



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Bihar Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar during the release of the 19th installment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme and launch of various development projects in Bhagalpur

Poll bugle sounds in Bihar by Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA/NEW DELHI

Blowing the poll trumpet in Bihar for year-end assembly elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday attacked the Lalu Yadav-led "jungle raj" regime in Bihar. Modi said "same" people were now making "vulgar" remarks about the ongoing Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj. Addressing a function in Bihar's Bhagalpur district, Modi, without naming the party or the former chief minister, also alleged that "the jungle raj wallahs hate our heritage and our faith". "The Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj is the greatest celebration of Bharat's unity. The number of people who have taken a holy dip exceeds the population of Europe. Many people from Bihar have

also undertaken the pilgrimage," the PM said. "But these jungle raj wallahs are speaking ill about Maha Kumbh and making vulgar remarks. These people were opposed to the Ram temple at Ayodhya, too. I know Bihar will not forgive them," said Modi. While demanding the resignation of Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav over the stampede at New Delhi railway station recently, Prasad questioned the heavy rush, saying "what does Kumbh signify? It is nonsense." The PM, who disbursed close to Rs 23,000 crore to nearly 100 million beneficiaries across the country, began his 40 minute speech with a reference to Kumbh and its connection with Bihar.

Pay present property tax to MCD, clear all past dues

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a big relief to the people of Delhi, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has announced a house-tax waiver scheme, allowing residents to clear their house tax dues of 2024-25 and have all previous pending taxes written off.

Additionally, in the next financial year, 100 percent of house tax on 100-yard homes and residential-area shops will be scrapped, while properties between 100-500 yards will get a 50 percent waiver. For the first time, 1,300 housing societies - previously ineligible - will receive a 25 percent rebate. This transformative proposal is set to be passed in the MCD House on February 25.

After losing the turf to BJP in governing the national Capital, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led MCD on Monday introduced a major house tax waiver for property owners which can be witnessed as a direct confrontation between the two different regime in Delhi.

The announcement, made ahead of the mayoral polls in April, was delivered at a press conference by AAP leader, MCD Mayor Mahesh Khinchi, Deputy Mayor Ravinder Bhardwaj, and Leader of the House Mukesh Goel.

Announcing the initiative, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said those who settle their 2024-25 house tax dues will have all previous outstanding amounts waived. The move aims at easing financial



Senior AAP leaders Sanjay Singh and Durgesh Pathak, Mayor Mahesh Khinchi and Leader of the House Mukesh Goyal held a joint press conference at the party headquarters in New Delhi

burdens on citizens and curbs corruption in tax collection, is set to be passed in the MCD House.

Singh highlighted that the decision is that those who pay their house tax for 2024-25 will have all their previous outstanding house tax dues, which have been a burden on them, completely waived.

"This is a major announcement: upon paying the house tax for 2024-25, all previous outstanding dues, which were a financial burden, will be written off. Secondly, the house tax for buildings ranging from 100 square yards to 500 square yards will be reduced by half. That is, houses within the 100-500 square yard range will now have their house tax cut by 50%," he said.

He further noted that for buildings below 100 square yards, the house tax will be entirely waived. He said, "So, properties between 100 and 500 square yards will have their tax reduced by half, and those below 100 square yards

will have their tax fully waived."

Under the scheme, properties measuring up to 100 square yards, including residential shops, will be completely exempt from house tax from the next financial year. Houses measuring between 100 and 500 square yards will receive a 50 per cent waiver, while 1,300 housing societies that previously did not qualify for any exemption will now get a 25 per cent rebate. Singh further added that additionally, residential properties where commercial activities such as shops are running, and properties designated for commercial purposes, will also have their house tax waived. Singh said, "There are over 1,300 apartments in Delhi that do not currently receive any tax exemptions or benefits. A crucial decision has been made regarding them as well: 1,300 housing apartments in Delhi will receive a 25% house tax waiver."

Powered BJP face fired AAP in Delhi Assembly

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The first day of the Delhi Assembly under the newly-formed BJP government witnessed a heated exchange between the treasury benches and opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) members, leading to a brief adjournment of the House on Monday following Vijender Gupta's election as speaker amid sloganeering from both the treasury and the Opposition benches, with AAP members accusing the BJP being "anti-Dalit and anti-Sikh".

The Leader of Opposition Atishi accused new Government for removing BR Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh's portraits from Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta's office, a charge denied by the ruling BJP.

Tensions escalated when the Leader of Opposition Atishi, while congratulating Gupta, alleged that photos of BR Ambedkar and Shaheed Bhagat Singh had been removed from the Chief Minister's Office. Her remarks, made without permission, led to loud protests from BJP MLAs prompting Speaker Vijender Gupta to censure her for speaking out of turn.

As disruptions continued, the newly elected assembly speaker Vijendra Gupta accused the AAP of disrupting the house with pre-planned intentions and adjourned the house for 15 minutes. The Speaker said it was a courtesy address and You (Opposition) should not have made it a political platform." The Opposition does not want the



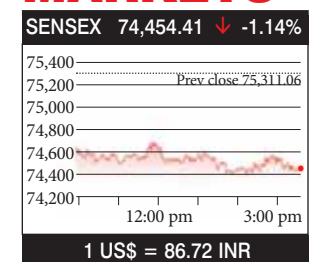
Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta greets newly-elected Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta at his chamber during the first day of the Assembly session in New Delhi

House to run smoothly. AAP has come with the intention of disrupting the House. Maintain the dignity of the House," said Gupta. Ruckus witnessed both inside and outside when Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Delhi Assembly Atishi alleged that the BJP removed the portraits from the Chief Minister's Office in the Assembly-portraits that had been put up under the AAP government.

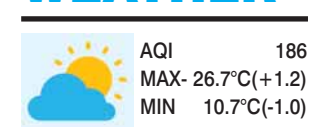
As the Assembly session began, AAP MLAs, led by the LoP, in a mark of protest inside the House, raised slogans and demanded the immediate reinstatement of the portraits. The BJP accused the opposition party of trying to divert people's attention from the CAG reports that will be tabled in the Assembly to expose "corruption" by AAP when it was in power. The Delhi BJP shared photos of the chief minister's office on social media and said, "The portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, Babasaheb Bhimrao

Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh the President and the prime minister are displayed in the offices of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other ministers." Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva also clarified that that the portraits of the revered Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh, the President of India, and the Prime Minister of India continue to be displayed in the offices of the Chief Minister and all ministers of Delhi - something that anyone can easily verify. Earlier from Sanskrit to English and Maithili to Punjabi, the first session of the newly constituted eighth Delhi Legislative Assembly began on Monday with MLAs of the ruling BJP and opposition AAP demonstrating the linguistic diversity of the legislature by taking their oaths in six languages including - Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Urdu, Maithili and Punjabi.

MARKETS



WEATHER



One dead, 10 injured in clash at Bangladesh air force base

PTI ■ DHAKA

A man was killed and several others injured in a clash on Monday between a group of local people and air force personnel at an airbase in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, officials said.

The Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) - the media wing of the military - in a statement said the "miscreants" attacked the Bangladesh Air Force Base near Cox's Bazar's Samitipara. "Bangladesh Air Force is taking necessary actions in this regard," it said. The ISPR said that "some local miscreants" of the Samitipara area adjacent to the beach resort town "launched a sudden attack" on the airbase after a biker was stopped at a checkpoint as he was crossing the base area without any papers for the vehicle. It said the biker was taken inside the base for interrogation when over 200 people marched towards the base. The security personnel tried to stop them, sparking a clash that left four Air Force personnel injured.

Deputy Commissioner of the district, Mohammad Salahuddin, said: one person was killed, and several others were injured in the incident". The official said a thorough investigation would be conducted into the cause of the attack.

Gym owner's murder: Delhi court sends gangster's wife to custody

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Monday sent alleged gangster Hashim Baba's wife Zoya Khan to three-day police custody in a case related to the reported killing of a 35-year-old gym owner by two bike-borne assailants in a posh neighbourhood in south Delhi's Greater Kailash area last September.

Chief judicial magistrate Anuj Kumar Singh sent Zoya Khan to police custody after the investigating officer said her custody was required to unearth the larger conspiracy (behind the killing) and to establish her role in the case. Besides Baba, the police also suspect the involvement of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's associates in the murder.

The police told the court that it wanted to recover the weapons used in the crime, claiming that all the accused were in touch with each other through App-based encrypted calls. The victim, Nadir Shah, who had previous criminal cases against his name, including



on charges of robbery and attempt to murder, co-owned a gym in Greater Kailash Part I. During the proceedings, Zoya told the court, "My only crime is that I am Hashim Baba's wife. I am not involved in any case against him." Her lawyer told the court that Zoya's name was not disclosed in any of the arrested accused's discloser and that she had joined the probe on two occasions when asked by the investigating agency. Shah also owned a business in Dubai. His father hailed from Afghanistan and had shifted to Delhi several years ago.

Survival of trapped men bleak in tunnel collapse: Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ HYDERABAD

Even as multiple agencies are at war footing in Telangana reminding their efforts in 17 days Silkyara Bend rescue operation in Uttarakhand, chances of survival of the eight persons who remain trapped in the SLBC tunnel seems to be "very remote".

The latest to join are a team of rat miners, who had rescued the construction workers trapped in the Silkyara Bend-Barkot tunnel in Uttarakhand in 2023, to extricate the men.

Indian Army, Navy, NDRF, SDRF and other agencies are also involved in rescue operations in close coordination with each other.

Despite relentless efforts by the Indian Army, NDRF and other agencies, no breakthrough has been achieved so far in the rescue operations to extricate the eight persons who have remained trapped for over 48 hours inside the tunnel after a section of it collapsed in the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) project in Telangana's Nagarkurnool district on Saturday.

The persons who have been trapped in the collapsed tunnel for the past over 48 hours have been identified as Manoj Kumar and Sri Niwas from Uttar Pradesh, Sunny Singh (Jammu and Kashmir), Gurpreet Singh (Punjab) and Sandeep Sahu, Jegta



A rescue operation underway after a portion of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel collapsed in Nagarkurnool district

Xess, Santosh Sahu and Anuj Sahu all from Jharkhand. Of the eight, two are engineers, two operators and four labourers.

Telangana Minister Jupally Krishna Rao said that rescuing the trapped individuals would take at least three to four days, as the accident site is filled with muck and debris, making it a daunting task for the rescuers.

"To be honest, the chances of their survival are very, very, very, very remote. Because, I myself went up to the end, almost just 50 meters short

(of the mishap site). When we took photographs, the end (of the tunnel) was visible. And out of the 9 meter diameter (of the tunnel) -- almost 30 feet, out of that 30 feet, mud has piled up to 25 feet," he said. "When we shouted their names also, there was no response...So, there is no chance at all," he said.

Krishna Rao said the process of clearing the debris is underway with several machinery in place. According to officials the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) which

weighs a few hundred tons, got almost flushed away by about 200 meters after the collapse and due to the gushing water.

"Even, even assuming they (the trapped persons) are in the lower part of the TBM machine, assuming even if it is intact on the top, where is the air (oxygen)? Underneath, how the oxygen will go," he asked though pumping of oxygen and dewatering have been continuously done.

"For removing all the debris and all that, in spite of all types of efforts, all types of organisations (working), it takes, I think it takes not less than 3-4 days (to extricate the people)," Rao, who had overseen the rescue operations along with Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, said. Rao said the conveyor belt was being restored to the tunnel to clear the debris.

Meanwhile, a social media post from Telangana Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said CM Revanth Reddy has been continuously reviewing the situation regarding the SLBC tunnel accident and was in constant touch with the ministers and senior officials involved in the rescue operations. Dewatering is going on while oxygen was being continuously pumped into the tunnel. The officials also informed that they are exploring alternative routes to reach the site of the accident by clearing the debris of soil mounds in the tunnel, the post said.

Simultaneous polls cater to federal structure

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is learnt to have told the joint committee of Parliament examining the bills on 'one nation, one election' that holding simultaneous polls to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies is not undemocratic and does not hurt the federal structure.

Responding to a set of queries posed by the members of the joint panel, the legislative department in the Union law ministry is learnt to have asserted that simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies were held in the past before the cycle was broken due to various reasons, including imposition of President's rule in some states.

Sources said while the ministry answered some of the questions, some others were sent to the Election Commission for a calibrated response. The joint committee is holding its next meeting on Tuesday. Following the adoption of the Constitution, elections to the Lok Sabha and all state assemblies were conducted simultaneously from 1951 to 1967, it noted. The first general elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies were held



together in 1951-52, a practice that continued for three subsequent general elections in 1957, 1962, and 1967. However, this cycle of synchronised elections was disrupted in 1968 and 1969 due to the premature dissolution of some state legislative assemblies. The fourth Lok Sabha was also dissolved prematurely in 1970, with fresh elections held in 1971. Unlike the first, second, and third Lok Sabha, which completed their full five-year terms, the fifth Lok Sabha's

term was extended until 1977 under Article 352 because of the declaration of Emergency.

Since then, only a few Lok Sabha terms have lasted the full five years, such as the eighth, 10th, 14th and 15th. Others, including the sixth, seventh, ninth, 11th, 12th and 13th were dissolved early, a government explainer on 'one nation, one election' had earlier said. State assemblies have faced similar disruptions over the years. Premature dissolutions and term extensions have become a "recurring challenge", the government had said.

"These developments have firmly disrupted the cycle of simultaneous elections, leading to the current pattern of staggered electoral schedules across the country," it observed. "Due to the ongoing cycle of polls in various parts of the country, political parties, their leaders, legislators, and both state and central governments focusses on preparing for upcoming polls rather than prioritising governance," it said, citing the 'rationale' for holding simultaneous polls as recommended by the panel headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind.

Kedarnath earnings more than double since 2020-21

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DEHRADUN

The Kedarnath temple's earnings from offerings, donations and different services offered to devotees have more than doubled since March 2021, an RTI query has revealed. From Rs 22.04 crore in 2020-21, it rose to Rs 52.9 crore in 2023-24, the Sri Badrinath-Kedarnath Mandir Samiti said in response to the query filed under the Right to Information Act by Noida-based RTI activist Amit Gupta. Giving a yearly break-up, the committee said the income of the famous Himalayan temple in Uttarakhand was Rs 22.04 crore in 2020-21, it dropped to Rs 16.52 crore in 2021-22 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic but rose again to Rs 29.67 crore in 2022-23 and to Rs 52.9 crore in 2023-24. The rise in the temple's income during the period was 2.3 times.

A delayed opening of the temple for devotees in 2021, coupled with restrictions such as mandatory negative RT-PCR test reports, a daily cap on the number of devotees visiting the shrine, besides compliance with mask-wearing and social-distancing norms had severely affected the inflow of pilgrims during



the pandemic. However, as the number of Covid cases declined and the yatra norms were relaxed, the number of pilgrims surged the following year, increasing the temple's earnings once again. The trend continued in 2023-24, the temple committee said. The income of the temple comes from the offerings and donations made by devotees as well as the priority darshan facilities offered to those coming by helicopter services for which an additional fee is charged by the committee.



PM's visit to lend wings to winter Char Dham Yatra: CM

PNS ■ UTTARKASHI/DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has said that the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Harshil-Mukhwa area will give a major push to the winter Char Dham Yatra in Uttarakhand. He said that the PM's visit will also help in boosting prosperity in the State. The CM visited Uttarkashi district on Monday to take stock of the preparations being made for the visit of PM Modi slated for February 27.

He said that the Harshil-Mukhwa area and people of Uttarakhand are ready to welcome the PM.

Dhama said that the visit of the PM will boost tourism in the Harshil-Mukhwa area which is known for its unmatched natural beauty. The PM's visit will also give publicity to the winter Char Dham Yatra and the number of pilgrims visiting the State for this Yatra is bound to increase further.

The CM said that the visit of the PM has always remained auspicious for Uttarakhand. He said that after



the visit of PM to Kedarnath, Mana and Adi Kailash, the number of pilgrims and tourists visiting these places has witnessed a major surge.

Similarly in the Investors Summit attended by the PM Modi, memorandum of understanding (MoU) worth Rs 3.5 lakh crore were inked. The

projects worth Rs 80,000 crore have been grounded so far, he added.

The CM further said that the inauguration of the 38th National Games by PM Modi has also proved beneficial for the State. He said that the organisation of these games has increased the prestige of Ut-

tarakhand. In the medal tally too, Uttarakhand jumped to seventh position in these games from 25th position it got in the 37th National Games.

In his visit the CM inspected arrangements from Harshil to Mukhwa village. He directed the officers to

make proper arrangements to ensure that the visit of the PM becomes memorable. The CM also inspected the ground and the stage in Harshil for the public meeting of PM Modi. At Mukhwa, the winter abode of the presiding goddess of Gangotri, the CM offered prayers at the Ganga temple and inspected arrangements for the visit of PM.

The district magistrate of Uttarkashi Meharban Singh Bisht informed the CM about the administration's preparedness and arrangements for the PM's visit. He said that an exhibition depicting local products and handicraft will be organised during the PM's visit.

Chief secretary Radha Raturi, principal secretary RK Sudhanshu, Secretary Sachin Kurve, additional director general police V Murugesan and other senior officers accompanied the CM.

Gangotri MLA Suresh Chauhan, superintendent of police Sarita Dohal and others were present on the occasion.

Congress should refrain from trying to divide State's people, says BJP

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Bharatiya Janata Party State president and Rajya Sabha member Mahendra Bhatt has requested the top leadership of the Congress to tell the party's MLAs to avoid talk which divides Uttarakhand into mountainous and plain regions. He opined that the Congress will soon suffer due to such divisive politics. Bhatt also appealed to the media to cooperate in this matter.

A few days after Parliamentary Affairs minister Prem Chand Aggarwal's statements during the recently concluded Vidhan Sabha session elicited strong criticism from the opposition and segments of the public, resulting in the BJP telling him to abstain from such talk, Bhatt told the media at his Dehradun residence that all people in the State should talk in the interests of Uttarakhand. "We

are all the people of Uttarakhand but the controversy raised to divide the people among Pahadis and those from the plains is guided by some ill-intention, which we all need to expose. It is important to identify those be-

not proper in any way. I will also tell the senior Congress leaders that the manner in which their MLAs are trying to divide the public by making statements regarding people of the mountains and plains is highly unfortunate.

We will not let such attempts harm the interests of the people of Uttarakhand. The Congress is going to suffer a major jolt in the coming days if it does not mend its ways," the BJP State president said.

Targeting the Congress for its opposition to the land law, he said that it opposes every good work, which is why the public has taught it lessons from time to time. Uttarakhand has finally got a strong land law with the cooperation of the people, detailed discussion and consent. Everyone should welcome it but the Congress is habituated to opposing every positive step, Bhatt added.



hind this, who want to divide Uttarakhandi society. Following the controversy in Rishikesh during the recent local body elections, the manner in which the Congress MLAs created an environment in the Assembly around the latest instance is

Will continue to fight for rights of mountainous areas: Butola

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Congress MLA from Badrinath, Lakhpat Butola has said that a separate State of Uttarakhand was created to fulfill the aspirations of people of the mountainous areas. Interacting

with the mediapersons at the headquarters of the State Congress on Monday, the MLA said that it is unfortunate that the people sitting in the power are trying to suppress the feelings and aspirations of the mountainous areas. Butola said that he will continue to raise the



with the mediapersons at the headquarters of the State Congress on Monday, the MLA said that it is unfortunate that the people sitting in the power are trying to suppress the feelings and aspirations of the mountainous areas. Butola said that he will continue to raise the

quiet when the people of the mountains were being abused inside the house. He said that BJP has won 25 out of 28 Assembly segments in the mountainous areas and it is due to the vote of the people of the mountains that the BJP MLAs were elected and made ministers.

Behaviour of Parliamentary Affairs minister unparliamentary: Negi

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Terming the behaviour of the Parliamentary Affairs minister Prem Chand Aggarwal as highly objectionable and unparliamentary, the Congress MLA from Pratnagar, Vikram Singh Negi has said that the chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama should seek his resignation from the cabinet.

