportunity to immerse myself in the authentic rhythms of this idyllic archipelago. For those eager for adventure, the luxury live-aboard catamaran, The Explorer, is an excellent option for diving and exploring the waters surrounding both Four Seasons resorts. This stay is not only luxurious but also mindful of the environment, making it all the more memorable. Our last stop is Blu for lunch, and what an experience it was! The restaurant, beautifully designed, overlooks the main pool and the vast ocean beyond. The food is simply phenomenal—we can easily dine there for a week without getting bored. Twice a year, the renowned Italian chef Gaetano Trovato and his team enhance the culinary journey with their exquisite creations. Dinner at Arnolfo is in a league of its own. Honestly, it is the best steak we have ever had, even surpassing those from Argentina. We would gladly return to Landaa Giraavaru just to savour it once more! The Moroccan-themed Al Barakat is equally exceptional. This resort truly prioritizes wellness in many forms. While the yoga classes and spa services are fantastic, it is the AyurMa Ayurvedic centre that truly captivates me. The consultations are thorough and illuminating; we learn things about ourselves that we have never realized before. Another compelling reason to visit the Maldives—it's a chance for self-discovery! After soaking in the serene beauty of Baa Atoll, we look forward to stopping by Male City to further embrace the richness of Maldivian culture.

MALE CITY BY FOOT

While Kuda Huraa feels cosy and inviting, Landaa Giraavaru strikes us as grand and expansive, like a swinging pendulum. Since both are part of the Four Seasons family and many guests spend time at each resort, it's easy to draw comparisons, but we won't go down that road. Each place is truly a gem in its own right, and I can honestly say we cherished our time at both. Taking a seaplane back to Male offers a stunning view of the azure waters and lush green islands below. Each resort we pass has its own unique charm, showcasing the diverse beauty of this enchanting paradise. Once in Male, we are guided by a knowledgeable local expert as we explore the city's historic landmarks. We start at the harbour and move past the oldest school, a proud symbol of the Maldives' impressive 98% literacy rate. At the Royal Garden Café, nestled in a nobleman's 'Ganduvaru', we enjoy a lovely cup of tea surrounded by beautifully carved wooden interiors. The November 3rd Memorial pays tribute to the heroes of 1988, while Sultan Park and the National Museum preserve the rich history of the sultanate era. As we continue our journey, the Grand Friday Mosque and the Islamic Centre impress with their striking architecture, and Independence Square reveals yet another chapter of Male's story. The local markets are alive with colour and energy, showcasing an array of tropical delights. In this enchanting place, time seems to stand still, inviting us to discover more at every corner. It is a journey we won't soon forget!

— Awarded the 'Best food writer in the country' by the Indian culinary forum, WACS and the ministry of Tourism, Rupali Dean writes on food and travel. Bakshish Dean, a 'distinguished chef and writer' with over 25 years of experience, excels in food styling and photography, while passionately exploring wildlife, forgotten recipes, and advanced culinary techniques

KINWANI HOUSE: YOUR ABODE THAT SHINES AMIDST HIMALAYAN FOOTHILLS

A peaceful retreat with old world charm and stunning views beckons travelers for a luxe, exclusive vacation, writes SHARMILA CHAND

Nestled in the foothills of The Himalayas, Kinwani House is a charming retreat that offers guests a rare opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich heritage of Tehri Garhwal. One remarkable aspect of Kinwani House is its geographical significance, with its longitude nearly aligning with 79 degrees east, passing through all twelve Shiva temples from Kedarnath to Kanyakumari, enhancing its spiritual aura, making it a unique destination.

WHERE CULTURAL HERITAGE MEETS NATURAL SPLENDOR

About 40 minutes uphill drive from Rishikesh, took us to the stunning home of the Royal family, 'Kinwani House'. The estate, built in 1954, now stands as an architectural gem, a testament to passionate restoration, regal grandeur and a beacon of warm luxe hospitality. It offers a unique blend of modern comfort, natural beauty, and cultural richness, making it a perfect choice for discerning travellers. From the moment of arrival, the warmth of Marisha Chheda, Resort Manager and her team sets the tone for a truly memorable stay. That exactly is the sentiment as expressed by Aditya Paul Lakhapal, Chairman, JPL Group, when he tells



me, "Our goal is to seamlessly blend the regal charm of the past with modern luxury, offering our guests a stay that is as memorable as it is meaningful. We invite you to explore the spiritual treasures of Rishikesh and experience the tranquil beauty of Kinwani House—a place where history and luxury meet in harmony." I stepped into my Princess Suite with smiling Aryan escorting me, and was captivated by the aesthetics infused with traditional and contemporary touches, featuring signature Aalia Collection amenities. Spread over two floors,

the tastefully re-done House comprises six large suites, each with their own ensuite baths, drawing rooms and private decks. Each suite is a harmonious blend of old world charm and contemporary elegance, offering a unique blend of art deco design and modern luxury, providing guests with an enriching and tranquil experience. The house also boasts lush gardens, sweeping views of the holy river Ganges, breathtaking panoramic vistas of the majestic Himalayan foothills, creating a captivating backdrop for moments of serenity and reflection.

I loved my High Tea at the beautiful conservatory with a bar and sitting area for an indoor evening under the stars or a special evening of cocktails by candlelight. Every detail, from the room amenities to the dining options, is designed to ensure guests feel truly at home.