He said that minister Aggarwal accused the

Congress MLA Madan Bisht of coming to the house in an inebriated state but failed to get him medically examined.

He said that during the discussion in the house, the Badrinath MLA raised the issues of his area on which the minister accused him of presenting false facts. Negi said that the minister is getting full protection from the government.

State employees to register marriage on UCC portal

Chief secretary seeks regular course on training government personnel on UCC

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The married employees of the State government will register their marriages under the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). In a related development the Uttarakhand Academy of Administration will also train the State government personnel in the UCC.

Chief secretary Radha Raturi has written to all the district magistrates directing them to ensure the marriage registration of all married State government employees under the UCC. She has stated in her letter that as per the UCC, the registration of marriages solemnised after March 26, 2010 is compulsory. Considering this, the district nodal officer for UCC will ensure all married State government personnel in the district register their marriage in a time bound manner. Every district will also provide a report regularly to the Home secretary in this regard. Raturi further said that the additional chief secretary/principal secretary/secretary of all departments should appoint one nodal officer who will ensure the registration of the department's married personnel under the UCC. Similarly, all the department heads should direct their subordinate married employees to register their marriage on the UCC portal. All the district magistrates and heads of departments will ensure that this task is completed in a time bound manner. A weekly report on this should be sent to the State's

Home secretary, she said. The chief secretary further directed the Information Technology Development Agency director to provide necessary technical assistance to all districts or departments for ensuring uninterrupted registration of marriages on the UCC portal.

Raturi also wrote a letter to the Uttarakhand Academy of Administration, Nainital, director general to conduct a regular course for training the State government personnel in provision of the UCC. She stated that in order to ensure the effective implementation of the UCC, it is important for all the government employees to know about its various provisions, procedures and their responsibilities. The academy can play an important role in this. It can develop a group of resource persons for the training on UCC provisions. These resource persons will train the officers and employees of the various departments. The chief secretary has stated in her letter that the academy should consider including a training programme on UCC as part of its regular course so that government employees at various levels can be trained in it from time to time. An elaborate training module comprising the legal and administrative aspects of the UCC, responsibilities of government officers, registration procedures and the use of the portal should also be prepared, Raturi said.

Unsavoury incidents masked achievements of Vidhan Sabha budget session

Minister Agarwal's outburst & mountain versus plain controversy hogged the limelight while the passage of stringent land law took a backseat

GAJENDRA SINGH NEGI ■ DEHRADUN

In the budget session of Vidhan Sabha which ended on Saturday, the Pushkar Singh Dhama led Bharatiya Janata Party government presented the much awaited bill on stringent land laws and got it passed. During the session, the biggest ever State budget was also passed by the house. For the first time in the history of the State, the size of the budget exceeded Rs one lakh crore. Criticised always for the short duration of the Vidhan Sabha sessions, the government organised the budget session for five days which is the longest in recent times. The house was in session for 37 hours and 49 minutes during these five days. Similarly, a record was created on Friday when the members sat almost till midnight and proceedings continued for 11 hours 51 minutes with the members discussing the budget and other business.

However, all these achievements got sidelined by the unsavoury behaviour inside the house and the controversy of plains versus mountainous areas of the State.

The session started on tumultuous note on February 18, when the members of the opposition Congress marched to the well of the house raising slogans for ex-



tending the duration of the budget session. The situation took a bad turn when the Congress MLA Madan Bisht clashed with Parliamentary Affairs minister Prem Chand Aggarwal, who later stated that the MLA was probably drunk. The Congress members staged a walkout during the governor's address. On Friday, Parliamentary Affairs minister Aggarwal got so much annoyed by the utterances of the Congress members that he allegedly used expletives against the people of mountainous areas of the State. The minister's outburst created a major controversy which forced the government and chief minister Dhama to launch a damage control exercise. Congress MLAs again raised the issue of unparliamentary language by the Parliamentary Affairs minister on the last day of the session with Badrinath MLA Lakhpat Butola

Khanpur, Umesh Kumar and BSP MLA Mohammad Shahzad and a situation where the Agriculture minister Ganesh Joshi failed to reply to a question on natural farming prompting the speaker to suspend the question. Amid acrimony between the treasury and opposition members, the government tabled the much anticipated Uttarakhand (Uttar Pradesh Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act 1950) amendment bill-2025 in the house which was passed by a voice vote on Friday. The new law prohibits purchase of land by outsiders in the rural areas of 11 mountainous districts of the State barring Hardwar and Udhampur Singh Nagar. Interestingly, the bill was passed without much debate inside the Vidhan Sabha while the din of the unpleasant Pahadi versus maidani debate engulfed other discussions.

नेनीताल दुग्ध उत्पादक सहकारी संघ लिमिटेड
(आई.एस.ओ. प्रमाणित उपकरण)
लालकुआँ, जिला नैनीताल (उत्तराखण्ड) दूरभाष : 05946 - 288061, 288127
पत्रांक 5389-93 / पीएफड आई०-जायका / साईनेज / 2024-25 दिनांक- 24.02.2025
संशोधित निविदा सूचना
सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि दिनांक 23.02.2025 को प्रकाशित अल्पकालिक निविदा सूचना में दुग्ध समिति 'पूरनपुर' को 'पदमपुर' पढा जाये।
शेष निविदा को शर्त पूर्ववत् रहेगी।
निर्माता : औषध दुग्ध एवं दुग्ध उत्पाद सामान्य प्रबन्धक

IG Khurana passes away after prolonged illness

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama, director general of police Deepam Seth and various officers paid tributes to inspector general of police Kewal Khurana who breathed his last late on Sunday night. An IPS officer of the 2005 batch of Uttarakhand cadre, Khurana passed away at a private hospital in Delhi. He succumbed to prolonged illness. His last rites were held

at Haridwar on Monday.

CM condoled his demise and also met the bereaved family members in Dehradun. Born in 1978 in Uttar Pradesh, Khurana had worked in various positions including the senior superintendent of police in Dehradun and Udhampur Singh Nagar, later also working as the director of traffic and most recently



headed the Home Guard. Considered a capable and promising police officer in

the State, he had executed various effective measures during his tenure in various capacities including taking stern measures for resolving traffic issues in Dehradun and enabling the education of children from deprived sections of society in Udhampur Singh Nagar district. His efforts are still appreciated among the general public.

Office of Superintending Engineer
6th circle, PWD, Uttarkashi
E-Mail : sepwduki@rediffmail.com Tel./Fax No-01374-222127

Letter No. - 734/56 M-06/2024
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Short Terms E-TENDER NOTICE
The Superintending Engineer 6th Circle, public works department, Uttarkashi, on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites item rate tender in two bid system for the following work. Information regarding tender shall be available on <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> from 5:00 pm date 03.03.2025

S. No	Name of work	Earnest money (Rs in lacs)	Cost of tender document (in Rs.)	Validity of tender (In days)	Time of Completion (In Month)	Class of Contractor
1	Strengthening Expansion Restoration Work of Rocfall Barrier in the landslide area From Masjid Mohalla area to Jal Nigam Office Gufiara at the headquarters of District Uttarkashi below Varunavat Mountain and work of modern gabio check dam below the landslide area.	10.00	5000.00 + 18% GST	120 days	09 Months	Registered in 'A' & above category in Road works in central Govt./State Govt./any Govt. Undertakin.

Destination Uttarakhand

EMERGING AYUSH & WELLNESS HUB

Yoga & meditation in U'Khand, a sign of wellness & spiritual revival

The tranquil and spiritual terrain of the Garhwal Himalayas has evolved into a focal point for fitness lovers, thanks to PM Modi's future forward vision



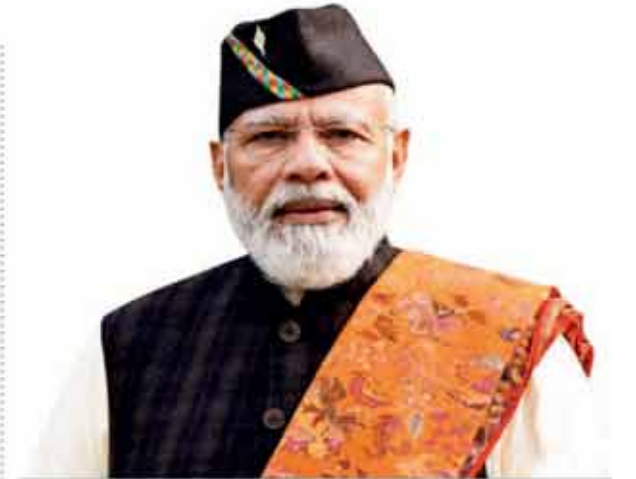
In June 2018, during the 4th International Yoga Day, Prime Minister Modi guided an estimated 50,000 enthusiasts in performing yoga asanas at the scenic Forest Research Institute, Dehradun. Emphasising yoga's international resonance, Modi remarked, "From Dehradun to Dublin, from Shanghai to Chicago, from Jakarta to Johannesburg, Yoga is everywhere." His focus on yoga as a unifying and therapeutic approach echoed profoundly, strengthening its position in boosting physical and mental well-being. "In Yoga, we have the perfect solution to

the problems we face, either as individuals or in our society," he said, highlighting the holistic advantages of yoga in promoting a peaceful, innovative, and satisfied life. The Prime Minister's advocacy for yoga expanded beyond the International Yoga Day festivities. In May 2019, his visit to the Kedarnath shrine attracted considerable awareness, especially his meditation session in the 'Dhyan Gufa' (meditation cave). A picture of Modi covered in a saffron shawl, sitting in meditation inside the cave, went viral on social me-

dia, scintillating widespread appeal in the cave as a new traveller appeal. This scenic location at 12,500 feet in the Garhwal Himalayas encountered an exceptional wave in popularity, with bookings for the meditation cave soaring. Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd (GMVN) recorded a swell in online bookings for the 'Dhyan Gufa,' which has been completely booked for months

PM Narendra Modi's fondness for yoga and meditation has immensely increased the favour of these age-old traditions, especially in Uttarakhand

ahead. This inflow of interest has encouraged local management to plan the building of three more meditation caves in the surroundings, improving the spiritual charm of the location. Modi's many visits to Kedarnath have also contributed to a surprising rise in the temple's footfall. The temple has been witnessing record-breaking footfall since, becoming a historic landmark for Kedarnath. Prime Minister Narendra Modi through his enthusiastic participation and promotion of yoga and meditation has boosted the international profile of these practices along with restoring spiritual tourism in Uttarakhand, attracting innumerable followers to the peaceful and hallowed surroundings of the Himalayas.



I congratulate the Uttarakhand government on the remarkable progress achieved in the last few years. This has been made possible by sustained policy push and focus on key sectors such as tourism and renewable energy. Alongside, the state has made significant strides in infrastructure development, setting new benchmarks for sustainable growth. Uttarakhand's commitment to harnessing its natural resources and promoting tourism has not only bolstered its economy but also showcased its potential on the global stage. I applaud the state's dedication to inclusive development and look forward to its continued success in the years ahead."

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttarakhand, known as Devbhoomi, has truly flourished as a global destination for yoga and meditation. His dedication, exemplified by his visits and meditation in Kedarnath and Adi Kailash, has inspired countless people worldwide to visit Rishikesh. Our government is committed to transforming Uttarakhand into a world-renowned hub for AYUSH health services, medicines, and consumer products, furthering his mission of holistic wellness."

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister

CM Dhami Govt 245 appointed 245 Ayush Doctors in Uttarakhand

245 selected candidates got appointment in AYUSH department, after the approval of CM Dhami, the wait of AYUSH doctors waiting for appointment in the state of Uttarakhand for a long time is now over. The government has issued orders for the appointment of a total of 245 candidates including 242 Ayurveda medical officers, one Unani, one Yoga and Naturopathy and one Manager State Pharmacy. Recruitment process was started for 257 medical officer posts. Uttarakhand Medical Selection Board started the recruitment process for 253 medical officer posts of



Ayurveda and Unani Department on 11 March 2022. After completing the interview process, the final selection of 243 candidates was also done. While their appointment letters were being issued, complaints of irregularities in the recruitment process came in. On this, in August, the Chief Minister had ordered a detailed investigation of the matter. All have been placed on probation for two years. On this, the government banned the appointment of selected candidates on the posts of Ayurveda medical officers and handed over the investigation to the Director of Ayurveda. Now after the completion of the investigation, the government has issued orders for his appointment after the approval of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

186 villages of the state identified by the name of herbs, Ayurveda department sends report to AYUSH Ministry

The state government has identified 186 villages of the state by the name of different herbs to promote Ayurveda treatment. The Ayurveda department distributed plants of the respective herbs to the people living in these villages. It has sent the report of these villages to the central government. Dr Pankaj Kumar Pandey, secretary AYUSH, said that 35 villages in Almora district, 12 in Bageshwar, four in Chamoli, three in Haridwar, 15 in Nainital, 42 in Pauri, 23 in Pithoragarh, five in Rudrapur, 24 in Tehri, 10 in Udham Singh Nagar

Ayurveda programmes will be started in 3900 schools in the state. Ayurveda doctors will visit schools and make the children aware

and 13 villages in Uttarkashi were identified as Herbal Villages. This initiative of the department will promote environmental protection. Along with this, people will be aware about Ayurveda herbs. He said that from next month, Ayurveda programmes will be started in 3900 schools in the state. Under this, Ayurveda doctors will go to schools and make the children aware. 13 villages in the state will be developed as Ayush Villages. Regular camps of Ayurveda, Yoga, and Homeopathy will be organised in these villages.

Adi Kailash turns into a meditation hub

The Chief Minister's visit to Adi Kailash strived to boost the area as a noteworthy pilgrimage and visitor destination

On International Yoga Day, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami performed yoga at Adi Kailash, a venerated place situated about 15,000 feet above sea level in the sacred land of Lord Shiva. This occasion not only highlighted the importance of yoga in improving physical, mental, and spiritual well-being but also emphasized the cultural and religious legacy of the place. In his address, Chief Minister Dhami highlighted the trans-

formative influence of yoga, defining it as a convergence of body, mind, and soul that brings contentment and calmness to humans. He extended an invitation to Shiva followers and visitors from around the globe to visit Adi Kailash, highlighting the significance of incorporating yoga into day-to-day routines for physical, mental, and emotional stability. The Chief Minister's visit to Adi Kailash also strived to boost the area as a noteworthy pilgrimage and visitor destination. He stated that the idea of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been instrumental in bringing transnational acclaim to the location. The Prime Minister's visit to Pithoragarh and

Jyotikong last year has already extended the inflow of travelers and pilgrims, turning Adi Kailash, Om Parvat, and Parvati Sarovar into bustling locations of spiritual and cultural tourism. The Chief Minister emphasized the financial advantages that improved tourism brings to the local residents. With more visitors and pilgrims visiting Adi Kailash and its surrounding neighborhoods, local enterprises, particularly

those involved in homestays and local food production, are flourishing. He backed the growth of 100% homestay-based tourism, which not only conserves the local architecture and culture but also provides sustainable job prospects for the locals. In his speech, Chief Minister Dhami also addressed the necessity for enhancing infrastructure and establishments in the region. He called for the standardization of transportation amenities and the simplification of the procedure for allocating Inner Line Permits, assuring that tourists do not encounter any problems. He emphasised the significance of maintaining sensitivity and clarity in these procedures to evade any turmoil in this sensitive border region. Environmental protection was another essential emphasis of the Chief Minister's address. He voiced concern over the pollution of the environment and the drying up of natural water sources. He informed strategies to restore traditional streams, springs, and ghats, encouraging everyone to contribute to this cause.

CM stressed that the idea of Prime Minister Modi has been instrumental in bringing about transnational acclaim to the location

formative influence of yoga, defining it as a convergence of body, mind, and soul that brings contentment and calmness to humans. He extended an invitation to Shiva followers and visitors from around the globe to visit Adi Kailash, highlighting



Milestones by AYUSH

With a strong infrastructure and strategic endeavours, Uttarakhand has arisen as a leader in reviving age-old medicinal approaches and assuring their accessibility to all

The Department of AYUSH in Uttarakhand has made noteworthy strides in elevating and incorporating conventional Ayurvedic and Unani methods of medicine into the state's healthcare framework.

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES AND INSTITUTIONS
Uttarakhand has a network of 546 Ayurvedic and Unani hospitals, furnishing essential medi-

cal care mainly via conventional techniques. These include 541 Ayurvedic and five Unani hospitals, alongside specialised facilities in establishments like the Government Ayurvedic College in Rishikul and Gurukul Kangri, Haridwar. These organisations not only deliver treatment, but also act as hubs for teaching and research in Ayurvedic medicine. Under the National Rural Health

Mission (NRHM), Ayush wings have been established in 206 allopathic hospitals, further incorporating conventional approaches into mainstream healthcare. This endeavour advances to community health centers and primary health centers, assuring exhaustive healthcare services across rural and metropolitan regions. **EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**
Uttarakhand has five Ayurvedic

colleges, including two government institutions, committed to providing quality teaching in Ayurvedic medicine. Notably, Rishikul Government Ayurvedic College, Haridwar, provides postgraduate education in seven specialised topics, augmenting the collection of qualified Ayurvedic practitioners in the area. The state also underscores training programmes for Ayurvedic nurses and pharmacists, enabling qualified healthcare specialists yearly. Private sector endeavours complement government measures, contributing greatly to the workforce in Ayurvedic medicine and corresponding domains. **INFRASTRUCTURE AND MANUFACTURING**
The Government Pharmaceutical Laboratory in Rishikul,

Haridwar, plays a key part in making Ayurvedic medicines to fulfill hospital needs. This establishment assures the availability of high-quality, standardized Ayurvedic formulations, that align with national health priorities. **Under NRHM, Ayush wings have been established in 206 allopathic hospitals, further incorporating conventional approaches into mainstream healthcare**

and Unani medicines via its State Drug Licensing Officer. Licensing and supervision ensure compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), with the majority of pharmacies already licensed. Measures are continuing to improve certification for all pharmacies, including well-known labels acknowledged nationally and globally. **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**
The establishment of a State Drug Testing Laboratory in Haridwar highlights Uttarakhand's dedication to promoting research and assuring the effectiveness and safety of Ayurvedic medicines. This establishment fosters strict testing and verification, boosting trust in conventional medicinal practices.

Uttarakhand's AYUSH Policy

Transforming healthcare landscape



Under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and the guidance of Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami, Uttarakhand's AYUSH Policy outlines innovative strategies to integrate traditional healthcare practices with modern methods, aiming for holistic, wellness and economic growth

Known as the 'Devbhoomi' or 'Land of Gods', Uttarakhand is deemed to evolve as an international center for AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) practices, leveraging its rich natural and cultural legacy. The AYUSH Policy of Uttarakhand summarises enterprising strategies to incorporate conventional healthcare procedures with contemporary methods, striving for holistic wellness and financial development. With a terrain endowed by the Himalayas, Uttarakhand has long

been associated with Ayurveda and Yoga. The policy strives to capitalise on this legacy by enabling the cultivation of over 1,000 rare medicinal plants native to the area. Endeavours such as the Chief Minister Medicinal Plant Development Programme are set to involve 50,000 farmers in growing these plants, promoting sustainable farming approaches, and augmenting regional revenues. In the domain of AYUSH production, Uttarakhand already has a strong drive, backed by ample raw materials and promising business necessities. The state hosts multiple GMP-certified manufacturing departments making a vast array of AYUSH medicines and consumer items. Under the new policy, more incentives and assistance will be offered to enable more units to attain WHO GMP certification and adhere to global quality norms. This action is anticipated to greatly improve the sector's contribution to the state's GDP, presently evaluated at Rs 4,000-5,000 crore. Healthcare constitutes another

AYUSH policy strives to capitalise on this legacy by enabling the cultivation of various rare medicinal plants native to the area

Wellness tourism, already thriving in Uttarakhand due to its natural magnificence and spiritual essence, is set to obtain additional growth. The policy proposes building health centers and resorts across the state, concentrating on places like Kasar Devi and Haridwar known for their natural healing effects. Education and research are essential elements of Uttarakhand's AYUSH concept, with organisations like the Uttarakhand Ayurved University ushering the charge. The policy supports NAAC accreditation of all AYUSH academic colleges within five years, promoting educational superiority and assuring graduates are qualified to fulfill international norms. Governance-wise, the department of AYUSH will spearhead policy undertaking, teaming closely with other state divisions and stakeholders. A single-window clearance system will facilitate investment processes, drawing private sector participation and promoting financial expansion across all AYUSH segments.

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



HC seeks clarification from Tourism Dept on UTDB appointment

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand High Court has sought clarification from the State government on the process of appointment of the subject expert (water sports) in the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB).

Hearing a quo warranto writ petition filed by Dehradun resident Shakti Singh Bartwal, the division bench of Chief Justice G Narendar and Justice Ashish Naithani asked the State government, Tourism secretary and CEO of UTDB to submit their explanations on the issue. According to the peti-

tioner, the UTDB appointed one Bhubendra Singh Pundir as subject expert (water sports) on June 19, 2024. The petition claims that the minimum educational qualification required for this position was a bachelor's degree, whereas the selected candidate had submitted a diploma certificate with his application which rendered him not eligible for the post. In the hearing, the HC raised questions regarding the educational qualification of the selected candidate. It also remarked that it was beyond understanding how a candidate serving in the military could

obtain a bachelor's degree without attending regular classes.

The court asked the government as to how a person without a bachelor's degree was appointed to the position and did the selection committee observe transparency in the appointment process. It also asked if other eligible candidates were deliberately excluded from the process.

The next hearing in the case is scheduled on March 5 in which the court has asked Pundir to remain present.

Rains forecast today in mountains after dry, warmer spell

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

After a dry and comparatively warmer spell which lasted a few days, the weather is forecast to take a turn in the State on Tuesday with rain likely in at least four districts. The State Meteorological Centre has forecast that very light to light rainfall is likely to occur at isolated places in Dehradun, Uttarkashi, Rudrapur and Chamoli districts on Tuesday. Apart from this, the weather is forecast to remain dry in the remaining districts of the State.

The provisional State capital Dehradun is forecast to witness

a mainly clear sky becoming partly cloudy towards the afternoon/evening. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be about 27 degrees Celsius and 11 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun today.

Meanwhile, the maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in the State on Monday were 26.4 degrees Celsius and 10.6 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun, 27.2 degrees Celsius and 7.6 degrees Celsius in Pantnagar, 16.6 degrees Celsius and 2.4 degrees Celsius in Mukteshwar and 16.4 degrees

Celsius and 5.2 degrees Celsius in New Tehri. The maximum temperature was three degrees Celsius above normal while the minimum was a degree above normal in Dehradun. The maximum was two degrees above normal and the minimum was a degree below normal in Pantnagar while in Mukteshwar the maximum was two degrees above normal and the minimum was a degree below normal. In Tehri the maximum was two degrees below normal while the minimum was a degree below normal.

24 Patanjali students secure jobs in placement drive

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

In a significant achievement for the University of Patanjali, 24 students of the final semester of MSc, BSc, BA, PGDYA and PGDYS courses of the department of Yoga Science were successfully placed during the campus placement drive held on Sunday. The drive resulted in successful job placements for students in various positions at Anant Yogalaya Private Limited.

He further stated that the university is committed to providing quality education



The university's placement officer Vinay Kumar Sharma expressed happiness over the success of the placement drive, highlighting that it was organised to offer students employment opportunities while they are still completing their studies.

along with excellent career opportunities. The selected students expressed their happiness and gratitude towards the university and the participating companies.

Kandwal to continue as chairperson of USCW

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The chairperson of the Uttarakhand State Commission for Women (USCW) Kusum Kandwal will continue in her role till the government appoints a new eligible person to the said position.

time, no new appointment has been made to the position. In light of the difficulties faced in the functioning of the USCW, the authorities have decided that Kandwal will remain in her role and continue to perform



According to the officials, Kandwal's term as the USCW chairperson expired on January 6, 2025. However, since that

the duties of the commission till a new chairperson is appointed.

Self-medication affects health adversely

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Doctors have cautioned against self-medication as it can result in kidney damage and various other health issues. It has been observed that the advancement of technology has led individuals to turn to platforms like social media for medical guidance, often opting for self-treatment rather than consulting healthcare professionals. Regarding this, doctors emphasised that relying on online health information can have detrimental effects and recommended seeking advice from a qualified doctor for lasting solutions.

Deputy medical superintendent at the Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) Dr NS Bisht said that he has also observed this trend, where individuals increasingly search online for remedies or medications for various ailments. He

highlighted that becoming a qualified doctor requires approximately 10 years of training, whereas information available through other channels can create an illusion of expertise in a matter of seconds. Therefore, individuals should consider who possesses the greater level of experience in healthcare matters.

He stated that many individuals resort to self-medication without consulting doctors, relying instead on medications, painkillers and other remedies prescribed by various sources. This practice of self-medication, can result in serious health issues such as general kidney failure, gastric problems and other complications. Therefore, he advised individuals against using any antibiotics or medications without prior consultation with a doctor. He also

emphasised that while home remedies may be beneficial for short-term relief, they are not suitable for long-term treatment.

"Self-medication from various sources is a misguided practice that many people engage in, often without understanding the underlying causes of their conditions. For instance, when experiencing a headache, individuals may choose painkillers without discerning the reason for their pain. Such self-medication practices can lead to adverse health effects, including kidney damage and ulcers, due to the consumption of medication without a doctor's guidance. Thus, it is crucial to seek professional medical advice before taking any medication," said the medical superintendent of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay dis-

trict hospital Dr VS Chauhan.

He emphasised that one should not rely on health consultation from different mediums including social media.

Local residents throng city markets ahead of Mahashivratri

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Many local residents have been observed in the city's major markets, including Paltan Bazaar and Hanuman Chowk, in preparation for the Mahashivratri celebration, which will take place on February 26 this year. In addition to the bustling markets, temples have also been decorated for the occasion. Notably, Mahashivratri is celebrated on the fourteenth day of the waxing phase of the lunar month of Phalgun. As part of the celebration, individuals often pay tribute to Lord Shiva through fasting and the offering of Prasad.

The owner of a Pooja shop Vibhu Pandey said that with only one day remaining for Mahashivratri, he has observed a significant increase in the number of devotees visiting his shop to purchase Pooja supplies. He said that many devotees were buying Kalash to offer milk and water to the Shivaling. Additionally, there is a rising demand for Shiv idols for home Pooja rituals.

A local resident, Yashika

Chanchal said, "Every year, my husband and I fast together on Mahashivratri. In preparation, I have completed my shopping for both the Pooja and the fast. I have purchased fruits such as Ber, bananas and apples, which I will present to Lord Shiva first thing in the morning of Mahashivratri." Beyond the Pooja shops, temples are also being adorned with flowers and lights. Further, many individuals flocked to fruit vendors to make their purchases.

In light of this, fruit vendor Raju Hari stated that in anticipation of Mahashivratri, there is a notable increase in the demand for fruits, particularly Ber, which is regarded as the favourite fruit to offer to Lord Shiva on this occasion. He said that he has been selling Ber at the price of Rs 80 per kilogramme. However, he said that on the day of Mahashivratri, the demand for Ber is expected to rise significantly among the local residents.

Mentored student receives Rs 5 lakh for startup under DUY

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A mentored student of the Project Devbhoomi Udhymata Yojana (DUY) has received Rs five lakh for her startup in Uttishtha 2025, organised by IIM Kashipur. This funding is intended for her startup, Eco Nexus Innovation, which focuses on sustainable material innovation by converting pine needles into non-resilient fibre (NRF) boards. These boards can be utilised in furniture, cabinetry and shelving. Siddiqui is a student at Government Postgraduate College, New Tehri.

Regarding this, Health minister Dhan Singh Rawat congratulated Siddiqui on her achievement. He said, "This is the result of the positive efforts of the Higher Education department, enabling our girl students to establish their identities on

ing the prime minister's vision of developing India and will provide all possible assistance to such initiatives."

Additionally, the secretary of the Higher Education department Ranjit Kumar Sinha highlighted that the government is actively working to create an ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in line with the National Education Policy (NEP). He said that through the DUY, a new generation of student entrepreneurs is being nurtured, with the funding received by Siddiqui serving as a testament to this effort. Sinha emphasised that the entrepreneurship ecosystem created by the DUY has not only fostered entrepreneurship in the State but has also improved the state's startup ranking. Further, the nodal officer of the DUY Deepak

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखों अनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम महेंद्र सिंह के रूप में दर्ज है, सही नाम महेंद्र सिंह आधर नं. 472311429799 F/o आर्मी नं. 16035146P राइफलमैन भीम सिंह, ग्राम पोस्ट- पतलिया, तहसील - कोटकासिम (पुरानी) हरसीली (नई), जिला - अलवर (पुराना) खैरथल (नया), राजस्थान - 301403 है।



national platforms. The growing participation of girl students in entrepreneurship is commendable. The government is committed to realis-

Kumar Pandey expressed gratitude to IIM for offering opportunities to students from remote and underserved areas.

Kirby celebrates its 17th Family Day

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Kirby Building Systems and Structures India Private Limited its Family Day on its premises here with various activities. Kirby International senior vice president D Raju, Kirby India CEO PV Mohan, senior director (Manufacturing) KG Philipose and other senior company officials along with Haridwar vice president (Manufacturing) Ashok Rao and DGM (HR) Dharendra Chauhan were among those who jointly inaugurated the event. The employees and their family members participated in various com-

petitive and recreational activities on the occasion which also saw different cultural presentations by the staff and their family members. A number of employees were also felicitated for their performance on the occasion. Raju said that Kirby is also involved in various social welfare activities. He said that the company is serious about education and health, adding that it has facilitated computer labs and furniture in schools. The company is also preparing a plan to provide better equipment for primary health centres.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE

I Satendra Kumar S/o Goverdhan Prasad R/o H.No.111, Krishnapuram, Majri Mafi, I.P. Po: I.P. Dist: Dehradun, Uttarakhand -248005 have changed my name to Satendra Kumar Bahukhandi for all future purposes.

I No. 15434392L HAV (Chef hosp.) Jagdish Chandra Residence Military Hospital, Dehradun Uttarakhand. In my Army Documents my mother's name is wrongly entered as Sundri Devi whereas the correct and true name should be Sundari Devi as per Aadhar card.

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखों अनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम महेंद्र सिंह के रूप में दर्ज है, सही नाम महेंद्र सिंह आधर नं. 472311429799 F/o आर्मी नं. 16035146P राइफलमैन भीम सिंह, ग्राम पोस्ट- पतलिया, तहसील - कोटकासिम (पुरानी) हरसीली (नई), जिला - अलवर (पुराना) खैरथल (नया), राजस्थान - 301403 है।

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हमारे पुत्र का नाम नराम निमि के पंजीकरण में त्रुटिग्रस्त विधान कंडारी (VIYAAN KANDARI) दर्ज हो गया है। जबकि हमारे पुत्र का सही नाम अरिजय कंडारी (ARINJAY KANDARI) है। भविष्य में हमारे पुत्र को उसके सही नाम से जाना व पहचाना जाये। श्री पारितोष कंडारी पुत्र श्री केसर सिंह कंडारी एवं श्रीमती अदिति पत्नी श्री पारितोष कंडारी, निवासी: 146, स्ट्रीट नं 4, जोगीवाला, विवेकानन्द ग्राम, फेज-2 नन्दनपुर, देहरादून, उत्तराखण्ड।

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The below mentioned borrowers have been issued notice to pay off their outstanding amount towards the facility against gold ornaments. ("Facility") availed by them from ICICI Bank Limited ("ICICI Bank"). We are constrained to conduct an E-Auction of pledged gold ornaments on Mar 07, 2025 as they have failed to repay the dues. ICICI Bank has the authority to remove account charge the E-Auction date without any prior notice. Auction will be held online - <https://jewel-auction.procuretiger.com> between 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. For detailed Terms and conditions, please log into given website. In case of deceased borrower, all conditions will be applicable to legal heirs.

Loan A/C No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Loan A/C No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Loan A/C No.	Customer Name	Branch Name
243805001205	Bhupendra Singh	Dehradun - Anurag	097962005025	Sachin Sharma	Dehradun - Pratishtha	098062005666	Asha Kohli	Nainital
243805001516	Bhupendra Singh	Dehradun - Prem Nagar	408109007291	Ashish Bhaddi	Katara Road	098062005487	Prema Shahi	Roorkee
243805001530	Bhupendra Singh	Dehradun - Prem Nagar	160162003371	Mohd Uman	Katara Road	091362003988	Arshad Goel	U.S. Nagar
740205000556	Jtender Singh	Dehradun - Selaqui	160062001378	Govind Gopal Joshi	Dehradun - Selaqui	160062001875	Abhay Agarwal	Dehradun - Selaqui
740205000587	Gabbar Singh Bisht	Dehradun - Selaqui	179405002284	Nisha Sonkar	Dehradun - Selaqui	117662001837	Anju Devi	Dehradun - Selaqui
467762000193	Sumer Singh Kandiyal	Dehradun - Selaqui	199062002585	Irshad Ali	Dehradun - Selaqui	117662001840	Dalip Singh	Dehradun - Selaqui
			199062002591	Geeta Arora	Dehradun - Selaqui	117662001841	Chandrakanta Puri	Dehradun - Selaqui
			734062000287	Aneta Devi	Dehradun - Selaqui			

Date : 25.02.2025
Place : Dehradun, Garhwal, Udhm Singh Nagar, Haridwar, Nainital, Pithoragarh
S/d Authorised Officer For ICICI Bank Limited

SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd.
(Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.)
Corporate Off. : 503 & 504, 5th Floor, G-Block, Inspire BKC, BKC Main Road, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400051
Regd. Off. : Commerzone IT Park, Tower B, 1st Floor, No. 111, Mount Poonamallee Road, Porur, Chennai - 600116, TN.

POSSESSION NOTICE FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY [(Appendix IV) Rule 8(1)]

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.) a Housing Finance Company (duly registered with National Housing Bank (Fully Backed by RBI) (hereinafter referred to as "SMHFC") under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002), and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated mentioned below under Section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon you being the borrowers (names mentioned below) to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice and interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers mentioned herein below having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers mentioned herein below and to the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The borrowers mentioned here in above in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with said property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "SMHFC" for an amount as mentioned herein under and interest thereon.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Description of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1	LAN :- 61173921072813 1. Farkhan F. S/o. Hasim 2. Shabnam, W/o. Farkhan, 3. Shabnam	A Property Residential House, Admeasuring East 22 Feet, West 22 Feet, North 31 Feet South 31 Feet, Having Total Area 682 Sq.ft., Having Three Rooms, Living Room, Kitchen, Kitchen, Mumty Bearing Its Khassa No. 1584, Situated At Vikanagar Colony, Village- Salempur 2nd, Mahood, Pargana Roorkee Tehsil & Distt. Haridwar, East- Passage 17.5 Feet Wide, West - Land of other, North - Plot of Other, South - Plot of Other.	Rs. 14,30,726/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Thirty Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Six Only) as On 18.11.2024	20.02.2025
2	LAN :- 611738010771912 1. SETHPAL, S/O. NEKI RAM 2. REENA	A Residential Property Having Plot No. 02, Block - F, Having Land Total Area of 875 Sq. Ft. i.e. 81.32 Sq. Mtrs., Khassa No. - 1357, Situated In Village Salempur 02-02, Pargana - Roorkee Tehsil & Distt. Haridwar, Boundaries as Per Deed - East- Way 20 Ft Wide, West - Plot No-25, North - Plot No-03, South - Plot No- 01.	Rs. 12,86,368/- (Rs. Twelve Lakh Eighty Six Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Eight Only) as On 10.09.2024	21.02.2025
3	LAN :- 611639211170528 1. Imran Islam, S/o. 2. Shabnam, W/o. Imran	All That Property Comprising of Land Bring Khata No. 767 (Fasli) Near 1420 To 1425, Khassa No. 9 Ka Area Measuring 94.30 Sq. Mtrs. With Total Covered Area Measuring 75 Sq. Mtrs, Situated At Mauza Navada, Pargana Panwa Doon, Distt. Dehradun, East :- 15 Ft. Wide Road, West- Property of Shri Dilshad, North :- Property of Others, South :- 15 Ft Wide Road	Rs. 24,30,990/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Thirty Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Only) as On 14.10.2024	18.02.2025

Place : Haridwar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
Date : 18.02.2025 / 20.02.2025 / 21.02.2025
Authorized Officer, SMFG INDIA HOME FINANCE CO. LTD.
(Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.)

Bank of Baroda
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property) (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the BANK OF BARODA, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantors as given below to repay the amount mentioned below within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section (4) of section 13 of the act read with rule 3 of the security interest Enforcement rules, 2002 on the date mentioned below against their names. The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property, and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of BANK OF BARODA, Garhwal Jal Sansthan, BRANCH, DEHRADUN for an amount detailed below and interest together with expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section 8 of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

S. No.	Name of the Borrowers/Guarantors	Description of Immovable Properties	Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount
1.	Branch: Garhwal Jal Sansthan, Dehradun Borrower: Mr. Manish Chaudhary and Mr. Kajal Chaudhary and Guarantor Shri Krishan Pal Bisht.	Equitable Mortgage dated 21.03.2016 All that Second Floor Portion (Without roof right) property forming part of Khassa No. 758 (THDC Plot no. 36 and 37) situated at Mauza Dehra Khas, Pargana Central Doon, District- Dehradun having covered area 63.27 Sq mtrs and proportionate land area out of Total plot area measuring 131.11 sq mtrs. Property standing in the name of Shri Manish Chaudhary son of Late Shri Satish Kumar Chaudhary & Mrs. Kajal Chaudhary son of Manish Chaudhary Boundaries of Property: East- 20 ft. wide Road, West: Land of Others, North: Land of Smt. Shashina, South: Land of Others.	15.10.2024	Rs. 18,82,951.95/- and further interest thereon at the contractual rate w.e. 18.02.2024 plus costs charges & expenses till date of payment.

Date : 24.02.2025
Place: Dehradun
Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

कार्यालय नगर निगम, हरिद्वार
पत्रांक- 1955 / सम्मति अर्जु / 2024-25
ई-निविदा सूचना
दिनांक- 24.02.2025

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि नगर निगम, हरिद्वार द्वारा समस्त इच्छुक व्यक्तियों / ठेकेदारों से हरिद्वार, हरकी पौडी स्थित 03 स्थलों पर फूल - फरोशी का ठेका किये जाने हेतु दिनांक 25.02.2025 से दिनांक 11.03.2025 तक दोपहर 2:00 बजे तक ई-निविदायें आमन्त्रित की जाती हैं, जिसकी शर्त वेबसाइट www.uktenders.gov.in अपलोड की जा रही है।

उपरोक्त कार्य हेतु इच्छुक व्यक्ति / फर्म अपनी रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति प्रस्तुत करें। ई-ऑनलाइन दस्तावेज व अन्य विवरण आपके द्वारा वेबसाइट www.uktenders.gov.in पर डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं।

क्र/सं	घाट एवं ठेके का नाम	स्थल का साईज एवं स्थल संख्या	निविदा की पूर्ण तैयारी में 10 प्रतिशत बटोतीरी निविदा दर	घरोहर धराराशि	हैसियत 25 प्रतिशत
1	मालवीय द्वीप जाने वाले पुल के साथ	6' x 6' स्थल सं-02	92,00,000/-	1,01,20,000/-	2,02,400/-
2	घंटाघर से पत्तद्वीप जाने वाले पुल की सीढ़ी के साथ	6' x 6' सिल सं-03	1,25,00,000/-	1,37,50,000/-	2,75,000/-
3	नाईसोता घाट नाले के पास	6' x 6' सिल सं-05	95,50,000/-	1,05,05,000/-	2,10,100/-

सहायक नगर आयुक्त, नगर निगम हरिद्वार

It is time to invest in MP: PM Modi

BJP set up factory of 'jumlas' in Assam says Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
BHOPAL



PM Narendra Modi with Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Singh attends the Global Investors Summit 2025 in Bhopal PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said with a strong talent pool and thriving industries, Madhya Pradesh is becoming a preferred business destination and that this is the time, and right time, to invest in the state.