DINING: CELEBRATION OF LOCAL FLAVOURS!

I was happy to see the menu that blends local regional dishes and world cuisine. Be it a hearty breakfast featuring both Indian and international favourites, or meals,



the food caters to every palate. Here you celebrate both global flavours and the rich tapestry of Pahari cuisine. No wonder, the star of my meal was 'Pahari Thali' with local ingredients and specialties of the region. Chef Arvind Negi, Aalia Collection pointed out, "Our culinary offerings blend local flavors with global influences, ensuring a delightful gastronomic journey. From fragrant biryanis and robust curries, to succulent kebabs and the authentic Pahadi thali, our menu across celebrates the diverse culinary heritage of India. For our discerning global travelers, we present a thoughtfully curated selection of international dishes. Whether one wishes to experience Oriental, Continental, Italian, or Thai flavours, we love to create exquisite dishes. Our sweet offerings are the perfect finale to your dining experience enhanced by homemade fresh ice creams."

ROOTED IN WELLNESS Start the day with a serene Sunrise Yoga session, followed by an indulgent spa treatment featuring varied therapies. What better way to unwind, than the temperature-controlled outdoor pool, a perfect de-stress mantra.

IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES For those seeking varied activities to engage themselves, the team crafts special experiences, including both cultural and adventure immersions. A visit to the iconic Parmarth Niketan Ashram to evening arti at Triveni Ghat on the banks of the Ganga in Rishikesh is a must for those spiritually inclined. For trek lovers there are several trails, the most beautiful being hiking up to the ancient Kunjapuri Devi Temple. Weather permitting, river rafting and bungee jumping are adventure sports one could partake

in for those seeking thrills. Hike through pristine mountain trails, soak in the beauty of nature, or indulge in yoga and mindful meditation amidst the serenity of the Himalayas. The choice is all yours!

TO CONCLUDE

If you looking for a tranquil getaway enveloped in natural splendor, The Kinwani House is the perfect answer. Here is a peaceful retreat away from the touristic crowd with experiences that are both enriching and indulgent. Whether it's enjoying a curated menu under the stars, relaxing in the temperature controlled pool with breathtaking views of the Himalayas, or embarking on a bespoke adventure with Kinwani Concierge, every aspect of Kinwani House is designed to leave a lasting impression.

"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion"
— Dalai Lama



MOSCOW FILM FESTIVAL KICKS OFF WITH FOCUS ON INDIAN CINEMA

Laapata ladies and *Kalki* resonate with Russian audience, opening up huge possibilities for Indian cinema in Russia, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**



The Moscow International Films Week, an event that has become a significant cultural bridge between Russia and the world opened up in Moscow with much fanfare at Khudozhestvenny Cinema and with people from film fraternity from around the world in attendance at the gala event. On the first day of the Film Week, screenings of both foreign and domestic films took place, including the nationwide premieres of the Indian sports drama *Field* and the philosophical-mystical drama *Alzheimer* from Iran. This year it is an Indian-themed week with focus on Indian cinema and celebrating Indian art of storytelling on celluloid. The film festival is hosting films from more than 40-countries but the flavour of the festival is completely Indian. The second day was completely dedicated to Indian cinema, with Russian artists performing on Indian songs and Indian cuisine being served at the venue with

Bollywood songs playing in the background. The Indian segment of the festival is dedicated to celebrating the richness and diversity of Indian cinema, offering Russian audiences a taste of India's cinematic brilliance through a curated selection of films. Among the highlights are two remarkable Indian films, *Laapata Ladies* and *Kalki*, which have captivated the Russian audience with their unique storytelling and cultural nuances. Indian cinema has long been admired in Russia, with classics from Bollywood making their mark in the past. Ra Kapoor was a household name in Russia and 'mera joota hai Japani, an all-time hit. The Indian-themed week at the Moscow International Films Week is a testament to the enduring connection between the two cultures. This year's selection is not just about showcasing films; it's about highlighting the shared human experiences and emotions that transcend borders. As one Russian filmmaker quipped, "Indian and Russian films are made with heart, the most striking similarity between Indian and Russian films is that the songs are woven into the storyline." This is despite the fact that much is lost in translation and language barrier remains a significant impediment. But that is about to change as Swapna Dutt, the co-producer of *Kalki*, told the Pioneer that they would be releasing the film dubbed in Russian. "Indian films were once very popular in Russia, we want to open that bracket again. I am sure Indian films have a huge market here," said Swapna Dutt.

THE INDIAN SEGMENT OF THE FESTIVAL IS DEDICATED TO CELEBRATING THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF INDIAN CINEMA, OFFERING RUSSIAN AUDIENCES A TASTE OF INDIA'S CINEMATIC BRILLIANCE THROUGH A CURATED SELECTION OF FILMS. AMONG THE HIGHLIGHTS ARE TWO REMARKABLE INDIAN FILMS, "LAAPATA LADIES" AND "KALKI," WHICH HAVE CAPTIVATED THE RUSSIAN AUDIENCE WITH THEIR UNIQUE STORYTELLING AND CULTURAL NUANCES

Laapata Ladies, a film that delves into the complexities of womanhood in contemporary India, has struck a chord with Russian viewers. The film's narrative, which intertwines humor with social commentary, offers a glimpse into the challenges and aspirations of Indian women. The Russian audience, known for its appreciation of nuanced storytelling, has responded positively to the film's portrayal of universal themes such as identity, freedom, and societal expectations.