He was speaking after inaugurating the mega 'Invest Madhya Pradesh - Global Investors Summit-2025' at the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, located near the picturesque Upper Lake in Bhopal, to showcase the state's infinite possibilities for investors and industrialists.

Modi said the World Bank has expressed confidence that India will continue to be the world's fastest growing economy in the coming years.

The World Bank recently said in its Global Economic Prospects report that India will remain the fastest-growing major economy for next two years.

Modi also said the Deregulation Commission will help create investment-friendly regulatory

ecosystem in the states. India is emerging as the top supply chain for global aerospace firms, he said, adding that textile, tourism and technology sectors will generate crores of jobs in the years to come.

The PM also unveiled 18 new policies of the Madhya Pradesh government, aimed at attracting major investment in the BJP-ruled state. "With a strong talent pool and thriving industries,

Madhya Pradesh is becoming a preferred business destination," Modi said. "This is the time, and right time, to invest in the state," the prime minister said. "The speed of development in Madhya Pradesh has doubled after the formation of the 'double engine' government in the state," he said.

Modi further said Madhya Pradesh is among the leading states in India's electric

vehicles revolution. There are several opportunities in the health and wellness sector in the country, he said, adding, "The world is liking the 'heal in India' mantra".

Modi said in the past two decades, MP has seen a lot of transformations. There were issues pertaining to electricity and water, and law and order was even worse. In such a scenario, industrial development was

difficult, he noted. But in the past 20 years, with the help of the people, the BJP state government focused on governance.

Two decades ago, people used to stay away from investing here (in MP), and now it is among the top states in the country for investment, Modi said.

He said that a few days ago, a UN organisation on climate change called India a "solar power superpower".

"This organisation also said that while many countries only talk, India shows results," Modi added.

On the occasion, Chief Minister Mohan Singh said with the organisation of the Global Investors Summit here, Madhya Pradesh will make its identity as a major global investment destination.

Yadav said his government is committed to double the state's economy in the next five years, as part of the country's commitment to make India a developed nation by 2047.

Madhya Pradesh has decided to observe 2025 as a year of industries and employment, as part of its commitment towards making India a developed nation, he added.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday demanded answers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi over alleged corruption under the Himanta Biswa Sarma dispensation in Assam and asserted that the "double dhokha (betrayal) government" will be held accountable for its "sins" in the assembly polls next year.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said Modi has set up a "factory of jumlas" in Assam, whose mastermind is the most corrupt chief minister of the BJP.

"Recently, Congress leaders in Assam have been attacked both ways - politically and physically! The public will respond to these attacks by forming a Congress government after one year," Kharge said in a post on X.

The state of Assam is suffering the consequences of corruption, hatred and misgovernance by the "land mafia of the BJP", he alleged.

"The unemployment of the youth, the helplessness of the tea garden workers, the rebuke of the Hon'ble Supreme Court on the issue of

illegal foreigners and the hypocrisy of the BJP are well known.

"The state has lagged behind on every scale of development and economically. 3.5 Crore people of Assam are extremely angry, no slogan of Modi ji can cool their anger now. Change is certain in Assam and the North-East," he asserted.

Addressing a press conference ahead of Prime Minister Modi's visit to Assam, Congress general secretary in-charge of party affairs in the state, Jitendra Singh, said what magic lamp did Modi give to the Assam chief minister that he (Sarma) became a business tycoon.

"Himanta Biswa Sarma has built an entire empire in Assam. The Chief Minister of Assam owns many tea gardens, news portals, a big outlet of McDonald's, international schools and lots of lands. A lot of land has been purchased in tribal areas including Majuli, Kamrup, Guwahati, Nagaon, Golaghat, where land cannot be purchased," he said at the presser also addressed by Assam Congress chief Bhupen Borah, Gaurav

Gogoi, Pradyut Bordoloi, Pawan Khera, among others. Singh also alleged that rat-hole mining was happening under the nose of Assam CM. If all this is happening, then are Narendra Modi's agencies investigating, he asked.

State Congress chief Borah said Assam Tribal Students Organization has asked three questions to PM Modi today. During the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, Modi had promised that the daily wage of 11 Lakh tea workers of Assam would be increased to ₹351 but today this wage is between ₹250 and ₹220, Borah said.

"Narendra Modi had promised that six communities of Assam will be given ST status within 100 days. This promise has not been fulfilled till date. Rat-hole mining is illegal in Assam, but it still continues in many places.

"So the question is: under whose leadership is illegal rat-hole mining taking place in Assam? When will there be an investigation into illegal rat-hole mining, when will the CM take action?" he said.

Borah said he was attacked a few days ago, but no one has been arrested till date.

VIP darshan suspended at Kashi Vishwanath from February 25-27

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
VARANASI

Anticipating a heavy rush of devotees during Mahashivratri, authorities have decided to suspend the VIP 'darshan' facility at the Kashi Vishwanath temple here from February 25 to 27.

Kashi Vishwanath Temple's Chief Executive Officer, Vishw Bhushan Mishra said on Monday that the number of visitors to the temple has significantly increased due to the return flow of devotees from the ongoing Maha Kumbh in nearby Prayagraj.

With Mahashivratri falling on February 26 this year alongside the Kumbh Mela, pilgrims from across the country, along with saints from various akharas, including Naga sadhus, are expected to arrive in large numbers to offer prayers, he noted.

"On this occasion, the Naga akharas will also take out a grand procession, which will temporarily block general access through gate number four of the temple. This is likely to increase the waiting time for regular devotees.

Given the hot and humid weather conditions, prolonged waiting could pose health risks, especially for children, women, and elderly visitors.

Keeping this in mind, authorities have decided to completely suspend VIP darshan for the three-day period," he said. Mishra noted that last year, around 12 Lakh devotees visited Kashi Vishwanath Dham on Mahashivratri.

However, given that this is a Maha Kumbh year, the number is expected to be even higher.

Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma emphasised the significance of Mahashivratri for Kashi, saying currently, six to nine Lakh people are visiting the Kashi Vishwanath temple daily during the Maha Kumbh.

On Mahashivratri, the number is expected to reach 10 to 12

Lakh. To manage the massive crowd, the number of queues at all four temple gates has been increased, and specific timings have been allocated for akharas and Naga sadhus, while the remaining time slots are reserved for general devotees, Sharma said.

Additional arrangements have been made within the temple premises, including drinking water stations, ORS and glucose supplies, shaded waiting areas, medical facilities, and ambulances, he said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Kashi Zone) Gaurav Banswal said that for crowd management and security, police have identified 55 locations in the city where barricading will be enforced.

The Kashi Vishwanath temple premises have been divided into zones and sectors, with 13 sectors assigned to dedicated police forces.

The area from Godowlia to Maidagin intersection has been declared a no-vehicle zone, and barricading will be strengthened up to Dashashwamedh Ghat, he said.

To ensure smooth traffic flow, eight traffic inspectors, 24 traffic sub-inspectors, 164 head constables, and over 300 home guards will be deployed across the city, he added.

According to information available on the Kashi Vishwanath Temple's website, on Mahashivratri, the "Mangala Aarti" would be performed at 2.15 am while the midday 'Bhog Aarti' will be held at 11.35 am.

However, there will be no Saptarishi Aarti (6.15 pm), Shringar-Bhog Aarti (8 pm) and Shayan Aarti (10.30 pm) on February 26, it showed.

"The temple doors will not be closed on the day of Mahashivratri and four-hour aarti will be performed from 11 pm to 6.30 am the next day. Mangala aarti will not be performed the next day of Mahashivratri," stated the message on the website attributed to the temple's trust.

Fadnavis approves 109 names as OSDs, PS to ministers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said he cleared 109 out of 125 names referred by cabinet ministers for their appointment as personal secretaries or OSDs but didn't approve others because they are either facing inquiries or known as "fixers".

"I have received some 125 names of officials whom my cabinet colleagues wanted to appoint as either personal secretaries (PS) or as officers on special duty. Out of it, I have cleared the names of 109.

"The reasons behind not clearing the names of the remaining (16) is either there is some inquiry going on against those officials or they are known as fixers in the administrative circles," Fadnavis told reporters.

He also said the rest (16) are facing various types of allegations. "Even if it would hurt someone, I will not clear such names".

Fadnavis also snubbed Agriculture Minister Manikrao Kokate, who belongs to the Nationalist Congress Party, over his remarks that even PS and OSDs are appointed by the chief minister, "leaving nothing in our hands".

Kokate had said that Fadnavis issued a stern warning to all his cabinet colleagues to maintain strict discipline within their respective departments.

"He (Fadnavis) stated that any minister who attempts to deviate from the government's plan risks losing their position. There is nothing left in our hands, as even the PS and OSDs are appointed by the chief minister. We will have to

perform now," Kokate said.

When asked about the agriculture minister's remarks, Fadnavis said Kokate probably didn't know approving the appointments of PS and OSDs is the CM's prerogative.

"A minister can propose candidates, but the final decision rests with my office," the CM added.

Fadnavis also expressed concerns regarding the issue of illegal constructions near Mumbai, which have led to court interventions.

"Some builders are playing a dirty game, by first engaging in illegal constructions and then manipulating individuals to file cases in court against illegal structures.

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has brought this issue to my attention. We will intervene in the courts to end such practices," he said.

Irtiga Mufti's seeks support to ban liquor in J and K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
SRINAGAR

Irtiga Mufti, the eldest daughter of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti, has taken a political stand against alcohol consumption in Jammu and Kashmir, and sought support from the public for the party's campaign to ban liquor in the Union Territory.

In a video message on X seeking support for the PDP's campaign to ban alcohol, Irtiga Mufti said, "Please be a part of our fight against alcohol and addiction.

Sign our digital signature campaign which I will be linking in my bio soon. And remember, the ban is just the beginning."

Electricity employees to go for nationwide strike against privatisation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NAGPUR

The CITU backed Electricity Employees Federation of India has urged central government and state government to stop further privatisation of power and energy sector and decided to protest against the implementation of Labour Codes. The national convention of electricity employees and engineers held in Nagpur on Sunday decided to go for strike on June 26 and blamed Central and State Government for "forcefully privatised its highly profitable, efficient and low tariff power utility in an irregular manner".

"The National Federations of electricity employees and engineers under the banner of National Coordination Committee discussed very gravely about the multi-prong attacks on the public electricity sector and the energy security of our country.

The convention took a serious note over the attacks on the democratic rights of the electricity employees and consumers, especially in UP. The Strike proposal was supported by the Samyukta Kishan Morcha and Central Trade Union leaders present in the Convention. The Strike is the response to all the attacks unleashed by the Central and several State Governments upon the public Power industry.

"After being elected for the third time, the NDA government has become desperate to privatise all the public electricity utilities.

Under the diktat of the Central government, the Chandigarh UT Administration forcefully privatised its highly profitable, efficient and low tariff Power Utility in an irregular manner. Desperate attacks of Privatisation have been unleashed on Purvanchal Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Ltd. (PVVNL) and Dakshinanchal Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Ltd. (DVVNL) of Uttar Pradesh.

It will put the service of 27,000 employees and engineers and 50,000 contract workers at stake. Electricity employees and engineers of UP are fighting for last 87 days defying the instigation and attacks of the UP administration," said Electricity Employees Federation in a statement.

The Federation also blamed Rajasthan Government for starting bidding process to privatise the Generation and Battery Storage Projects. Battle is going on for last several months in Telangana, where the Government has planned to handover the electricity distribution service of South Hyderabad Circle to Adani group, said the Federation.

"Actually, the Central Government is in real haste to privatise the state DISCOMs. A unique regional meeting on Power sector with States and UTs of Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh has been held on 20th February, New Delhi.

As per the Press Release of the Ministry of Power, "the States have urged Centre for support in privatisation of distribution" and "Listing of Utilities will be taken up by States to bring investment."

Undoubtedly, all these State governments will try to move very fast in their privatisation agenda," said Prasanta N Chowdhury, General Secretary of Electricity Employees Federation.

"Further to facilitate the privatisation project, a Group of Ministers have been formed by the Government of India and the convener of the group is the UP Energy Minister, who is infamous for his privatisation drives. And again the Central government is coming with a new draft of the Electricity Amendment Bill.

The struggle is bound to be sharpened in coming days," added the Federation.

Yogi slams SP over remarks on Kumbh arrangements

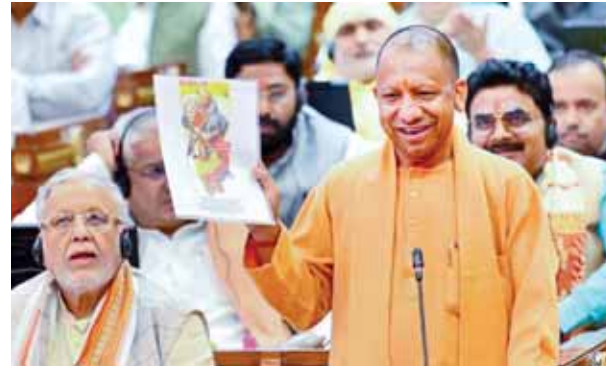
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath slammed the opposition Samajwadi Party on Monday, saying that during its rule in the state, the chief minister did not have the time to review Kumbh arrangements and "a non-Sanatani was made its in charge".

He was referring to the Kumbh organised in 2013 when Akhilesh Yadav was the Uttar Pradesh chief minister and Mohammad Azam Khan was made the in charge of the religious congregation in Prayagraj.

In his address in the state assembly, Adityanath said, "We have not played with faith like you. In your time, the chief minister did not have time to see and review the event and therefore he appointed a non-Sanatani as the in-charge of Kumbh."

"But here I myself was



UP CM Yogi Adityanath speaks as Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna looks on during the Budget session of the UP Assembly in Lucknow PTI

reviewing Kumbh and am still doing it. This is the reason that whoever went to the Kumbh in 2013 saw chaos, corruption, and pollution.

There was no water fit for bathing in the Triveni of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. The prime minister of Mauritius is an example of this who refused

to take a bath," he said.

Adityanath said that this time people are visiting the Maha Kumbh continuously.

"The President, the prime minister and the vice president visited there. The King of Bhutan came, and heads of all other countries of the world — that is 74 nations — visited the place. All of them

participated in the event and made it successful. For the first time... everyone became a part of this event and made it successful," he added.

Adityanath alleged that in the past one-and-a-half months, leftists and socialists made poisonous statements on social media about Maha Kumbh.

"Apart from dirt, disorder and trouble of tourists, they found nothing else there. But apart from all this, their ideology has no effect on the ground.

There is silence on hundreds of deaths due to conditions during Haj. The leftists and seculars of India who have been seen speaking on the Maha Kumbh maintain silence on that," he said.

Attacking the opposition over their criticism of Kumbh arrangements, he said whoever searched for something in Kumbh, got it.

Gurugram police arrests 27 cyber criminals for defrauding ₹157.90 Crore

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The cyber crimes teams of the Gurugram police have arrested 27 including a minor cyber criminals who defrauded people in 14,633 complaints worth ₹157.90 Crore, police said on Monday.

According to the police, After reviewing the data of the 17 mobile phones and 03 SIM cards recovered from the accused by the police from the Indian Cyber Crime Coordinate Center (I4C), it was found that the accused were involved in fraud of about ₹157.90 Crore and around 14,633 complaints were registered against them across India. In connection to this out of 14,633 complaints 611 were converted into cases which were registered across India.

Out of 611 cases, 28 cases were registered against them in Haryana including 4 in Gurugram.

The accused revealed before the salutes that they used to commit fraud by creating fake IDs on Instagram and cheating people, committing fraud in the name of investment, digital arrest, KYC related fraud and task based fraud.

The investigation teams have recovered 7 mobile phones, 03 SIM cards and 02 debit cards from the possession of the accused. "The accused used to defraud people in the name of investing in the stock market, online loans and offers lucrative offers to the victims and duped them," Priyanshu Diwan, ACP (south) said. He said that the Gurugram police is closely working with other agencies

and organisations to counter these frauds. "We appealed to the public to steer clear of such dubious callers and advised caution in sharing personal details to strangers stalking them online," he added.

"The cyber fraudsters commit fraud by luring people with good profits, investing in the stock market, reducing electricity bills, in the name of buying/selling cheap goods online, sextorting through video calls on WhatsApp, morphing, sending links through various means, posing as a customs officer/police officer in the name of implicating false case, in the name of issuing a No-Objection Certificate, digitally arresting people by showing the fear of implicating them in a criminal case, etc," he said.

32 AAP MLAs, ministers in touch with me: Punjab Congress leader Bajwa

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa Monday claimed that 32 AAP MLAs were in touch with him to switch sides. Hitting back, the ruling AAP's state unit president Aman Arora claimed that it was Bajwa who has made an "advance booking" to join the BJP.

Speaking to reporters outside the Punjab Assembly, Bajwa also claimed that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was in touch with the BJP. "When (Arvind) Kejriwal decides to remove him, he (Mann) will pack his bags and join them (BJP)," he claimed.

The leader of the opposition in the state assembly asserted that in his 45 years of political experience, he has never made any wrong statement. "We had

earlier said the Congress does not have any intention to topple this (AAP) government," he said.

"I am saying this again 32 MLAs are in touch with me. Not only MLAs, but even ministers are in touch with me. Aman Arora is also aware of this matter," claimed Bajwa.

"They (AAP MLAs) all know that this is their last term. They are looking for new parties to get tickets. I am in touch with them (32 MLAs). We will see who is to be brought in, who is likely to win the polls and who is not. It will happen at an appropriate time."

Lashing out at Mann, the Qadian MLA claimed that the chief minister remained "absent" from the House on the first day of the two-day session of the Punjab Assembly, which began here on Monday.

HC dismisses plea against Mahashivratri celebrations at Isha Foundation, Coimbatore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Monday dismissed a petition seeking direction to authorities concerned from granting permission to conduct Mahashivratri celebrations at Isha Foundation in Coimbatore.

Petitioner S T Sivagnanan had sought a direction to the authorities to initiate appropriate action against Isha Foundation for allegedly operating its facilities without adequate sewage treatment facilities, discharging untreated sewage, for causing severe noise pollution and desist from issuing any permission for conducting the Mahashivratri function on February 26 and 27 in light

of alleged violations committed last year. The Court had last week directed the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) to verify as to whether the rules and regulations are being followed by the foundation during Mahashivratri celebrations.

TNPCB on Monday informed HC that Isha Foundation has adequate treatment facility to handle the sewage generated.

R Kannan, member secretary, TNPCB stated this in his court affidavit filed in response to the petition filed by Sivagnanan.

Kannan submitted that Isha Foundation has provided adequate treatment facilities and the standard of the

Ambient Noise Level was within the standards prescribed by the Board. In the premises of the Isha Foundation, seating capacity was only 60,000. He said no complaint petition has been received from the public regarding air, water and noise pollution.

This yoga center has necessary infrastructure facilities to handle solid, liquid and noise pollution during Mahashivratri function.

The Isha Foundation has also followed Noise Rules, he added.

Following this, a division bench comprising Justices S M Subramaniam and K Rajasekar dismissed the petition filed by Sivagnanan.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

German election Tik Toked

As Germany votes to elect its new chancellor, far right may make substantial gains thanks to its Tik Tok campaign

Germany votes in a snap federal election, a political shake-up triggered by the collapse of the three-party coalition government at the end of last year. With 59.2 million eligible voters, this election is set to reshape the country's political landscape, potentially heralding a shift towards conservatism and a stronger far-right presence. At the forefront of the race is Friedrich Merz, the 69-year-old leader of the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU). Merz has emerged as the frontrunner to become Germany's next chancellor, advocating for economic stability, stricter immigration policies, and a reassertion of Germany's leadership in Europe. The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) is poised to make historic gains, emerging as the second-largest political force. This comes at the expense of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democratic Party (SPD), which has suffered due to economic stagnation and dissatisfaction with the previous coalition government. The Green Party and the Free Democrats (FDP), both



part of the fallen coalition, have also struggled to maintain voter confidence. Meanwhile, the Left Party is fighting to remain relevant amid internal divisions and the broader shift in political sentiment.

This election is taking place at a critical juncture for Germany, with pressing domestic and international challenges shaping the national narrative. Germany, the EU's largest economy, is grappling with slow growth, rising inflation, and concerns about industrial competitiveness. Many voters are looking for a leader who can restore economic stability and drive innovation. Besides, the country has faced growing debates over migration policies, with many Germans expressing concerns about integration and border security. The AfD has capitalised on this sentiment, calling for stricter immigration controls. With growing geopolitical tensions, including relations with China, Russia, and the United States, Germany's next leader will need to navigate foreign policy challenges carefully. But the biggest factor that is being analysed is why the AfD is gaining ground? Indeed, the rise of the AfD can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, economic dissatisfaction has pushed voters towards populist rhetoric, with the AfD portraying itself as the party of change. Secondly, frustration with the previous coalition's handling of immigration and energy policy has bolstered nationalist sentiments. An interesting aspect of this election has been the role played by social media, particularly TikTok. The AfD has effectively leveraged TikTok to reach younger audiences, spreading populist messages through short, engaging videos, often laced with negative content. Meanwhile, mainstream parties have struggled to counteract misinformation and viral narratives that favor the far-right. This election underscores the growing influence of digital platforms in modern politics, raising questions about regulation and the impact of algorithm-driven content on democratic processes. Whatever the outcome, it will have far-reaching implications for Germany, the EU and beyond.

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PICTALK



A parrot perches on a 'Palas' flower, in Bastar

PTI

Navigating differences: Lessons in collaboration from a life in leadership

My experiences have taught me that to find common ground one must show patience, open to dialogue and accommodate perspectives different from your own

I have been trying to set up a small library within my condominium complex. A lady was apprehensive about the criticism from a select few for the expenditure on this noble venture. Her sharp rejoinder that she could never stoop so low to my simple solution of inviting the critics to inaugurate the library left me seething.

In another instance, a lady unequivocally told me that she would not work with another lady in the Art and Literature Festival I am organizing within my society. I found their response irrational. I had worked in the government sector for more than 30 years out of the 35 years of an active professional life.

The initial 17 years were spent in handling big teams of literate or semi-literate staff. My success depended upon their performance. I could not achieve much without the support of subordinates, peers, and superiors. I did not have the luxury of going back to my seniors to shift a person if he did not perform. I also could not go back asking for a transfer if I felt overwhelmed by the people who



had strong unions, and who would not hesitate to run me down even at the slightest hint of weakness. I was taking stock of the previous day's performance with my senior supervisor in my very first posting in a maintenance shed that had more than 1,000 staff.

A group of staff and their leaders barged into the room to air their grievances. An unruly element from the crowd threw an earthen tea cup to landed right in front of me on the table. I had to gulp down the insult to present a brave face as I thundered in the most authoritative voice I could muster that the meeting was over and I would not discuss any further. It turned out that they were testing me and the leaders

tried their best to be on my right side. A senior visited my shop floor during lunch hours in another posting in a production unit a few years later.

A place where a lot of grease was used was usually quite gloomy with layers of the sticky substance accumulating over years. The shop floor would also not be the cleanest of the places at lunchtime. Railways was an extremely hierarchical organisation with the seniors considering themselves masters at insulting the subordinates, particularly the officers, who would not retaliate in front of the staff out of a sense of propriety.

This senior gentleman shouted at me that if the cleaning staff was not available, then I should have cleaned myself.



SANJAY CHANDRA

My supervisor and the staff showed more compassion as they rushed around. There were many such incidents when I felt degraded and insulted. I did not have the same options that the two young ladies wanted to exercise. To give credit to both, they are well educated, one of them having studied psychology in college, the other is a medical professional. I find a similar unwillingness in other younger professionals. They are rigid in their approach to daily problems and would rather not talk to a person with contrary opinions than sit down to resolve them. The attitude often spills into the personal lives also. There would always be some difficult times. There is a need to discuss and find a middle ground.

I would like to bring their attention to the famous words of Abraham Lincoln, "I do not like that man. I must get to know him better." It will take a lot of time and effort. But in the end, it will be worth it. (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

New VC appointment rules undermine State autonomy

The UGC's draft guidelines, while ostensibly aimed at ensuring uniformity in VC appointments, have opened a Pandora's box of political and constitutional concerns



K S TOMAR

The University Grants Commission's (UGC) draft guidelines proposing a shift in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors (VCs) have ignited a political storm. By granting Chancellors—predominantly Governors—the authority to constitute search-cum-selection committees for appointing VCs, the UGC has stirred concerns about federalism, state autonomy, and academic independence.

Adding to the controversy, non-compliance with these guidelines could disqualify state universities from UGC funding schemes, creating a direct clash between the Centre and opposition-ruled states such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh. This move, seen as a veiled attempt to centralise power over state universities, places the spotlight on India's federal structure and the simmering tension between state governments and Governors, especially in opposition-led states. At the core of the debate is the growing role of Governors, often viewed as proxies of the Centre, in state governance.

Historically, state governments have played a central role in appointing VCs by constituting independent search committees. However, the UGC's draft proposes a shift, granting Governors—functioning as Chancellors of state universities—control over these committees. Governors, constitutionally expected to act as neutral figures, have increasingly been accused of serving partisan interests, particularly in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal. By formalizing the Governor's role in academic appointments, the UGC guidelines risk politicising the process, potentially undermining academic independence and turning universities into ideological battlegrounds. The fears of state governments are not unfounded.

In Tamil Nadu, for example, the DMK has accused the Governor of deliberately delaying VC appointments to push candidates aligned with the ruling party at the Centre. Similarly, Kerala has witnessed repeated stand-offs between the Governor and the state government over academic



appointments. The new guidelines only add fuel to these already volatile relationships. The UGC's draft guidelines also raise significant constitutional questions. Education, as a subject under the Concurrent List, allows both the Centre and states to legislate on it. However, the Constitution also upholds federal principles, granting states substantial control over their universities.

The new guidelines, by empowering Governors to dominate the VC appointment process, are being viewed as an encroachment on states' jurisdiction. Several states may challenge these guidelines in court, arguing that they violate the federal structure enshrined in the Constitution. States like Tamil Nadu have already passed laws to curtail the Governor's powers in academic governance, reflecting a broader pushback against what they see as an overreach by the Centre.

For opposition-ruled states, where educational institutions are often viewed as bastions of intellectual and political autonomy, the UGC's guidelines have deepened fears of central overreach. The ruling dispensations in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal have expressed strong apprehensions about Governors using this newfound authority as an extension of the Centre's political influence. In West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's government has long accused the Governor of interfering in the state's affairs, particularly in



THE FEAR IS THAT SUCH INTERFERENCE COULD STIFLE INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY, WITH UNIVERSITIES BECOMING VEHICLES FOR PROPAGATING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL AGENDA

the educational domain. The UGC guidelines could exacerbate this friction, allowing the Governor to influence appointments to academic institutions. Such moves, critics argue, undermine the intellectual independence that universities in the state have historically enjoyed.

In Kerala, where the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government has vociferously defended educational autonomy, the guidelines are being seen as an outright encroachment on the state's constitutional rights. The state government fears that politicised appointments could compromise the ideological neutrality and academic standards of its universities.

The DMK-led Tamil Nadu government has also repeatedly opposed the Governor's increasing interference in educational appointments. The state has even passed legislation to reduce the Governor's control over the VC selection process, only to have it stalled by the Governor. For Tamil Nadu, these new guidelines are a direct challenge to the state's efforts to safeguard its educational institutions from external political influence.

Universities, as centres of higher learning, thrive on autonomy and academic freedom. The UGC's intervention threatens to compromise these principles by potentially turning VCs into political appointees. Critics argue that such appointments could erode academic independence, with VCs prioritising political allegiance over edu-

cational excellence. In opposition-led states, this concern is particularly acute.

The fear is that such interference could stifle intellectual diversity, with universities becoming vehicles for propagating the central government's political agenda. This interference also undermines the confidence of academicians and researchers.

Scholars worry that political considerations will outweigh merit in appointments, leading to a decline in the quality of higher education. The resulting chilling effect could discourage free thought and innovation in academic institutions.

The controversy over VC appointments is emblematic of a larger tussle between the Centre and states over federalism. For states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal, the guidelines represent an erosion of their autonomy in managing critical domains such as education. This growing centralisation also poses questions about the role of Governors in a federal structure.

A balanced approach, one that respects state autonomy while ensuring accountability in academic governance, is the need of the hour. Without such a resolution, the guidelines risk becoming another flashpoint in the Centre-state relationship, with significant implications for India's federal structure and the future of its education system.

(The writer is a senior political analyst and strategic affairs columnist)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FARMERS DESERVE FAIR PRICES

Madam — The Union Agriculture Minister talking about the government working out schemes (February 23) to prevent distress sale of farm produce is welcome. India continues to be predominantly an agrarian country. Its contribution to the country's GDP was around 51 per cent at the time the country got freedom. Still, we had to depend on aids like PL480 to feed the poor. Thanks to the green revolution taken up with all by the government as well as the farming community with all sincerity the country is upgraded to food surplus status. But due to the shifting of focus from agriculture to industry, agriculture is suffering the worst, facing all sorts of odds at every level.

Though every commodity's price is fixed by the producer, it doesn't hold good for the farm produce. The government doesn't volunteer to take the ground reality into account and fix the cost, leaving it to the market dynamics. This policy has allowed the middlemen to play havoc. This reality, coupled with the apathetic moves of the government, has resulted in millions of farmers resorting to committing suicide. Many small farmers are deserting their farming activities and migrating to cities seeking daily wage jobs for their livelihood. The government is still not sensitised to address the issues but comes out with plans to monopolise farming by a few private corporations. It is good that the minister has now talked about the woes of the farmers who fail to get reasonable returns and the consumers who fail to get the benefit of the plenty. It would be a meaningful act of the government to discuss with the farmers and address their woes without attaching any political strings. Farmers are the real wealth creators and providers of food security.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

MEDIA TARGETS KIIT UNIVERSITY

Madam — After the suicide of a Nepali student at Odisha's KIIT University following an unhealthy relationship, some sections of the media are targeting the university

Virat shines as India beats Pakistan



India has beaten its archrival Pakistan by six wickets in their group A match of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 at the Dubai International Cricket stadium. Virat Kohli has once again proved his supremacy against Pakistan in the ICC tournaments, delivering a scintillating unbeaten century with a memorable knock off 111 balls. The win propelled India to the top of Group A with 4 points,

virtually securing a semifinal berth, while Pakistan faced the threat of an early exit, suffering their second consecutive defeat. Kohli's knock featuring seven exquisite boundaries dismantled Pakistan's hopes as their premier pacers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf struggled to make an impact after Afridi dismissed Rohit Sharma (20 off 15) early with a fiery yorker. It is Kohli's 51st ODI tonne by becoming the fastest batter to reach 14000 ODI runs during his innings. With 51 centuries in ODIs and 30 in Tests, with 7 double centuries in international cricket, Kohli is regarded as one of the greatest batsmen of all time. Kohli is often referred to as the King Kohli by his fans and supporters due to his achievements and contributions to the game.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

to satisfy their agenda. Now, the context of justice for the deceased girl has been diverted to their own vendetta. As a result, the last couple of days have been very dramatic for the student fraternity. Other students in KIIT who have come for higher studies from outside and their parents have been in a distributing mind state. They should not suffer from the media trial. Considering the incident, the state government formed a high-level committee to probe into it. Now it's become a political farce; every day different political outfits are staging protests in the evening in front of the main gate like a daily routine, which is ruining the academic environment on the campus. Amid all of this, we should not forget the contributions of this university to the sports and education systems of the state. Let's make a healthy environment for the other students of KIIT and have faith in the law.

Susant Pal | Bhubaneswar

TRUMP DISRUPTING WORLD ORDER

Madam — US President Donald Trump's economic and geopolitical decisions have

raised global concerns. His imposition of tariffs on Mexico, Canada, Brazil, and China has strained trade relations. His remarks about annexing Canada and Panama are alarming, while his characterisation of India as the highest tariff-imposing nation risks diplomatic tensions. On foreign policy, Trump's abandonment of Ukraine, despite US Democrats pushing it into conflict with Russia, has left the nation vulnerable.

His call for Palestinians to vacate Gaza and seek refuge in Egypt and Jordan adds to Middle East instability. If America alienates nations through unilateral policies, it risks losing global leadership. A hostile US stance could push China and Russia closer. No country, not even the US, can remain strong forever without allies. For America to truly remain great, Trump must adopt a more cooperative and balanced approach to international relations.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

THE HANDWRITING BLUES: A STORY OF DECLINE

Some see handwriting as a reflection of character, but it shifts, evolves and often declines beyond recognition



APS MALHOTRA

Some conjecture that a person's handwriting can give a glimpse into that person's character. But I am a sceptic in this regard, because, in my opinion, the handwriting of an individual is not a constant, but keeps on morphing as time goes by. A case in point is your humble friend, who has seen his handwriting deteriorate over the past few decades, till now, in my fifth decade, it is nothing more than a painstaking, almost illegible scrawl- although, with the advent of the now ubiquitous personal computer and other sundry devices, the negative impact of this deterioration has been minimised, especially in official work. Because today, when I write a note on any file with my hand, others find it rather difficult to 'decrypt'. Even filling simple financial documents like a cheque is a nightmare now, a stiff challenge, that is increasingly being left to my better half to handle, as bank people, on a few occasions, have raised doubts about the authenticity of my signature. But before the readers start commiserating about the sad and agonising state of my handwriting, I will share with them that this was not always the case. In the early years of school, I was the darling of my teachers because of my neat and clean handwriting, which made me the cynosure of my peers. Writing on four-line copies, I would get full marks in English handwriting.

The slide commenced from middle school onwards, when I shifted from writing with a pencil to writing with a ball pen, and the copy changed from one with four lines to that with two lines. But the hand was still steady, and teachers did not have any problem reading my answer sheets, as was evident from the good grades I continued to get in my exams. But I am sure, that as I entered college and the university in the mid-eighties, the good professors would have become



increasingly impatient in poring over my messy answer sheets, with scribbles galore. Throughout, my father, a diligent and thorough gentleman, with very precise and beautiful handwriting, kept counselling me to stem the rot, even as I secured a job in the public sector in 1991. He gently warned that it would adversely impact my prospects of growth in the corporate world, especially when this was the period when all office work was conducted on well-defined sheets of paper- which, in my case, were to be yellow pages.

Before leaving for Bombay (as Mumbai was then called), I scoffed at Dad's gentle, but consistent reprimands. It was only when I took my first, tentative steps in the company did I realise that what Dad had been emphasising over the years was not an iota away from the truth. I faced a mild, personal nudge from some bosses on this account, but others were not so kind, and their reaction bordered on outright contempt, reprimand and disapproval. But Dad was an eternal optimist. He still harboured a strong wish to get my handwriting back on track, even at this stage, for which he purchased a book- 'Techniques to improve your handwriting'. I was back in kindergarten.

So, whenever I came home to Delhi for a break, he would insist that I sit with him, at least for some time, and practice on ways to improve my, by now abominable handwriting. But by this point, my mind, like that of all young men, was engrossed in finer things of life than improving my writing ability, which, I realised, was destined to be an exercise in futility. This cat-and-mouse game continued even after I got married in 1993. It was only after I became a father in 1995 did Dad finally buried his desire to improve my handwriting to a decent level.

(The author is a freelance writer; views are personal)

RBI should go for an 'accommodative' stance



UTTAM GUPTA

While inflation has been steadily declining, the RBI opted to retain its 'neutral' stance, signaling a measured approach rather than give push to boost liquidity and demand



On February 7, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced the decisions taken by the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in its sixth bi-monthly meeting of the current financial year (FY). It has reduced the policy rate or the repo rate (the interest rate at which the RBI lends to banks) by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. This marks the first repo rate cut in nearly five years. Moreover, it has continued with a neutral stance which it shifted in its fourth bi-monthly review/announcement on October 10, 2024, from its earlier stance of "withdrawal of accommodation". In 2016, the Union Government put in place an institutionalized framework to enable the MPC to formulate monetary policy and determine the key interest rates including the policy rate for inflation targeting. It mandated the RBI to fix the policy rate in such a manner as to maintain the Consumer Price Index or CPI (it corresponds to a basket that includes food, fuel, manufactured goods, and select services) within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent).

The RBI decides the policy rates once in two months during each FY. The mandate initially given for five years ending March 31, 2021, has since been extended for a further period of five years. The current mandate will continue till March 31, 2026. The other crucial policy instrument the RBI uses for targeting inflation is Liquidity - jargon for the quantum of credit available in the banking system. Pumping more liquidity along with a reduction in the policy rate represents a scenario which in jargon is described as an 'accommodative' policy stance. The terminology was coined by the outgoing governor Shaktikanta Das in June 2019 when he started going for aggressive cuts in the policy rate and an increase in credit availability.

Since June 2022 the RBI changed its stance to "withdrawal of accommodation" and had stuck to it till October 9, 2024, when in the fourth bi-monthly review, the MPC decided to go for a "neutral" stance. A



THE PROBLEM IS RBI'S OBSESSION WITH INFLATION. MALHOTRA RECOGNISES THAT INFLATION IS ON A DOWNWARD TRAJECTORY. YET, HE DOESN'T WANT TO RELINQUISH HIS NEUTRAL STANCE CITING GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHALLENGES "PROGRESS IN GLOBAL DISINFLATION IS STALLING"

"neutral" stance connotes that the RBI has vowed to keep its options flexible meaning it will neither squeeze liquidity by restricting credit availability and keeping policy rates high nor go for unrestrained lending at low interest rates.

While inflation targeting is important, it is equally necessary to dovetail the monetary policy to sustain the momentum of high growth. During the second quarter of the current FY, growth in GDP plummeted to a low of 5.4 per cent down from a high of 8.1 per cent during the second Qr of FY 2023-24. For the current FY 2024-25, it is estimated at 6.4 per cent as against 8.2 per cent recorded during FY 2023-24. Seen in this backdrop and an overarching need to achieve a growth of 8 per cent on a sustained basis in line to make India a 'developed economy' by 2047, the RBI could have given the desired push. It could have gone for an 'accommodative' policy stance by opting for a significant cut in the policy rate and pumping sufficient cash into the banking system. However, it has stuck to a "neutral" stance while reducing the repo rate by a small 0.25 per cent. RBI's reluctance has to do with a mindset that was reflected in ex-Governor Das's observation while announcing the first bi-monthly policy of the current FY. He had said "The elephant has now gone out for a walk and appears to be returning to the forest.

We would like the elephant to return to the forest and remain there on a durable basis." Put simply, he meant there was no need to start reducing interest rates until inflation reached the target of 4 per cent and stayed at that level. The incumbent Governor has continued with this mindset. In February 2023, the policy rate was at a peak of 6.5 per cent. During FY 2022-23, the CPI inflation was hovering around 8 percent.

In the following year, it started decreasing from 7.4 per cent in July 2023 to 5 per cent in September 2023, 4.8 per cent in October 2023 and 5.1 per cent during January/February 2024. For FY 2023-24, it was 5.4 percent. During the current FY also, it has kept low; 5.08 percent in June 2024 and 3.54 percent in July of 2024. After a brief spurt of 6.2 per cent in October 2024, in January 2025, it declined to 4.3 per cent. During FY 2024-25, the RBI has estimated it at 4.8 percent. Given the above, from the third quarter of FY 2023-24, the CPI inflation has remained well within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent). This position continues during the current FY. For FY 2025-26, the RBI expects it to be 4.2 per cent. Thus, there was a strong case for a significant reduction in the repo rate besides the injection of sufficient liquidity. This would have helped in stimulating demand thereby giving a boost to economic growth besides helping millions of borrowers reduce their EMIs and helping industries, especially MSMEs reduce the cost of servicing their loans. But, this was not to be.