Kalki, another standout film screened on the second day, explores themes of mythology and modernity, blending them in a way that is both thought-provoking and visually stunning. The film's exploration of Indian mythology, set against the backdrop of modern societal issues, has intrigued Russian viewers. The film's ability to weave together the old and the new, the mythical and the real, resonates deeply with a culture that values its own rich historical and cultural heritage. The success of *Laapata Ladies* and *Kalki* at the Moscow International Films Week highlights the growing appeal of Indian cinema in Russia. These films, while rooted in Indian culture, address universal themes that resonate with audiences across the world. The Russian viewers have found a connection with the characters and their stories, appreciating the films for their depth, creativity, and the way they tackle complex social issues.

The Indian-themed week has also opened doors for cultural exchange, with discussions and workshops that allow Russian audiences to engage more deeply with Indian cinema. This exchange of ideas and cultural narratives fosters a deeper understanding between the two nations, reinforcing the importance of art in bridging cultural gaps.

As Indian films continue to gain popularity in Russia, the Indian-themed week at the Moscow International Films Week is likely to become a regular feature, showcasing the best of Indian cinema to Russian audiences. The success of *Laapata Ladies* and *Kalki* is not just a win for the filmmakers but also a testament to the universal appeal of Indian stories that, while deeply rooted in their own cultures, speak to the shared human experience. The Moscow International Films Week's Indian-themed week is more than just a showcase of films; it's a celebration of the cultural connections between India and Russia. The warm reception of films like *Laapata Ladies* and *Kalki* by the Russian audience is a reflection of the power of cinema to transcend borders and bring people together through the shared language of storytelling.



I DON'T SMOKE, DON'T DRINK MUCH, AND GO TO THE GYM FIVE TIMES A WEEK. I LIVE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND FEEL GREAT. I CAN RUN A MARATHON, YOU KNOW
—SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR



From leading corporate giants to shaping culinary excellence, PAWAN SONI'S journey is a celebration of passion and innovation in the food industry, says SAKSHI PRIYA

FROM CORPORATE SUCCESS TO CULINARY STARDOM A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF FOOD BLOGGING AND AWARDS

In the culinary world, where flavours tell stories and meals become cherished memories, Pawan Soni has forged an extraordinary path. A former Vice President at global giants like HSBC and GE Capital, Soni made a bold yet passionate shift from the corporate boardroom to the vibrant food scene. Driven by his love for discovering hidden gastronomic gems, he founded Indian Food Freak, a blog that has since grown into one of India's most influential food and travel platforms. His journey took a remarkable turn in 2014 when he launched The Big F Awards, a celebration of culinary excellence that has now become one of Delhi NCR's most prestigious events. Now entering its 11th year, The Big F Awards have distinguished themselves with an unwavering

commitment to transparency and integrity. Built on the principle of not imposing any financial burden on nominees, these awards have earned a reputation as a fair and respected platform for recognising excellence in the food industry. Over the past decade, they have become synonymous with culinary credibility, highlighting the region's finest dining establishments and championing new talents, including home chefs and bakers who bring fresh flavours and creativity to the table.

This year, The Big F Awards embark on an exciting new chapter by expanding their reach to encompass the entire Delhi-NCR region, reinforcing their vision of inclusivity and growth. This grand event will showcase a diverse array of culinary talent, with new categories that reflect the latest trends and celebrate the art of both dining out and home cooking. Attendees can look forward to an immersive experience where innovation, artistry, and passion are celebrated in a truly memorable way. At the heart of this celebration is a distinguished jury, featuring some of India's most renowned culinary experts, such as Chef Kunal Kapur, Chef Nita Mehta, Rocky Singh, and many others. These esteemed judges will rigorously evaluate each nominee, visiting the restaurants and sampling the dishes before casting their votes. This commitment to fairness ensures that the awards remain a beacon of trust and excellence in the food industry.

For Pawan Soni, The Big F Awards are more than just an event, they are a community and a platform for supporting genuine connections and inspiring culinary creativity. As he prepares for the upcoming awards in September, Soni envisions an evening that brings together the best of Delhi NCR's food scene, offering an opportunity to celebrate, connect and elevate the standards of culinary excellence. With a legacy of integrity and innovation, The Big F Awards continue to shine as a cornerstone of the region's vibrant food culture.

Founded in 2014, The Big F Awards have become a symbol of credibility and fairness, consistently upholding the highest standards in the industry. This year's edition promises to build on this legacy, with new surprises, new talents, and new stories to be told. Join Pawan Soni and his esteemed panel in this grand celebration of culinary brilliance, where the finest in food artistry come together to create an unforgettable experience.

A CONVERSATION WITH PAWAN SONI

Pawan Soni shares insights into his transition from corporate life to food blogging, the challenges he faced in

the early days and his commitment to transparency and excellence in The Big F Awards. He provides valuable perspectives on the growth of his blog, the influence of his corporate background and what to expect from this year's prestigious event.

You left a successful career as Vice President at MNCs like HSBC and GE Capital to follow your passion for food. What motivated this career shift, and how did your corporate experience shape your approach to food blogging and awards?