The problem is RBI's obsession with inflation. Malhotra recognizes that inflation is on a downward trajectory. Yet, he doesn't want to relinquish his neutral stance citing global economic challenges "progress in global disinflation is stalling". Put simply, he fears imported inflation impacting CPI hence, a "neutral stance will provide MPC flexibility to respond to evolving macro-economic environment." A major factor contributing to wide variations in CPI inflation is food inflation which has a weight of around 40 per cent and is impacted predominantly by supply side/seasonal factors whereas monetary policy instruments work on the demand side. Invariably, food inflation main-

tains an upward trend even as a small disruption in supply caused by seasonal factors can lead to spiralling prices.

As long as food remains a part of the CPI basket, inflation targeting will always remain a problem. There is an urgent need to exclude it while setting benchmark interest rates, an idea that was mooted by the Chief Economic Advisor in the Economic Survey (ES) for 2023-24. The CEA argued that monetary policy has no bearing on the prices of food items, which are dictated by supply-side pressures.

For instance, during 2021-22, wheat output was affected by unusually high temperatures. During 2022-23, rains accompanied by hailstorms acted as a spoiler. During the first half of FY 2023-24, food inflation went up due to a spike in the prices of vegetables caused by seasonal factors. The spurt in food prices during October 2024 also had to do with supply-side pressures only. The RBI can achieve little to control them by keeping the policy rate high. The RBI should take the idea mooted in the ES - 2023-24 on board. Meanwhile, it should consider reducing the weight of food inflation in CPI to reflect the contemporary reality. The current 40 per cent weight is based on the Consumption Expenditure Survey (CES) of 2011-12 whereas Summary Statistics from the 2022-23 CES point towards a significant reduction.

While formulating its monetary policy, the RBI's prime responsibility is to ensure macro-economic stability its pivotal focus being on keeping inflation within reasonable bounds. However, it can't be oblivious of the dire need to support economic growth which could be adversely impacted if it doesn't relax the credit environment.

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

M23 rebellion and Rwanda's role: The escalating crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

At the heart of this conflict lies a web of ethnic tensions, political grievances, and economic exploitation, particularly vast mineral wealth of DRC

The recent escalation of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a stark reminder of the region's deep-rooted instability. The resurgence of the M23 rebellion, which led to the seizure of Goma and further advances into South Kivu, is not merely an internal Congolese crisis—it is a conflict with significant regional and international implications. Rwanda's involvement, whether direct or indirect, remains contentious, as accusations of its support for M23 persist. While Kigali denies these allegations, the sophistication of M23's operations raises serious questions about its backing. At the heart of this crisis lies a complex mix of ethnic tensions, political grievances, and



DEBASHISH JAINA

economic exploitation, particularly concerning the DRC's vast mineral wealth. For years, Rwanda has been accused of providing M23 with financial and military support, a claim reinforced by multiple UN reports and statements from Western governments. Kigali, however, insists that it is acting in self-defence, citing the threat posed by the Democratic Forces for the

Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a Hutu militia operating in eastern DRC with historical ties to the perpetrators of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Yet, Rwanda's actions go beyond border security. The conflict's economic dimension cannot be ignored, with Rwanda being accused of profiting from the illicit exploitation of Congolese minerals, particularly coltan, a key component in electronic devices.

The capture of Rubaya, a coltan-rich area, by M23 last year suggests that economic interests play a crucial role in shaping the rebellion's trajectory. M23 claims to be fighting for the rights of ethnic Tutsis in eastern DRC, arguing that the Congolese government has failed to protect them from persecution. While

there is historical evidence of ethnic violence against Tutsis in the region, M23's actions undermine its credibility. Rather than advocating for political rights through diplomatic means, the group has engaged in violence, forced displacement, and human rights violations. Its strategy of seizing key cities and resource-rich territories suggests an agenda extending far beyond self-defence.

The DRC, backed by the international community, has dismissed M23's claims, arguing that the group is acting as a proxy for Rwanda's regional ambitions. The latest attempt by regional leaders to broker peace, with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community



(EAC) calling for an immediate ceasefire, reflects a growing recognition that the crisis cannot be resolved through military means alone. However, the reality on the ground tells a different story. M23 had briefly declared a ceasefire before resuming attacks, signalling that diplomatic efforts are struggling to keep up with battlefield developments. The DRC's call for UN sanctions against Rwanda, coupled with protests in Kinshasa

where demonstrators burned portraits of President Paul Kagame, indicates a deepening rift between the two countries. With diplomatic ties severed and hostilities intensifying, the prospects for a negotiated settlement remain bleak. A purely military solution is unlikely to yield lasting peace. The Congolese army has historically struggled to contain well-equipped rebel groups, and the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, has done little to prevent the latest wave of violence. Foreign military intervention, whether from regional actors or international forces, risks escalating the situation rather than resolving it. The most viable path forward is a combination of military containment and political

engagement. Strengthening the DRC's security forces to prevent further territorial losses is crucial, but diplomatic efforts must also address the root causes of the conflict, including ethnic grievances and economic exploitation. The global demand for coltan and other precious resources ensures that armed groups can sustain themselves through illegal mining operations. Without stronger international regulations and accountability measures, companies sourcing minerals from conflict zones will remain complicit in financing violence. Holding both state and non-state actors accountable for their role in resource exploitation is essential for breaking the cycle of conflict. The ongoing crisis in eastern

DRC is not just about M23 or Rwanda's alleged involvement—it is part of a larger geopolitical struggle that has plagued the region for decades. Unless regional actors commit to genuine peace efforts and the international community enforces stricter measures against illegal mineral trade, the conflict will persist. The path to stability requires addressing both security concerns and economic incentives that drive armed groups. Without meaningful action, eastern DRC will remain trapped in a cycle of violence, with its people bearing the brunt of a war that serves the interests of powerful actors far beyond its borders.

(The writer is a foreign policy researcher; views are personal)

Conservatives win German poll

Far-right party surges to second place

PTI ■ BERLIN

Provisional results confirmed that mainstream conservatives led by Friedrich Merz won Germany's national election, while a far-right party surged to become the nation's second-largest.

The campaign was dominated by worries about the years-long stagnation of Europe's biggest economy and pressure to curb migration, something that caused friction after Merz pushed hard in recent weeks for a tougher approach.

It took place against a background of growing uncertainty over the future of Ukraine and Europe's alliance with the United States.

The results released by the electoral authority showed Merz's Christian Democrats and the centre-left Social Democrats winning a combined majority of seats in the national legislature after small parties failed to make the electoral threshold.

That gives Merz the best chance of becoming the country's next chancellor. He said on election night that he hopes to form a government by Easter at the latest.

He has ruled out a coalition with the far-right Alternative

for Germany, or AfD, which is now the country's second-largest party after its best showing ever.

For the time being, outgoing Chancellor Olaf Scholz, whose Social Democratic party suffered a stinging defeat, will remain.

Mainstream parties hold majority as far-right surges Merz's conservatives won 208 seats in the 630-seat Bundestag, while the AfD won 152. The three parties in the former governing coalition lost seats, with the SDP falling to 120 seats and the Greens to 85.

The pro-business Free Democrats, which triggered early elections by pulling out of the coalition, failed to reach the 5 per cent of the vote required to win seats.

The left party got 64 seats, while the left-wing Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance came in just under the 5 per cent hurdle.

The AfD was jubilant on Sunday night, with leaders vowing to become the country's main party in the next election as its appeal expands. The anti-immigrant, far-right party has established itself as a significant political force in the 12 years since it was founded, but it hasn't yet been part of any state or



Friedrich Merz

national government. That's the result of what is often called a "firewall" against Alternative for Germany. Other parties say they won't work with the AfD, which is under observation by the domestic intelligence agency for suspected right-wing extremism, something that AfD objects to strongly. Its branches in three eastern states are designated "proven right-wing extremist" groups, which is particularly sensitive in view of Germany's Nazi past.

The election took place seven months earlier than originally planned after Scholz's unpopular coalition collapsed in November, three years into a

term that was increasingly marred by infighting. There was widespread discontent and not much enthusiasm for any of the candidates.

Merz says he's ready to face challenges from US and Russia Merz said Sunday night that his top priority is to unify Europe in the face of challenges coming from the US and Russia. Both US Vice President JD Vance and Trump ally Elon Musk openly supported the AfD.

"I have no illusions at all about what is happening from America," he told supporters. "Take a look at the recent interventions in the German election campaign by Mr. Elon

Musk." He added that "the interventions from Washington were no less dramatic and drastic and ultimately outrageous than the interventions we have seen from Moscow. So we are under such massive pressure from two sides that my absolute priority now is really to create unity in Europe".

Germany is the most populous country in the 27-nation European Union and a leading member of NATO. It has been Ukraine's second-biggest weapons supplier, after the US, and will be central to shaping the continent's response to the challenges of the coming years, including the Trump administration's confrontational foreign and trade policy.

The conservative leader said that "the most important thing is to reestablish a viable government in Germany as quickly as possible". "I am aware of the responsibility," Merz said. "I am also aware of the scale of the task that now lies ahead of us. I approach it with the utmost respect, and I know that it will not be easy."

"The world out there isn't waiting for us, and it isn't waiting for long-drawn-out coalition talks and negotiations," he told cheering supporters.

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF WAR WITH RUSSIA

Foreign leaders visit Ukraine in show of solidarity

PTI ■ KYIV

A dozen leaders from Europe and Canada visited Ukraine's capital on Monday to mark the in a show of support for Kyiv by some of the nation at war's most important backers. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau were among the visitors greeted at the train station by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and the president's chief of staff Andrii Yermak.

In a post on X, von der Leyen wrote that Europe was in Kyiv "because Ukraine is in Europe". "In this fight for survival, it is not only the destiny of Ukraine that is at stake. It's Europe's destiny," she wrote.

The guests, also including European Council President Antonio Costa as well as the prime ministers of Northern European countries and Spain, were set to attend events dedicated to the anniversary and discuss supporting Ukraine with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy amid a recent US policy shift under President Donald Trump.

In the latest sign of Europe's efforts to rework its strategy on Ukraine to respond to Trump's actions, Costa on Sunday announced that he would con-

vene an emergency summit of the 27 EU leaders in Brussels on March 6, with Ukraine at the top of the agenda.

"We are living a defining moment for Ukraine and European security," Costa said in a post on social media.

The three-year mark of the war in Ukraine came at a sensitive moment for Kyiv as Zelenskyy navigates a rapidly changing international environment upended by Trump's changes to the US approach to the war.

The US leader has sought to follow through on his campaign promises to end the war quickly, though his methods for doing so have alarmed many in Ukraine and Europe who believe that his approach is too conciliatory toward Russia and its president, Vladimir Putin.

Russia's foreign ministry said Saturday that preparations for a face-to-face meeting between Trump and Putin were underway, and US officials have said that they had agreed with Moscow to reestablish diplomatic ties and restart economic cooperation.

And on Sunday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told the state TASS news agency that Moscow and Washington would continue bilateral talks at the end of next week, adding that "quite a lot" of contact was ongoing between

the Russian and American sides.

Leaders across the EU, fearing both that Trump's approach to Ukraine would lead to an unfavorable settlement for Kyiv and that they — among Ukraine's most important supporters — would be sidelined in negotiation for peace, have rushed to assert their own response to the rapidly shifting environment.

The EU's top diplomat, Kaja Kallas, insisted on Monday that the US cannot seal any peace deal to end the war without Ukraine or Europe being involved. She highlighted what she claimed were pro-Russian positions being taken up by the Trump administration.

"You can discuss whatever you want with Putin. But if it comes to Europe or Ukraine, then Ukraine and Europe also have to agree to this deal," Kallas told reporters in Brussels, where she is chairing a meeting of EU foreign ministers.

Kallas travels to Washington on Tuesday for talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Asked whether the US administration is acting in the interests of Russia or Ukraine's Western backers, she said: "If you look at the messages that come from the United States, then it's clear that the Russian narrative is there very strongly represented."

Pope facing kidney problems

PTI ■ ROME

Pope Francis woke up and was continuing his therapies on Monday after a quiet night, on the 10th day of his hospitalisation for a complex lung infection that has provoked the early stages of kidney insufficiency, the Vatican said.

"The night passed well, the pope slept and is resting," it said. A medical bulletin was expected later Monday.

He is continuing to feed himself and is not receiving artificial or liquid nutrition, the Vatican said.

Late Sunday, doctors reported that blood tests showed "early, slight kidney insufficiency" that was nevertheless under control. They said Francis, 88, remained in critical condition but that he hadn't experienced any further respiratory crises since Saturday. He was receiving high flows of supplemental oxygen and, on Sunday, was alert, responsive and attended Mass. They said his prognosis was guarded.



A candle glimmers alongside a painting of Pope Francis at San José de Flores basilica, Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he worshipped as a youth. AP / PTI

Doctors have said Francis' condition is touch-and-go, given his age, fragility and pre-existing lung disease. They have warned that the main threat

facing Francis is sepsis, a serious infection of the blood that can occur as a complication of pneumonia. To date there has been no ref-

erence to any onset of sepsis in the medical updates provided by the Vatican.

This hospitalisation now looks set to be Francis' longest as pope. He spent 10 days at Rome's Gemelli hospital in 2021 after he had 33 centimeters (13 inches) of his colon removed.

In New York on Sunday, Cardinal Timothy Dolan acknowledged what church leaders in Rome weren't saying publicly: that the Catholic faithful were united "at the bedside of a dying father".

"As our Holy Father Pope Francis is in very, very fragile health, and probably close to death," Dolan said in his homily from the pulpit of St. Patrick's Cathedral, though he later told reporters he hoped and prayed that Francis would "bounce back".

Francis' condition has revived speculation about what might happen if he becomes unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and whether he might resign.

Human rights suffocated by autocrats and warmongers, says Guterres

PTI ■ GENEVA

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says human rights are being "suffocated" around the world, lashing out at voices of division and anger who see them as a barrier to their quest for power and profit.

In a speech to the Human Rights Council, Guterres decried Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine that marked its third anniversary Monday, appealed for a permanent cease-fire between Palestinian militants and Israel, and urged respect for Congo's territorial integrity, among other things.

While reiterating many of his concerns about conflict and climate change, the UN chief said he would propose new ideas to the Security Council aimed to bring greater stability and security for the people of Haiti, where a multinational security support mission has been deployed.

Guterres depicted a world where human rights were "on the ropes and being pummeled hard" by warmongers, a "morally bankrupt global financial system" that favors profits over planet protections, those who might exploit artificial intelligence to harm people, and leaders who seek to demonize migrants or restrict women's rights.

Human rights, he said, "are being suffocated by autocrats, crushing opposition because they fear what the truly empowered people would do," and "by voices of division and anger who view human rights not as a boon to humanity, but as a barrier to the power, profit and control they seek."

Three weeks ago, US President Donald Trump announced a US pullout from the council, though the Biden administration had already decided the United States would not seek a seat on the 47-member-country body when its latest three-year term expired at the end of last year.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Presidential Press Office, European leaders attending the ceremony at the memorial to the fallen Ukrainian soldiers on Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday. AP/PTI

China holds live-fire exercises in Gulf of Tonkin as Vietnam marks territorial claims

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Chinese authorities said they began live-fire exercises in the Gulf of Tonkin on Monday, only days after Vietnam announced a new line marking what it considers its territory in the body of water between the two countries.

China's Maritime Safety Administration said the exercises would be focused on the Beibu Gulf area, closer to the Chinese side of the Gulf of Tonkin, and would run through Thursday evening.

It gave no further details, but the drills follow an announcement last week by Vietnam establishing a baseline used to calculate the width of its territorial waters in the Gulf of Tonkin.

State-run Vietnam News reported that the baseline was in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and would provide "a robust legal basis for safeguarding and exercising

Vietnam's sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction". Vietnam has not publicly responded to the Chinese drills.

China and Vietnam have long had a maritime agreement governing the Gulf of Tonkin, but have been locked in competing claims in the nearby South China Sea over the Spratly and Paracel Islands and maritime areas.

China has been growing aggressive in pursuing those claims, and in October assaulted 10 Vietnamese fishermen near the Paracel Islands, three of whom suffered broken limbs. China claims almost the entire South China Sea as its own, though it has not publicly released exact coordinates of its claim other than a map with 10 dashed lines broadly demarcating what it calls its territory.

In addition to Vietnam, China's claims overlap with those of the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, while Indonesia has also fig-

ured in violent confrontations with the Chinese coast guard and fishing fleets in the waters around the Natuna Islands.

Tensions have been particularly high with the Philippines, with regular confrontations between the two countries.

Most recently, a Chinese navy helicopter flew within 10 feet (3 metres) of a Philippine patrol plane last week over the South China Sea, near the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines.

Leaders in Australia and New Zealand also said China should have given more warning before its navy conducted an unusual series of live-fire exercises in the seas between the two countries, forcing flights on Friday and Saturday to divert on short notice.

Political leaders from both countries emphasized that China didn't breach international law, but said they had only been given "a couple hours notice" rather than the usual 12 to 24 hours.

Greenpeace says pipeline company's lawsuit threatens organisation's future

PTI ■ MANDAN (US)

A Texas pipeline company's lawsuit accusing Greenpeace of defamation, disruptions and attacks during protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline goes to trial in North Dakota on Monday, in a case the environmental advocacy organisation says threatens free speech rights and its very future.

The lawsuit stems from the protests in 2016 and 2017 over the oil pipeline's planned Missouri River crossing, upstream from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's reservation. The tribe has long argued that the pipeline threatens its water supply. Of the thousands of people who protested the project, hundreds were arrested.

Energy Transfer and its subsidiary Dakota Access allege trespass, nuisance, defamation and other offenses by Netherlands-based Greenpeace International and its American branch, Greenpeace USA. The lawsuit also names the group's funding arm, Greenpeace Fund Inc.

The jury trial in state court in Mandan, North Dakota, is scheduled to last five weeks.

What are details of the case? Dallas-based Energy Transfer alleges Greenpeace tried to delay construction of the pipeline, defamed the companies behind it, and coordinated trespassing, vandalism and violence by pipeline protesters. The lawsuit seeks millions of dollars in damages.

The Dakota Access Pipeline

was completed and has been transporting oil since June 2017. Greenpeace International said it shouldn't be named in the lawsuit because it is distinct from the two US-based Greenpeace entities, operates outside the US, and its employees were never in North Dakota or involved with the protests.

Greenpeace USA said the plaintiffs have failed to back up their claims in the years since the protests. Earlier in February, a judge denied motions by Greenpeace to throw out or limit parts of the case.

What is Greenpeace's position? Representatives of the environmental organisation founded over 50 years ago said the company just wants to silence oil industry critics.

"This trial is a critical test of the

future of the First Amendment, both freedom of speech and peaceful protest, under the Trump administration and beyond," Greenpeace USA Interim Executive Director Sushma Raman told reporters.

"A bad ruling in this case could put our rights and freedoms in jeopardy for all of us, whether we are journalists, protesters or anyone who wants to engage in public debate," Greenpeace USA helped support "nonviolent, direct-action training" on safety and de-escalation at the protests, Senior Legal Adviser Deepa Padmanabha said.

Energy Transfer is arguing that "anyone engaged in a training at a protest should be held responsible for the actions of every person at that protest," Padmanabha said.

Federal workers confront mass confusion as Musk's deadline to list accomplishments looms

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Confusion and chaos loom as hundreds of thousands of federal employees begin their workweek on Monday facing a deadline from President Donald Trump's cost-cutting chief, Elon Musk, to explain their recent accomplishments or risk losing their jobs.