Back in our day, social media wasn't a thing. Like many, I followed the conventional route—completing an MBA and then diving into the corporate world. But food was my escape. Traveling the world, I discovered hidden culinary gems and started writing for newspapers and magazines. Eventually, I launched my own blog, Indian Food Freak. Before I knew it, my passion for food had grown into a full-blown career.

MY CORPORATE EXPERIENCE WAS THE YEAST THAT HELPED INDIAN FOOD FREAK RISE. THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN ORGANISING THE AWARDS WAS SECURING SPONSORS WHO BELIEVED IN THE VISION BUT DIDN'T INFLUENCE THE RESULTS.

In foodie terms, my corporate career was a recipe for success, but my love for food was the secret ingredient. I traded PowerPoint for paprika and now, I'm serving up a plate of purpose. Jokes aside, my corporate experience was invaluable. It taught me critical skills in sales, operations, and more, which I still use in my second career. Having worked with ethical companies, I've always prioritized transparency. Even after 11 years of running the food awards, I ensure there's no money exchange involved, whether for nominations, attending the awards or in any other aspect.

When you started Indian Food Freak food blogging was relatively new in India. How did you introduce the concept to an unfamiliar audience, and what strategies did you use to build your initial following?

Introducing food blogging to India was like adding a new spice to a traditional recipe—initially unfamiliar, but now indispensable. I focused on creating content that was relatable, authentic, and sprinkled

with humor. I remained honest and objective in all my reviews, even if it meant ruffling a few feathers among friends in the industry. By avoiding fancy jargon and staying true to my readers, I built trust and loyalty. My guiding principle has always been to write for my readers, not for the restaurants.

How did you address the skepticism or resistance from both the public and industry professionals during the early days of food blogging, especially when it was an emerging field?

Skeptics are like stale spices - they need to be replaced with fresh perspectives. I proved that food blogging wasn't just a flash in the pan by consistently delivering quality content and building a loyal community. Facebook played a significant role in this, as I created a space where food enthusiasts could exchange opinions and learn from each other.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced in creating content for your blog in the early days, and how did you overcome issues related to resources, technology or audience engagement?

The early days were like cooking with limited ingredients—creativity was key. I tackled challenges by infusing my content with storytelling, leveraging social media, and engaging with my audience like a master chef. Content was never an issue because food is something we encounter daily. To improve the visual appeal, I invested in a DSLR. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Indian Food Freak has grown into one of the largest food and travel blogs in India. What were some of the initial challenges you encountered when starting your blog and organising The Big F Awards, and how did your corporate experience help you navigate these obstacles?

My corporate experience was the yeast that helped Indian Food Freak rise. The biggest challenge in organizing the awards was securing sponsors who believed in the vision but didn't influence the results. My sales and marketing skills were crucial here. Convincing people of the brand visibility that our awards could offer was key, and looking back, I'm proud to say that I delivered on those promises.

This year, The Big F Awards has expanded to cover the entire Delhi-NCR region. What motivated this expansion, and what new opportunities and challenges do you anticipate?

Expanding The Big F Awards to Delhi-NCR was like adding a new course to the menu—a natural progression. Since it takes nearly six months to organize the awards, with our jury visiting each restaurant to taste the food before

delivering a verdict, venturing into other cities wasn't feasible. However, Delhi-NCR should be treated as one city, with people frequently traveling for work and pleasure. Including Delhi has given us broader and, in some cases, better choices, helping foodies make informed decisions when they dine out.

The introduction of categories for home bakers and home chefs is a unique and thoughtful addition. What inspired these new categories, and how do they reflect current trends in the food industry?

Home bakers and home chefs are the new spice merchants—they're driving innovation and shaping trends. These categories reflect the democratisation of food and the rise of culinary entrepreneurship. I'm pleased to see that home chefs and bakers are now taken seriously. Not only have their businesses expanded, but many new ventures are focused solely on this segment, helping them grow by organising pop-ups at five-star hotels, developing apps for delivery, and introducing them to wider audiences.

Winning the Best Influencer Award by BBC Good Food in 2018 is a significant achievement. How did this recognition impact your career and the growth of Indian Food Freak and The Big F Awards?

We all seek acknowledgment and appreciation. Winning the award was a validation that I was on the right path. It boosted my morale and increased confidence in the products and content I deliver.

The Big F Awards are known for their transparency and integrity. How are you ensuring these values are upheld in this year's expanded edition, especially with the addition of new categories?

Transparency and integrity are the secret ingredients in The Big F Awards' recipe. We ensure fairness by using a robust judging process, clear criteria, and a commitment to accountability. From selecting the right jury to deliberating each result, we remain steadfast in our dedication to honesty and transparency.

As you prepare for the 11th edition of The Big F Awards, what are your personal goals for the event, and what do you hope attendees and participants will take away from this year's awards?

My personal goal for The Big F Awards is to foster a culinary community that's the icing on the cake. I hope attendees and participants leave inspired, with new connections and a renewed passion for the food industry. People don't mind losing as long as they know they lost to a worthy opponent. Our aim is to be fair and just while building camaraderie among all industry professionals.

PAWAN SONI
Food critic and founder of the Big F Awards



A TRIBUTE TO TRADITION

GURU SHOVANA NARAYAN'S 75 YEARS OF KATHAK MASTERY

Sharanyam, a heartfelt tribute to the legendary Guru SHOVANA NARAYAN on her 75th birthday, beautifully celebrated her extraordinary journey in Kathak. The evening was a touching tribute to her life's work, showcasing the profound impact she has had on the art form and her disciples, says SAKSHI PRIYA



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

In the world of Indian classical dance, few names resonate with as much reverence as Padmashri Guru Shovana Narayan. Her journey is not just a tribute to her unparalleled dedication to Kathak but a living legacy that has inspired generations. As she steps into her 75th year, the Asavari Centre for Kathak honoured this icon with an evening titled "Sharanyam," a celebration as vibrant and profound as Guruji herself. Padmashri Guru Shovana Narayan is a celebrated icon in Kathak, with a remarkable career spanning over six decades. Her innovative approach and deep understanding of Indian culture have redefined the art form. With prestigious awards like the Padma Shri and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, her influence extends beyond performance to visionary choreography, dedicated teaching, and cultural leadership. On this unforgettable evening, the Stein Auditorium at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi was transformed into a space of dance and devotion. The evening was not just an event; it was a vibrant expression of love, respect and admiration from her disciples worldwide. Each performance honoured not just Kathak but the essence of Guru Shovana Narayan - the artist, the mentor and the visionary. From the moment the lights dimmed and the

first note echoed through the auditorium, it was clear that this evening was extraordinary. The performance of "Taal Pancham Sawari" was a masterful display of rhythm and precision, perfectly embodying the discipline and expression that Guruji has always emphasised. Beyond the technical brilliance, it was the sheer emotion that captivated the audience. "Chaand" was not just a dance; it was a poetic journey that moved everyone present. Similarly, "Malika" seamlessly fused song and dance, creating a blend of beauty that felt almost otherworldly. One of the most memorable moments of the night was "Moonlight Impressionism," a performance that seemed to slow time itself. The dancers moved with such grace that the stage became a peaceful space, where the silence of moonlight was captured in every gesture and step. The soft strains of the piano added an extra layer of

elegance, making it feel as though the audience was witnessing a dream come to life. The evening was a reflection of the profound bond between Guruji and her disciples, a connection that was evident in every movement and gesture on stage. This wasn't just a series of performances; it was a living reflection of the relationships built through years of shared passion, dedication, and mutual respect. As the video presentation played, featuring heartfelt birthday messages from her students, the emotion in the auditorium was overwhelming. These messages were more than just words of



“ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS OF THE NIGHT WAS 'MOONLIGHT IMPRESSIONISM,' A PERFORMANCE THAT SEEMED TO SLOW TIME ITSELF. THE DANCERS MOVED WITH SUCH GRACE THAT THE STAGE BECAME A PEACEFUL SPACE, WHERE THE SILENCE OF MOONLIGHT WAS CAPTURED IN EVERY GESTURE AND STEP.”

admiration; they were living proof of the deep, enduring love and gratitude that have grown over the years - a love that extends far beyond the art of Kathak. As the evening drew to a close with the powerful performance of "Dhwani-Pratidhwani," the energy in the auditorium reached its zenith. The audience's applause was more than just appreciation; it was a collective outpouring of respect, love, and admiration for a woman who has devoted her life to the pursuit of art and the nurturing of others. In the words of Guruji's first disciple, Shruti Gupta Chandra, "Sharanyam is a small tribute from all of us who have learned so much from Shovana Didi - dance in its purest form and, with it, many life lessons. And the learning continues..." Guruji herself reflected on the evening with emotion, saying, "The air rebounded with the pure love and sublime devotion of all the disciples that touched every heart and left everyone emotional. The programme was meticulously planned and executed." As her disciples paid tribute through their performances, it was clear that Guru Shovana Narayan's influence extends far beyond the stage. She has touched lives, instilled values, and inspired a generation of dancers who carry forward her legacy with pride and reverence. For them, she is not just a guru; she is a mother, a confidante, and a guiding star. Guru Shovana Narayan represents both tradition and innovation. She embodies the continuity of creativity, demonstrating that art is not just about preserving the past but about creating a future rooted in tradition yet open to new possibilities. As we celebrate her 75th year, it's evident that Guru Shovana Narayan is much more than a dancer; she is a visionary whose life has been dedicated to Kathak. Her legacy extends beyond performances to the hearts of her students and the countless lives she has touched. She is not just a mentor and guide but an inspiring figure whose dedication continues to elevate the art form and inspire those who learn from her.

A CELEBRATION OF INDIA'S TIMELESS CRAFTSMANSHIP

Naayaab highlights India's rich craftsmanship through over 100 masterpieces by renowned artisans. This exhibition blends tradition with innovation, presenting a unique cultural celebration, writes SAKSHI PRIYA

Naayaab, a groundbreaking exhibition platform, is set to become a beacon of India's rich heritage, showcasing over 100 masterpieces by the nation's most celebrated artisans. Spanning three major cities New Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai. This exhibition is more than just an exhibition, it is a profound celebration of India's artistic legacy, bringing together over 40 traditional art forms under one roof.