Musk's unusual demand has faced resistance from several key US agencies led by the president's loyalists — including the FBI, State Department, Homeland Security and the Pentagon — which instructed their employees over the weekend not to comply. Lawmakers in both parties said that Musk's mandate may be illegal, while unions are threatening to sue.

Trump over the weekend called for Musk to be more aggressive in his cost-cutting crusade

through the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, and posted a meme on social media mocking federal employees who "cried about Trump and Elon".

Musk's team sent an email to hundreds of thousands of federal employees on Saturday giving them roughly 48 hours to report five specific things they had accomplished last week. In a separate message on X, Musk said any employee who failed to respond by the deadline — set in the email as 11:59 p.m. EST Monday — would lose their job.

Mass confusion followed on the eve of the deadline as some agencies resisted the order, others encouraged their workers to comply, and still others offered conflicting guidance. One message on Sunday morn-

ing from the Department of Health and Human Services, led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., instructed its roughly 80,000 employees to comply. That was shortly after the acting general counsel, Sean Keveney, had instructed some not to. And by Sunday evening, agency leadership issued new instructions that employees should "pause activities" related to the request until noon on Monday.

"I'll be candid with you. Having put in over 70 hours of work last week advancing Administration's priorities, I was personally insulted to receive the below email," Keveney said in an email viewed by The Associated Press that acknowledged a broad sense of "uncertainty and stress" within the agency.

Keveney laid out security concerns and pointed out some of

the work done by the agency's employees may be protected by attorney-client privilege: "I have received no assurances that there are appropriate protections in place to safeguard responses to this email."

Democrats and even some Republicans, including Sen. John Curtis, R-Utah, were critical of Musk's ultimatum.

"If I could say one thing to Elon Musk, it's like, please put a dose of compassion in this," Curtis, whose state has 33,000 federal employees, said on CBS' "Face the Nation." "These are real people. These are mortgages. ... It's a false narrative to say we have to cut and you have to be cruel to do it as well."

Newly confirmed FBI Director Kash Patel, an outspoken Trump ally, instructed employees to ignore Musk's request, at

least for now.

"The FBI, through the Office of the Director, is in charge of all of our review processes, and will conduct reviews in accordance with FBI procedures," Patel wrote in an email confirmed by the AP. "When and if further information is required, we will coordinate the responses. For now, please pause any responses."

Ed Martin, interim US attorney for the District of Columbia, sent his staff a message Sunday that may have caused more confusion.

"Let me clarify: We will comply with this OPM request whether by replying or deciding not to reply," Martin wrote in the email obtained by the AP, referring to the Office of Personnel Management.

"Please make a good faith effort to reply and list your

activities (or not, as you prefer), and I will, as I mentioned, have your back regarding any confusion," Martin continued. "We can do this." Officials at the Departments of State, Defense and Homeland Security were more consistent.

Tibor Nagy, acting undersecretary of state for management, told employees in an email that department leadership would respond on behalf of workers.

"No employee is obligated to report their activities outside of their Department chain of command," Nagy wrote in an email. Pentagon leadership instructed employees to "pause" any response to Musk's team, according to an email from Jules Hurst, the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

The Homeland Security Department, meanwhile, told

employees that "no reporting action from you is needed at this time" and that agency managers would respond, according to an email from RD Alles, deputy undersecretary for management.

Thousands of government employees have already been forced out of the federal workforce — either by being fired or through a "deferred resignation" offer — during the first month of Trump's second term.

There is no official figure available for the total firings or layoffs so far, but the AP has tallied hundreds of thousands of workers who are being affected. Many work outside of Washington.

Musk on Sunday called his latest request "a very basic pulse check." "The reason this matters is that a significant number of people who are supposed

to be working for the government are doing so little work that they are not checking their email at all!" Musk wrote on X. "In some cases, we believe non-existent people or the identities of dead people are being used to collect paychecks. In other words, there is outright fraud."

He has provided no evidence of such fraud. Separately, Musk and Trump have falsely claimed in recent days that tens of millions of dead people over 100 years old are receiving Social Security payments.

Meanwhile, thousands of other employees are preparing to leave the federal workforce this coming week, including probationary civilian workers at the Pentagon and all but a fraction of US Agency for International Development staffers through cuts or leave.

Trump's abrupt change of US policy on Ukraine raises questions about Taiwan support

US President Donald Trump's abrupt reversal of three years of American policy toward Ukraine has raised concerns...

Trump was quite popular in Taiwan when he left office in 2021 and was widely credited with bringing the US and the democratically governed island closer together.

By American law, the US is obligated to supply Taiwan with sufficient hardware and technology to fend off invasion from the mainland...

appointed many China hawks in his administration, including in top-level positions such as Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Taiwan Strait as an indispensable element of security and prosperity for the international community." In a move that irked Beijing...

comforting," Nouwens said. The shift on Ukraine will give China the opportunity to push a message that the US is an unreliable partner...

approach than some before him, said Euan Graham, a senior defense analyst with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute.

Graham said that while all American allies "should be concerned by the Trump administration's abandonment of Ukraine and willingness to deal with Putin..."

Trump meets Macron amidst uncertainty over US ties with Europe, Ukraine

President Donald Trump welcomed French President Emmanuel Macron to the White House for talks on Monday at a moment of deep uncertainty about the future of transatlantic relations...

Chinese aggression brings Japan, Philippines closer

Japan and the Philippines agreed on Monday to further deepen their defense collaboration and talk about protecting shared military information in the face of mutual alarm over China's increasing aggressive actions in the region.

tion-sharing. "We also agreed to commence discussion between defence authorities on military information protection mechanism," Nakatani said.

over islands in the East China Sea. Chinese and Philippine coast guard and navy ships, meanwhile, have been involved in a series of increasingly hostile confrontations in the South China Sea in the last two years.

Blast outside Russian Consulate in Marseille

An incendiary device exploded outside the Russian Consulate in Marseille early Monday, authorities said, on the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Police raid PTI leaders' homes, offices, arrest dozens in Pakistan

Pakistan raided offices and residences of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders and arrested a dozen activists as the party announced the resumption of political activities...

dozen PTI activists, including Murrez District General Secretary Safdar Zaman Satti, were arrested.

unleashed a reign of terror on the masses. "This fascist regime has stooped too low by picking up a young college girl through male policemen in Punjab for sharing a post against Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on social media," she said.

Paradipt Port Authority

Name of the tender: Road Widening and Restoration/Repair of Divider from Gate No.2 to BOT Substation Square. Estimated Cost: Rs.4,24,97,225.82.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that, SEEMA DABAS W/O BALDEV SINGH R/O-GH-1/214, FF, PACHIM VIHAR DELHI-63, I am the miter/owner/legal owner of GH-1/214, FF, PACHIM VIHAR, DELHI-63, File No. 16(23)1889/PW/RPS which is allotted by the DDA, I have lost the Original Allotment-Cum-Demand Letter, Handing over Possession Letter & NOC for write up...

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Ashwani Sharma, son of Late Sh. Dinesh Kumar, resident of 578, Sector-15, Part-1, Gurugram do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under: 1. That I am contesting the election of Member from Ward No. 13 of the Municipal Corporation Gurugram as a candidate set up as Independent.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Know to all through this public notice that my clients Sh. Kirshan Pal S/o Late Sh. Hari Singh and his wife Smt. Saroj R/o H.No-104, Sangeer Pur, Delhi-36, have debarred their son namely together (with No. 59591/03/13) and his wife Asha (Aashir No. 25592/44/2852) from their all movable and immovable properties and have served all relations with them, due to their irresponsible & quarrelsome behavior...

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Nongmaithem Romi Devi, D/o Nongmaithem Koireng Singh R/o Wanging Khounou Awang Leikai, P.O. Chairel, P.S. Wangou, District Kachhing, Manipur hereby declare that Nongmaithem Romi Devi and Nongmaithem Romi Devi are one and the same person.

I, Babai Parkhe, Mother of-

No.14848522L Hav Parkhe Vijay Vitthal, R/o- Vill- Raygavhan, Post- Dhawalgaon, Teh- Shrigonda, Dist- Ahmadnagar, Maharashtra- 413702, have changed my name from Babai Parkhe to Babai Vitthal Parkhe, vide affidavit dated 24/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Sanju Devi W/o Mr. Anrendra Thakur who is/are purchasing the Flat No. 201, addressing around R/Su, Yds. on the Ground Floor in a property out of Kharsa No. 599, situated in Village Chhattarpur, Near Durga Ashram, New Delhi - 110074 from Mr. Bijoy Bhattacharya S/o Mr. Surya Bhattacharya who was the owner of property by virtue of Notarized Gift Deed, GPA & Will dated 07.12.2023 executed by Mr. Surya Narayan Bhattacharya S/o Mr. H. Bhattacharya alias Hari Narayan Bhattacharya. Intend to mortgage the same against the financial assistance from Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited, Surrounding Member Certificate of Mr. Surya Narayan Bhattacharya are not available with Seiler i.e. Mr. Bijoy Bhattacharya S/o Mr. Surya Bhattacharya to comply the requirements of BANK/NFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or creating mortgage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days at below address.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that Mr. Sonu S/o Mr. Gangra Ram is the owner of RESIDENTIAL PLOT of land area measuring 50 sq. yds, i.e. 41.30 sq. mtrs. out of Kharsa No. 528m, situated in the area of Village Chaichpur Loni, Pargana and Tehsil Loni, Ghazabad U.P. acquired by virtue of Sale Deed dated 14.11.2012 (Document No. 19882) executed by Mr. Devender Kumar Sharma S/o Mr. Patiram Sharma, registered in SR-LOVI, Ghazabad. Registration Particulars page are not available of Original Sale Deed Dated 09.12.2010, (Document Number 27353), executed by Mr. Eaji S/o Mr. Alias Though Attorney Mr. Onkar S/o Mr. Kewal in favour of Mohd Iqbal S/O Mr. Nabbi Bakas with our client in respect of the said property and our client intend to mortgage the above mentioned property against the financial assistance from Hero Housing Finance Ltd. Any person having any type of claim/right/title/interest over the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 10 days at below mentioned address.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to general public that Mrs. Babita Gautam who is purchasing the Residential Property area measuring 270 sq. yds., Kharsa No. 506/915, Village Chhattarpur, Noida, Pargana and Tehsil Deed Dated 02-08-2023 (Doc. No. 5042) and same to be financed & mortgaged by Federal Bank Limited, Sec-13 Limited. That (1) Original Sale Deed dated 01-11-2008 (Doc. No. 3712) in favour of Mr. Anil Kumar, (2) Original Sale Deed dated 22-02-2018 in favour of Mr. Dinesh Kumar and Mr. Rajeev, (3) Original Sale Deed dated 02-07-2021 (Doc. No. 3033) in favour of Mrs. Prema Devi, (4) Original Correction Deed in favour of Mrs. Prema Devi, (5) Original Gift Deed dated 06-08-2022 (Doc. No. 5041) in favour of Mr. Vipin, (6) Original Correction Deed in favour of Mr. Vipin, (7) All the above mentioned documents from (1) to (6) has been misplaced. To comply the requirements of BANK/NFC, we give this public notice that if any person having any type of claim/right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections within 7 days, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc. or interest in the said property. If any person(s) intending to sell their respective said portion(s) to proposed borrower(s) i.e. Sh. Vinay Kanchari (or any persons) having any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to right, title or interest in the said property in any manner whatsoever, immediately contact the undersigned in writing along with all supporting documents in respect of their claim(s)/objection(s). If no such claim is received within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, then it will be presumed that no one has any present or right, title, or interest in the said property and even if someone has any claim/objection, he/she/they have given up the same.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Miss Ashya D/o Mr. Shahzad Ahmed is the owner of Residential Building Second Floor, (Without roof slab), Built on bearing Property No. P-186, area measuring 80 Sq. Yards, i.e. 66.88 Sq. Mts., out of Kharsa No. 561, situated in village of Chandrawali, Aligarh, Ghaziabad, U.P. (Document No. 115/2012/1889/SG/AG/2012, dated 09.08.2012, as per No. 7979, requisitioned by Mr. Shahzad Ahmed, (2) Mr. Ashraf & (3) Miss Sana, same to be financed by SFGF India Credit Company Limited (Formerly Fullerton India Credit Company Limited), General public kindly informed that if any person(s) having any objection/claim over the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present. Rata Raj Park, Ashwariya, Sector-13, Gurgaon, Haryana. SG Associates (Law Firm) P/18, Lotus Road Plaza, Vaidya Khari, Indraprastha, New Delhi-110028. Email: sgassociates@gmail.com, 9811117236, 01144412361

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized officer of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule [3] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Bank had issued a demand notice on dated: 01-08-2024, calling upon the borrower & mortgagor namely Smt. Sangeeta Gupta W/o. Sh. Raj Kumar Gupta R/o. 1365, Ground Floor, Gali No.8, Govind Pur, New Delhi-110019, and Smt. Sangeeta Gupta W/o. Sh. Raj Kumar Gupta, C/o. Mis. Laxmi General Store, 1314, Ground Floor, Gali No. 10, Govind Pur, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.7,74,265/- (Rupees Seven Lakhs Seventy Four Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Five Only), together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Public at large is hereby notified / informed on behalf of my client Sh. Saied Ahmed aged 69 years S/o Late Shri Azimullah R/O-E-419, First Floor, JaiPu Extension Part-2, Badarpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044 that my client do hereby disown and disinherit his two sons; daughters-in-law and daughter namely (i) Shri Anwar, daughter-in-law Smt. Anjum Saifi both R/O of E-419, Third Floor, JaiPu Extension Part-2, Badarpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044; (ii) Shri Akbar Khan, daughter-in-law Smt. Imrana Saifi both R/O of E-419, Second Floor, JaiPu Extension Part-2, Badarpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044 and (iii) Smt. Parveen alias Rukhsana W/o Shri Saqeer both R/o Sangan Vihar near Asthal Mandi, South Delhi-110062 including all their legal heirs/successors etc. for their continued, misconduct, misbehavior, harassment, humiliation and misdeeds towards my client. These persons, their legal heirs/successors etc. shall not inherit any of movable and immovable properties of my client nor be entitled to any share in movable/immovable properties or any other assets etc. of my client in any manner whatsoever and they shall further not be entitled to the probate of any will of my client. To put to notice one and all that my client has no concerns either with them or their legal heirs/successors etc. in any manner. Any person dealing or transacting with the aforesaid persons in any respect concerning my client or his properties and assets etc. shall be doing at his or her own risk, cost and peril and the general public kindly take note thereto.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

For Signatireglobal (India) Limited has been granted Environmental Clearance for Industrial Plotted Colony at Village Shidrawali, Tehsil Manesar, District-Gurugram, Haryana vide letter EC Identification No. SEAC/HR/2024/266 dated 19.02.2025. The copy of clearance along with the conditions to be complied with is available at office of the Haryana State Pollution Control Board on the website of the MOEF&CC at http://parivesh.nic.in and at registered office of the company at 13th Floor, Dr. Gopal Dass Bhawan, 28 Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001 and also on website of the company at www.signatireglobal.in.

PUBLIC NOTICE

M/s Signatireglobal Business Park Private Limited has been granted Environmental Clearance for Industrial Plotted Colony Project at Village-Bhondis, Ghamroli, Mahendwara, Tehsil-Sohna, District- Gurugram, Haryana vide EC identification No. SEAC/HR/2024/191 dated 17.02.2025. The copy of clearance along with the conditions to be complied is available at office of the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority, Haryana and on the website of the MOEF&CC at http://parivesh.nic.in. Also available at the registered office of the company at 13th floor, Dr. Gopal Dass Bhawan, 28 Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi and also on website of the company at www.signatireglobal.in.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to general public at large that my client Axis Bank Limited, having one of its Branch at 11 Floor, Hinalaya House, K.G. Vard, New Delhi - 110011 intends to grant Loan facility to Sh. Vinay Kancharia against security of Flat (S) Bearing No. 74 (Bassment) 8-B-38B, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank Sector 2 Noida UP-201301>Contact#0120-4269379

PUBLIC NOTICE

The above mentioned borrower & mortgagor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower & mortgagor and the public in general that the Bank has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4) of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [3] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on the 21st day of February 2025.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The borrower & mortgagor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs. 7,74,265/- together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of the notice till the date of realization together with all the costs incurred by the bank in realizing the said amount.

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Himanshu Ahuja (Advocate)

Contact No. 9813310373, 011-418330149 E-mail Address: alolegals@gmail.com

DISCUSSION OF THE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of the SHOP NO.1, ON GROUND FLOOR (WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS) OF PROPERTY NO.1314-B, GALI NO. 13, (15.84 SQ. METERS) OF AREA MEASURING 19 SQ. YDS. MEASURING 19 sq. Yds (15.84 Sq. Meters), KALKAJI, NEW DELHI-110019, Falling under the Registration Sub-Registrar-V, Delhi.

(HARISH KUMAR) AUTHORIZED OFFICER

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD., HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Dushyant Dahiya (Advocate) Office:-407, Vishal Bhowan, 95 Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PD(1577)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

PD(1581)C

Form No. INC-19 Notice

Date: 24th Feb, 2025

Form No. INC-19 Notice

Date: 24th Feb, 2025

India, UK resume talks for trade pact

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India and the UK on Monday announced the resumption of negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA), which is expected to double or even triple bilateral trade from the current \$20 Billion in the next 10 years. The announcement was made by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds here.

"Today, the Republic of India and the United Kingdom (UK) have resumed negotiations towards a trade deal between our two countries," a joint statement issued after the meeting said.

Both sides have agreed to resume talks towards a balanced, mutually beneficial and a forward-looking deal that delivers mutual growth and builds on the strengths of the two complementary economies.

The strengthening of the trading relationship has the potential to unlock



Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal meets UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds in New Delhi. Pioneer Photo

opportunities for business and consumers across both nations and build further on the already deep ties, it said.

Briefing media, Goyal said the pact will be "pathbreaking" and would provide huge opportunities to grow "our current \$20 Billion bilateral trade in merchandise to probably twice or thrice in the next 10 years".

On the deadline to conclude the negotiations, he said its never "too early" or "too late" to conclude a good agreement as

Asked whether the negotiations for the bilateral investment treaty (BIT) would be concluded along with the FTA, Goyal said the two countries are actively negotiating at three different fronts - FTA, BIT, and a Double Contribution Convention Agreement.

"And all three are in parallel and conjoint with each other," he said.

Goyal also said that immigration has never been a part of trade negotiations anywhere in the world and India has "never ever" discussed immigration in any FTA negotiations.

On this, Reynolds said that the UK welcomes "the huge and important relationship we have with people coming from India to UK whether to study, whether to be part of the businesses and obviously business mobility is a separate issue to immigration".

Goyal added that in several countries, including the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, Indian students travel for education.

In almost all these countries, to incentivise education, business and attract more people, countries "do give a certain period of time for students to gain practical experience to work in their country but that is short-term business work visas. It has nothing to do with immigration as such," he added.

The India-UK FTA negotiations were launched on January 13, 2022. The agreement is aimed at boosting bilateral trade and investments.

In such pacts, two countries either eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on maximum goods traded between them. They also ease norms for promoting trade in services and bilateral investments.

The bilateral trade between India and the UK increased to \$21.34 Billion in 2023-24 from \$20.36 Billion in 2022-23. The United Kingdom is the sixth largest investor in India. The country has received \$35.3 Billion FDI during April 2000 and September 2024.

India Inc expected to achieve seven-eight per cent growth in Q4: ICRA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic rating agency Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency (ICRA) on Monday said Indian companies are likely to clock seven-eight per cent revenue growth during the March quarter of the current fiscal year, led by revival in rural demand and uptick in government spending.

ICRA expects the private capital expenditure (capex) cycle to remain measured in view of the uncertainties around geopolitical developments and relatively subdued outlook on merchandise exports from India.

Nonetheless, certain sunrise sectors such as electronics, semiconductors and niche segments within the automotive space like electric vehicles (EVs) will continue to see a scale-up in investments, in line with various production-linked incentive programmes announced by the

Government of India, it said. In a statement, ICRA said the recovery in the operating profit margins (OPM) for India Inc witnessed over the past quarter is likely to be sustained at 18.2-18.4 per cent, supported by an increase in demand, led by improved consumer sentiments.