A SHOWCASE OF INDIA'S ARTISTIC DIVERSITY

Naayaab's significance lies in its ability to bring together an extraordinary collection of art forms, each representing a unique aspect of India's cultural fabric. With works from over 70 master artists, including several Padma Shri and Shilp Guru awards, this exhibition is a rare opportunity to witness the pinnacle of Indian craftsmanship. The exhibition highlighted the exceptional craftsmanship of several renowned artisans. Sudarshan Sahoo captivated with his intricate stone carving while Jai Prakash Lakhiawal impressed with his detailed miniature paintings. Khaleel Ahmad showcased his exquisite kilim carpets and Bhuri Bai presented her vibrant Bhil art. Durga Bai Vyam contributed her intricate Gond paintings. The visionary leaders behind Naayaab were Ajay A Singh, Founder Director and Akansha Dixit, Founder & Chief Curator. One of the most captivating pieces is the Inlay Artistry Chest by



Rupan Matharu, a work that exemplifies the exhibition's ethos of blending tradition with modernity. Crafted from Indian rosewood using traditional Hoshiarpur inlay techniques, Matharu's chest replaces the historically used ivory or bone with acrylic, making it both environmentally conscious and a stunning piece of art. The intricate patterns and meticulous detailing make it a true testament to the mastery of Indian artisans. Another powerful piece is Durga Bai Vyam's Gond Painting "Climate in Crisis", which uses symbolic imagery to address the resilience of nature in the face of human activity. This painting not only showcases the intricate detailing typical of Gond art but also delivers a poignant message about environmental conservation. Jai Prakash Lakhiawal's Shrinathji in Tanjore and Miniature Fusion painting is another highlight, merging Tanjore and Pichwai styles

to create a resplendent depiction of the Hindu deity. The use of gold leaf and natural pigments elevates this piece to a new level of artistic brilliance. The Heritage Red Sozni Shawl by Bashir Ahmed Bhatt is a must-see for those interested in traditional Indian textiles. This exquisite shawl, with its intricate embroidery of 600 stitches per centimeter, took four years to complete and is a tribute to the time-honored skills of Kashmiri Sozni artisans.

MASTERPIECES OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

Among the many remarkable pieces, Shiva Kumar's Tri Panel Mythic Tales stands out as a masterpiece of wood inlay and carving. Spanning six years in the making, this wooden set depicts narratives from the lives of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna across three panels, showcasing scenes like Sri Rama Pattabishekam,



Vishwaroopa and Krishna Leela. The craftsmanship is so intricate that concealed handles reveal a hidden third panel, an engineering feat in itself. The use of different woods and seashells for vibrant hues, along with hand-carved Yali motifs on the outer frame, make this artwork a true marvel. Another notable piece is Mukesh Kumar Soni's Maharaja Brooch Pendant, a stunning example of Meenakari on gold. Inspired by the regal bearing of Rajput personages, this pendant cum brooch combines uncut diamonds, baroque freshwater pearls, glass, spinels, and gold to create a piece that is both opulent and refined. The intricate designs on both sides, along

with the use of vibrant enamel colors, reflect the rich tradition of Meenakari, an art form passed down through generations since the Mughal era.

A PLATFORM FOR PRESERVATION AND INNOVATION

Naayaab is more than just an exhibition; it is a movement aimed at preserving and reviving India's traditional art forms. The long-term vision of making Naayaab an annual event, both in India and globally, is commendable. By doing so, the organizers hope to inspire the next generation of artisans and ensure that these invaluable skills continue to thrive. As an art enthusiast, witnessing Naayaab is both a privilege and a profound reminder of the richness of Indian heritage.



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

The exhibition not only showcases the exceptional talent of Indian artisans but also serves as a platform to elevate these crafts to the global stage, ensuring they are celebrated for generations to come. Naayaab is not just an exhibition, it is a celebration of India's artistic heritage, a platform for master artisans and a beacon of hope for the future of traditional crafts. In an age where digital and mass-produced art often takes center stage, Naayaab stands as a beautiful contradiction, a reminder of the beauty of handcrafted excellence and the importance of preserving cultural legacies. For collectors, connoisseurs and art lovers alike, Naayaab offers a rare opportunity to connect with the soul of Indian culture, to witness the legacy of its artistic heritage, and to support the artisans who dedicate their lives to preserving these traditions. It is an unmissable event that promises to leave a lasting impact on anyone

who values the intersection of history, culture and creativity. Naayaab is not just an exhibition but a profound celebration of India's rich artistic heritage. By bringing together over 100 masterpieces from acclaimed artisans across the country, it offers a unique platform that honors and revives traditional crafts. The intricate works displayed, from the innovative Inlay Artistry Chest to the evocative Gond Painting, illustrate the extraordinary skill and creativity of Indian artisans. This event is a tribute to the enduring significance of these art forms and serves as an inspiring reminder of the beauty that emerges when tradition meets innovation. Naayaab stands as a pivotal moment for both art lovers and cultural enthusiasts, marking a significant step in preserving and promoting India's invaluable artistic legacy.



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week, you'll experience a surge of emotional renewal and inspiration, leading to significant personal growth and the opportunity for meaningful connections. Embrace the new beginnings in your life with confidence and enthusiasm, allowing yourself to be open and vulnerable. This openness will deepen your relationships and enhance your sense of fulfillment. The current energies are encouraging you to explore your emotional needs and desires more deeply, guiding you toward a greater understanding of yourself. Engage in activities that truly resonate with your values and bring you joy. To maintain balance, take time for introspection, ensuring that your excitement and drive are rooted in authentic, meaningful connections.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Friday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week, focus on maintaining fairness, balance, and accountability in your actions and decisions. It's an opportune time to resolve any disputes and strive for harmony in your relationships and projects. Be mindful of the importance of acting with integrity, as this will be crucial in your interactions and endeavors. You may encounter situations that require careful consideration of your options or addressing imbalances. Trust in your ability to advocate for what is right and true. Reflect on how your actions impact others and ensure that you proceed with honesty and clarity. By aligning your goals with a commitment to fairness, you'll navigate any challenges that arise with grace and effectiveness.

Lucky number 15 | Lucky colour Ivory
Lucky day Monday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week invites you to balance multiple responsibilities effectively. Embrace the challenge of managing various tasks with flexibility and adaptability. It's a time to harness your enthusiasm and organizational abilities to keep everything moving smoothly. The current cosmic influences emphasize the importance of maintaining equilibrium in your busy schedule. By prioritizing and adjusting as needed, you can handle the demands of the week without becoming overwhelmed. Stay focused on your goals while remaining open to making necessary adjustments. Your resourcefulness and ability to adapt will be key in navigating through the week with efficiency and maintaining a sense of harmony among all your commitments. Keep a steady pace, and you'll find that your efforts align beautifully with your objectives.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Palm
Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, you're stepping into a role that demands leadership and ambitious endeavors, making it a perfect time to take charge of your goals with confidence and creativity. You'll find yourself exuding a magnetic energy that draws others to your ideas, giving you the opportunity to inspire and guide those around you. This is a time to harness your inner drive, pushing forward on important projects with a mix of passion and practicality. While your determination is strong, remember to balance your ambitions with a steady, grounded approach. Your natural perseverance will serve you well as you navigate this dynamic period, allowing you to lead with both vision and stability. This is your moment to shine in your pursuits with unwavering determination.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Wednesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week highlights a period of recognizing and addressing personal barriers and unhealthy behaviors. You might find yourself grappling with issues of control or repetitive negative patterns that are limiting your growth. The influence of current cosmic energies encourages you to identify and confront these challenges, urging a break from the constraints of fear or excessive desire. This period is crucial for regaining your independence and strength. Reflect on any habits or situations that may be limiting you and make a concerted effort to release them. Though the process might be demanding, it provides a substantial opportunity for personal evolution and development. Seize this moment to free yourself and cultivate a more wholesome and balanced life approach.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Emerald
Lucky day Friday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week calls for a period of deep reflection and navigating through areas of uncertainty. It's a time when hidden aspects of your life or underlying emotions may surface, requiring careful exploration. The influences surrounding you are pushing towards relying on your inner instincts and looking beyond obvious appearances. You might face situations filled with ambiguity or even deceptive information, making it crucial to evaluate circumstances with a keen sense of awareness. This phase is ideal for delving into your deeper self, addressing any underlying anxieties or misconceptions. Embrace these moments for self-exploration and foster a connection with your own guiding voice. Although this time may feel unstable, it presents an opportunity to gain significant personal insights and growth. Let your internal compass lead you through less clear paths.

Lucky number 1 | Lucky colour Amber
Lucky day Thursday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, focus on establishing order and discipline in your life. You'll benefit from setting clear boundaries and creating a structured approach to your tasks. The current energies support your efforts to take control and make strategic decisions, allowing you to lead with confidence. This is an opportune time to take charge of projects or situations that require a strong and authoritative presence. Utilize this time to establish long-term objectives and apply practical approaches. By balancing your need for intellectual engagement with a disciplined approach, you can achieve greater stability and success. Trust in your ability to organize and guide others, and you'll find it easier to navigate any challenges that arise.

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Sunday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week promises a period of emotional satisfaction, harmony, and strengthened connections. You may find a profound sense of joy and completeness in your personal relationships and household. The current influences are conducive to fostering closer ties with those close to you. It's an ideal time to nurture your family dynamics and cultivate a nurturing atmosphere. Enjoy the benefits of positive exchanges and collective joy. Additionally, this is a favorable moment to pay attention to your emotional health and explore methods to develop enduring happiness. Appreciate the splendor of these experiences and utilize them to enhance the love and delight in your life. These enriching experiences can be a foundation for future stability and joy.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Mint
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week ushers in a period marked by intense curiosity and the birth of fresh ideas, presenting an excellent opportunity for intellectual growth. You are poised to make remarkable discoveries due to your heightened analytical abilities. This is the perfect time to immerse yourself in research projects or initiate stimulating intellectual pursuits. The current influences inspire you to look at things from innovative angles and engage in meaningful dialogues. Your ability to think critically will serve you well, but it's important to avoid being overly sharp in your interactions. As you navigate through this period of dynamic thinking, remember to balance your keen enthusiasm with tact and patience. Let your inquisitive nature guide your journey of exploration and learning.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Monday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week brings a surge of mental clarity and a strong drive to take swift action. You may find yourself propelled into new ideas or projects with a sense of urgency, feeling a heightened determination to get things done. This is a time to approach tasks with a clear and assertive mindset, making the most of the dynamic energy around you. However, it's important to remain mindful of the impact of your words and actions; avoid being overly reactive or impulsive. Strive to balance your focused determination with a sense of emotional awareness. By doing so, you'll be able to navigate this active period effectively, embracing the momentum while staying connected to your inner guidance.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week may bring moments of conclusion and opportunities for significant breakthroughs. It's a time when you might encounter challenging situations or harsh truths. These experiences suggest a need to address and let go of elements that no longer contribute positively to your life. While this period can be demanding, it offers a valuable chance for closure and rejuvenation. Take this opportunity to release any old grievances or burdensome circumstances. Confronting these issues directly allows for healing and transformation. Although the process may be intense, it is clearing the way for fresh starts and personal advancement. Use this period to reevaluate your direction and emerge more robust and adaptable.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Wednesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week is ripe with opportunities for fresh beginnings and the pursuit of exciting ventures. You are encouraged to embrace your imaginative side and take bold steps toward your goals. You may find yourself inspired by new ideas or projects that ignite your passion. This is an excellent period for launching new endeavors or diving into creative interests. However, it's important to balance your enthusiasm with practical considerations to ensure your plans are well-founded. Embrace this time of exploration and allow your curiosity and creativity to guide you. Trust in your capabilities and remain open to the possibilities that unfold. This approach will help you harness the energy of the moment and channel it into productive and fulfilling activities.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Saffron
Lucky day Sunday

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THE TUNING FORK



C V Srikanth

The one constant from my School, to my Corporate, to my family has been- hearing 'You are not thinking' | 'You are not applying yourself' | 'You are not invested enough in what you are doing' - phrases we have all grown up listening to and perhaps continue to. *Manasa Budhi Chitta Ahankara*. - embodied in the quotients - IQ | EQ | SQ. **IQ (Intelligence Quotient):** A relative measure of the Intelligence of the person expressed in number. Can be seen as the ability to understand complex concepts and apply it effectively. Aligns with the concept of 'Buddhi' the higher intellect or discrimination (Viveka). It includes intellectual discernment, wisdom (Prajna) through practise **EQ (Emotional Quotient):** Relative measure of Emotional intelligence - having a heightened sense of emotional and social awareness, including skills like ability to understand, use, manage your own emotions in positive ways, communicate empathetically, self-regulation. Indian ancient texts see it as qualities like emotional balance, compassion (karuna), non-attachment (vairagya), and equanimity (samata). **SQ (Spiritual Quotient):** Relative measure of Spiritual intelligence. Encompasses placing our actions and our

lives in a wider, richer, meaningful context. mindfulness, self-awareness, and connection to a higher purpose or reality. Indian scriptures describe it as the work towards and capacity for transcending the ego and realizing one's true nature (atman) or universal consciousness (Parabrahman), the aptitude to enter into heightened spiritual states of consciousness, the ability to invest in everyday activities, events, and relationships with a sense of the devotion (bhakti) and non-attachment (aparigraha), to engage in virtuous behavior (forgiveness, gratitude, humility, modesty, compassion). **They are distinct concepts** - but inseparable by nature for any holistic development or application. Only a judicious combination of Intellectual clarity + emotional maturity + spiritual insight (SQ) can result in fulfilment. Our scriptures emphasize the need to cultivate and practise these through self-discipline and self-inquiry (Jijnāsa) Ultimately, the goal is defined by us - a comprehensive embracing awakening to the Universe. Krishna teaches us in The Bhagavad Gita that both EQ and SQ are integral aspects of a balanced and meaningful life.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्मा ते सद्गोस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ 47 ॥

IQ EQ and SQ

karmāṇy-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana mā karma-phala-hetur bhārmā te saṅgo 'stvākarmaṇi (2.47)

You have the right to perform your prescribed duties. You are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor be attached to inaction.

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान्।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टो स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥
prajāhāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭhaḥ sthita-prajñas tadochyaate (2.55)

When one discards all selfish desires and cravings of the senses that torment the mind, and becomes satisfied in the realization of the self, such a person is said to be transcendently situated.

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥
dūreṇa hy-avarāṇi karma buddhi-yogād dhanañjaya buddhau śharaṇam anvichchha kṛpaṇāḥ phala-hetavaḥ (2.49)

The recourse is divine knowledge and insight. Discard reward-seeking actions that are certainly inferior to works performed with the spiritual intellect established in divine knowledge. Miserly are those who seek to enjoy the fruits of their works. These 2 Shlokas are examples of SQ. When we tune in and nurture our SQ, we move towards happiness, peace and a tranquil state of mind because we do everything in a state of gratitude and devotion.

None of the 3 - IQ EQ or SQ can be underestimated and under rated. They compliment each other. We need to farm their working together in coherence and balance. IQ helps rational and logical thinking. Emotional stability and maturity help individuals maintain

equanimity amidst life's apparent contradictions or dualities, facilitating focused spiritual practice. The Spiritual quotient is the provides the overarching context and purpose for life. Understanding one's true nature as a spiritual being (atman) and cultivating faith and devotion (shradhha), sensitivity and detachment helps us transcend to lasting inner tranquillity, gratitude and contentment. Emotional stability supports spiritual practice by reducing distractions and mental turbulence, while spiritual understanding provides a higher perspective that enriches emotional experiences with depth and meaning. As someone said 'The world is a contradiction and the Universe is Paradox.' To understand, navigate and rise above - Deep Breathe, Soak in, Experience Life!!

— The writer is a versatile professional with 3 decades in corporate experience & leadership roles, excelling in several areas as a ICF Certified Mentor Life Coach, Corporate Coach, Spiritual Intelligence Coach & CXO Coach. Spiritual counselor, Astro & Vastu consultant (25+ years of grounding in Vedanta philosophy) and a Motivational speaker. He is a Dale Carnegie's T3 graduate