"Rural demand is expected to be upbeat in H1 CY2025 (January-March), aided by the robust output for most kharif crops and the favourable outlook for the ongoing Rabi season.

Beyond that, a normal and well distributed monsoon in 2025 is crucial to support the agricultural outcomes," said Kinjal Shah, senior vice president and co-group head, Corporate Ratings, ICRA.

Urban demand, which has been sluggish over the last few quarters, is expected to improve, aided by the sizeable income-tax relief in the Union Budget 2025, the monetary easing by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and the expectations of a moderation

in food inflation, which would augment discretionary consumption, Shah added.

ICRA said the evolution of the global economic and political scenario, movement in foreign exchange rates, impact of the new US President's policies, pick up in government spending and a revival in the domestic urban demand would remain the key monitorables over the near-term.

ICRA's analysis of the Q3 FY2025 (October-December) performance of 602 listed companies (excluding financial sector entities) shows a 6.8 per cent year-on-year revenue growth, supported by improved demand across consumption-oriented sectors like consumer durables, FMCG, retail, hotels and airlines, while a few commodity-oriented sectors like iron and steel witnessed some decline, following lower realisations owing to weak global demand and influx of cheaper imports from China.

Delhi discoms achieve A+ rating in consumer service 2023-24

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major achievement for Delhi's power sector, the city's discoms, including BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL), have been awarded the highest A+ rating in the fourth edition of the Consumer Service Ratings of Discoms for the year 2023-24.

Released by REC Limited under the Ministry of Power, this evaluation ranked 66 power distribution companies across India, covering over 33 Crore consumers. The rankings were based on four broad parameters: operational reliability (45 marks), connection and other services (10 marks), metering, billing and collection (35 marks), and fault rectification and grievance redressal (10 marks). These were further

divided into 23 sub-parameters, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of service delivery.

Of the 66 discoms assessed, 56 were state-owned, while 10 were private. However, only six managed to achieve the coveted A+ rating, with BRPL and BYPL standing out for their exceptional service quality.

Over the last four years, five discoms, including BRPL, BYPL, and Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL), have consistently maintained top grades (A+/A), highlighting their commitment to operational efficiency and consumer satisfaction.

Delhi discoms performed exceptionally across several critical aspects. They ensured 24-hour power supply, a significant achievement in a sector plagued by frequent outages in many parts of the country. BRPL recorded an impressive

distribution failure rate of only 0.1 per cent, while BYPL stood at 0.6 per cent - a stark contrast to the national average of 6.4 per cent. The report also recognised Delhi discoms for their efficiency in processing consumer applications, achieving a 100 per cent processing rate through their online portals compared to the national average of 87 per cent. Billing accuracy was another area of excellence, with 99 per cent of bills generated through actual meter readings, surpassing the national average of 91 per cent. In the adoption of advanced metering technologies, BYPL led the way with 100 per cent bills generated via non-manual meter readings, while BRPL and TPDDL followed closely at 99 per cent, significantly higher than the 37 per cent national average.

Consumer engagement was another stronghold for Delhi

discoms, with 99 per cent of BRPL and BYPL consumers receiving billing alerts compared to the national average of 82 per cent. The digital transformation of payment systems also placed them ahead of the curve, with 89 per cent of BRPL and BYPL consumers opting for digital payments, far exceeding the national average of 41 per cent.

The Consumer Service Ratings of Discoms, released by Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar during the Review, Planning, and Monitoring (RPM) last week, aims to benchmark service delivery, promote healthy competition, and encourage continuous improvements among discoms.

With this recognition, Delhi's discoms reaffirm their commitment to excellence, setting a benchmark for the power distribution sector nationwide.

Indian tech sector revenues to grow 5.1 per cent in FY25

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian tech sector's revenues are set to grow 5.1 per cent to \$282.6 Billion in fiscal year 2025, and likely to climb up further to \$300 Billion in fiscal year 2026, lobby grouping Nasscom said on Monday.

The revenue growth is on the "right trajectory", the body's president Rajesh Nambiar told reporters here, pointing out to revenue growth of four per cent in fiscal year 2024, 5.1 per cent in fiscal year 2025 and the over 6.1 per cent needed to cross its expectation of crossing \$300 Billion in fiscal year 2026.

"It has been a good outcome broadly given everything happening around us," Nambiar said pointing to aspects like geopolitics, and tariffs which are dominating the worries at present.

Nasscom said the sector, which includes IT services companies, business process management companies, global capability centres and e-commerce companies, added 1.26 Lakh new jobs in fiscal year 2025 to take the overall employment to 58 Lakh.

Nambiar hinted that the industry will continue to add employees in the same pace that it did last year.

The Indian IT sector's fiscal year 2025 growth is likely to be faster than the 4.7 per cent growth in global tech services spending in the calendar year 2024, Nasscom said, adding that India's share in global sourcing stood at 58 per cent as of fiscal year 2025.

Among the segments, the IT services companies' revenues will grow 4.3 per cent to \$137.1 Billion while the BPM industry will see its revenues

grow by 4.7 per cent to \$54.6 Billion.

The engineering research and development space is the fastest growing at seven per cent at \$55.6 Billion, Nasscom said.

The domestic revenues for the sector which has been traditionally focused on exports will grow seven per cent to \$58.2 Billion, outpacing exports' 4.6 per cent growth at \$224.4 Billion, Nasscom said.

The body said the export revenues between Indian and global multinationals are evenly split at present, and denied that the heft of the foreign 'companies has increased courtesy of the global capability centres (GCC) play. It pegged the total number of GCCs at 1,760 and added that such units employ 19 Lakh people at present.

Retail inflation eases slightly for farm workers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for farm and rural workers eased slightly to 4.61 per cent and 4.73 per cent, respectively, in January from 5.01 per cent and 5.05 per cent in December 2024, showed the government data released on Monday.

The All-India Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL) and Rural Labourers (CPI-RL) decreased by four points and three points, respectively, for the month of January 2025, reaching 1,316 and 1,328 points, the labour ministry said in a statement.

According to the statement, the CPI-AL and CPI-RL stood at 1,320 points and 1,331 points, respectively in December 2024. The food index for CPI-AL decreased from 1,262 points in December to 1,255 points in January this year.

Gold rises ₹350 to reclaim ₹89,000 mark

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose ₹350 to trade near a record high at ₹89,100 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid firm global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at ₹88,750 per 10 grams on Friday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity increased ₹350 to ₹88,700 per 10 grams from the previous close of ₹88,350 per 10 grams.

"Gold traded with a modest gain on Monday as geopolitical and trade tensions continued to provide a safe haven demand to hedge against uncertainty," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Last week, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity hit fresh peaks of ₹89,450 and ₹89,050 per 10 grams, respectively.

However, silver traded flat at ₹1 Lakh per kg.



Ranjan Dimri

Further, Gandhi highlighted that the US dollar has provided an additional boost for the precious metal. The dollar index fell for the third week in a row and is trading lower amid mixed United States macro data. Meanwhile, in futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for April delivery appreciated ₹118 to ₹86,128 per 10 grams.

"Gold traded within a range, posting minor gains, supported by Comex gold holding above \$2,925. Rupee weakness provided additional support to MCX gold," Jateen Trivedi, VP research analyst - commodity and currency, LKP Securities, said.

Comex gold futures for April delivery quoted higher at \$2,954.71 per ounce in the

overseas markets. Globally, spot gold also rose \$5.50 to \$2,941.55 per ounce. "Gold prices continue to hover near all-time highs as the dollar weakens amid escalating geopolitical and economic uncertainty," Abans Holdings' chief executive officer Chintan Mehta said.

The precious metal's rally is expected to persist as safe-haven demand remains strong, with central banks worldwide continuing to accumulate gold to hedge against economic volatility and policy uncertainty, Mehta added.

On the other hand, silver futures in the Asian market hours quoted 0.43 per cent lower at \$33.20 per ounce.

According to Kotak Securities, traders are closely monitoring the upcoming Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) data release to further understand the US Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, as it directly impacts bullion's investment appeal.

Sensex tumbles over 850 points on weak global cues

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Falling for the fifth straight session on Monday, equity benchmark BSE Sensex plunged over 850 points to drop below the crucial 75,000 level, tracking a weak global market trend and unabated foreign fund outflows amid escalating trade tensions.

Besides, deep losses in IT, telecom and metal stocks added to the gloom, analysts said.

The 30-share BSE benchmark tanked 856.65 points or 1.14 per cent to settle at 74,454.41. During the day, it plummeted 923.62 points or 1.22 per cent to 74,387.44.

The NSE Nifty dropped 242.55 points or 1.06 per cent to 22,553.35.

As many as 2,810 stocks declined, while 1,207 advanced and 183 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"The market is more concerned about the US' likely move to reciprocate higher tariff levies on exporting nations, which could impact developing countries, including India. Also, FIIs

showing no signs of putting brakes on their India exit strategy continue to weigh heavily on markets, with expensive valuations driving investors to curb their equity bets here.

"Heavy selling in banking, IT, telecom and other old economy sectors saw benchmark Sensex end below the crucial level of 75k mark," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

In the last five trading sessions, the BSE barometer lost 1,542.45 points or two per cent, and the Nifty tanked 406.15 points or 1.76 per cent. From the Sensex pack, HCL Tech, Zomato, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel and NTPC were among the biggest laggards.

In contrast, Mahindra and Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Maruti, Nestle and ITC were among the gainers.

Among BSE sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT dropped 2.65 per cent, IT (2.60 per cent), teck (2.56 per cent), telecommunication (2.26 per

cent), metal (2.16 per cent), commodities (1.53 per cent) and utilities (1.42 per cent). On the other hand, Auto and FMCG were the gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined 1.31 per cent, and the midcap index dipped 0.78 per cent.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹3,449.15 Crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

Foreign investors have pulled out over ₹23,710 Crore from equity markets so far this month, pushing total outflows past ₹1 Lakh Crore in 2025 amid rising global trade tensions.

"The D-Street indices experienced a sharp drop to an eight-month low as market sentiment remained subdued. The decline was primarily driven by significant losses in heavyweight stocks, especially within the IT sector. This weakness followed reports of declining consumer confidence in the US, casting a shadow over the country's growth outlook.

"The broader market felt the impact, pulling down both

small and midcap indices," Ameya Ranadive, Chartered Market Technician, CFTe, Sr Technical Analyst, StoxBox, said.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. Equity markets were closed in Tokyo for a holiday.

European markets were trading mostly in positive territory. US markets ended significantly lower on Friday.

"Global headwinds continue to weigh on the domestic market, with persistent volatility causing uncertainty among retail investors, who generally have a lower risk appetite. Weak US consumer sentiment and tariff concerns may further pressure export-oriented sectors such as IT," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude rose 0.04 per cent to USD 74.46 a barrel.

On Friday, the BSE benchmark dropped 424.90 points or 0.56 per cent to settle at 75,311.06. The Nifty declined 117.25 points or 0.51 per cent to 22,795.90.

NTPC, Reliance, Adani commit ₹4 Lakh Crore investment in MP

PTI ■ BHOPAL

Billionaire Gautam Adani's group, Reliance Industries and state-owned power producer NTPC were among over a dozen companies that on Monday committed to invest about ₹4 Lakh Crore across businesses in Madhya Pradesh, amid a high-voltage showcase by the state of its vast opportunities and investment potential.

While Adani promised ₹1.10 Lakh Crore in pumped storage, cement, mining, smart meters, and thermal energy, Reliance committed ₹60,000 Crore to set up bio-fuel projects in the state.

Speaking at the eighth edition of the Madhya Pradesh investment summit, Adani promised another ₹1 Lakh Crore in a greenfield smart city, an airport project, and a coal-gasification project for which the ports-to-power conglomerate is in talks with

the state government. "Today, I am proud to announce new investments of over ₹1,10,000 Crore in the areas of pumped storage, cement, mining, smart-meters and thermal energy. These multi-sectoral investments will create more than 1,20,000 jobs in Madhya Pradesh by 2030," he said.

Adani said the plans are not just about investments, but they are milestones in a shared journey - one that would make the state a national leader in industrial and economic growth.

The inaugural MP Global Investors Summit began with big-ticket announcements - with the state going all out to woo global investors and large business houses to invest in the MP's limitless potential.

NTPC-NGEL (NTPC Green Energy Ltd) and MPPGCL (Madhya Pradesh Power Generation Company Ltd) signed a Memorandum of



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav in a meeting with Gautam Adani and other industrialists during Global Investors Summit 2025 in Bhopal. PTI

Understanding (MoU) for 20 GW worth of renewable power generation in the state, with an intent to invest ₹1,20,000 Crore in the energy sector.

NTPC Chairman and Managing Director Gurdeep Singh said his firm and its subsidiaries and joint venture

partners will invest ₹1.2 Lakh Crore in setting up 20 gigawatts of renewable power generation capacity in Madhya Pradesh. NTPC will also look at investing another ₹80,000 Crore in two sites of greenfield nuclear power plants in the state.

Renewable energy player Avaada plans to invest ₹50,000 Crore in setting up solar, wind, and pump hydro storage and battery storage projects and solar photovoltaic module manufacturing facility, its MD Vineet Mittal said.

"We will invest ₹50,000 Crore over a period of next three to five years in solar, wind, pumped storage, as well as battery," Mittal said.

Ahmedabad-based Torrent Power committed ₹26,500 Crore investment in renewable energy projects.

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) committed ₹26,800 Crore and ₹21,000 Crore of lending support, respectively, to projects coming up in the state.

The Indo-European Chamber of Small and Medium Enterprises, the Germany India Innovation Centre, and the Indo-German Chamber of

Commerce also signed MoUs with Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation (MPIDC).

OPG Power Generation Pvt Ltd pledged ₹13,400 Crore investment in setting up a manufacturing facility for battery storage systems, small modular reactors, green hydrogen and hybrid (solar and wind) power generation.

The final numbers will change after the state government releases a full list of investment commitments at the end of the two-day summit on Tuesday.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, while addressing audiences during the MoU signing ceremony said, the State has hit new milestones on the inaugural day of the Global Investors Summit.

He said that nations across the world have reposed confidence and faith in India's pace of progress and leadership in multiple sectors.

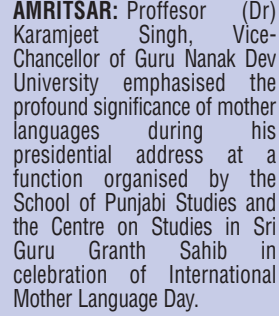
INBRIEF

INTERACTIVE SESSION WITH DIASPORA PUNJABI WRITER HELD AT GNDU



AMRITSAR: In a thought-provoking program organised by the School of Punjabi Studies at Guru Nanak Dev University, diaspora Punjabi writer Neelam Laj Saini shared her insights on diaspora Punjabi literature and her creative process with faculty, research students, and attendees.

MOTHER LANGUAGE CONNECTS INDIVIDUALS TO THEIR HERITAGE: PROF KARAMJEET SINGH



AMRITSAR: Professor (Dr) Karamjeet Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Guru Nanak Dev University emphasised the profound significance of mother languages during his presidential address at a function organised by the School of Punjabi Studies and the Centre on Studies in Sri Guru Granth Sahib in celebration of International Mother Language Day.

Liverpool marching towards Premier League title

PTI ■ MANCHESTER
Can anyone stop Liverpool's march toward the Premier League title? Not Manchester City, that's for sure. With a 2-0 win at the home of the four-time defending champion on Sunday, Liverpool produced a statement performance to move 11 points clear of Arsenal at the top of the standings. "Special" was how Mohamed Salah described the latest victory that left the away fans chanting "We're gonna win the league" after the final whistle. City manager Pep Guardiola, meanwhile, accepted the title was now Liverpool's to lose. First-half goals from Salah and Dominik Szoboszlai put Arne Slot's team on course for a win that leaves it in command of the title race after 27 games. Liverpool is now 20 points above fourth-placed City after completing a league double over Guardiola's once all-conquering team. While Slot tried to dampen title talk with months still remaining of the campaign, Liverpool's advantage is undeniable. "What we do know is that no one

saw us as a title contender when we started in the beginning of the season. And I think no one in the world of football would have expected City not to be so close to the one that leads the league," the Dutch coach said. This was City's eighth defeat in the league this season and 14th overall. The most games City had lost under Guardiola in any of his previous eight seasons was 12 in the 2019-20 campaign, which was the last time it failed to win the title. Then, as now, it was Liverpool that led the way, and the Merseyside club looks likely to win a record-equaling 20th league title this year. City, meanwhile, faces a fight to secure a top-four finish and a return to next season's Champions League. It is above fifth-placed Newcastle on goal difference and just two points ahead of Aston Villa in eighth. **TITLE CHARGE** Arsenal's surprise 1-0 loss to West Ham on Saturday had given Liverpool the opportunity to strengthen its grip on the title race. And the visitors quickly took control at the Etihad through Salah's deflected effort from a well-worked corner routine in the 14th



minute. It was his 30th goal of an outstanding campaign. He turned provider in the 37th to set up Szoboszlai, whose low shot wrong-footed City goalkeeper Ederson and rolled into the bottom corner. City, without the injured Erling

Haaland, rarely looked like getting back into the match, with Omar Marmoush's disallowed goal for offside the closest the home team came to scoring. "Now you're gonna believe us," chanted Liverpool's fans. "The fans can sing whatever they

want. I think they sing it quite long (time) already, but we know as a team how hard we have to work for every single win," Slot said. **CITY SLUMP** Another humbling defeat in an ever-worsening season for City. On Wednesday a 3-1 loss to Real

Madrid sent Guardiola's team crashing out of the Champions League. Back to domestic matters on Sunday and City was powerless to slow down Liverpool's title charge. The FA Cup is now the only realistic trophy available to City this season, while Champions League qualification is the priority for a team that has dominated English soccer under Guardiola. "If it doesn't happen it's because we were not good enough, not because a lack of hunger and desire," Guardiola said. "It is so tight with four or five teams and Nottingham, Newcastle, Aston Villa are so good. It will not be easy but we will try." City went into this season having won an unprecedented four English league titles in a row. Under Guardiola it has won six of the last seven. In total, he has won 15 major trophies at the club, including the Champions League as part of a treble in 2023. **SEVEN-GOAL THRILLER** Newcastle scored four goals in 11 minutes against Nottingham Forest, but still had to withstand a late fightback to seal a 4-3 win. A first-half goal spree — including

two more for Alexander Isak — gave Newcastle a 4-1 lead at the break at St James' Park. But Forest, which had led after six minutes, mounted a comeback that provided a nervous finish. The win moved Newcastle up to fifth and boosted its hopes of a top-four finish and Champions League qualification. Third-placed Forest led through Callum Hudson-Odoi's opener in the sixth. But Newcastle powered back with Lewis Miley's goal in the 23rd sparking a remarkable spree. Jacob Murphy put the home team ahead two minutes later and Isak struck from the penalty spot in the 33rd. A minute later Isak scored his second to take his total for the season to 21. The Sweden striker is level with Erling Haaland on 19 league goals and only Mohamed Salah, with 24, has scored more this season. Forest's fightback began in the 63rd through Nikola Milenkovic and in the 90th, Ryan Yates pulled the score back to 4-3. The defeat was Forest's third in its last four games in the league and saw it miss out on the chance to move to within three points of second-placed Arsenal.

Bayern beats Frankfurt 4-0

PTI ■ BERLIN
Bayern Munich substitute Serge Gnabry grabbed a late goal to cap a 4-0 win over third-placed Eintracht Frankfurt that consolidated the Bavarian powerhouse's Bundesliga lead. Gnabry fired the ball through Frankfurt goalkeeper Kevin Trapp's legs in the second minute of stoppage time, almost 10 minutes after Jamal Musiala ran past a host of defenders and got a fortunate bounce of the ball before firing it past Trapp for Bayern's third goal. Without top scorer Harry Kane, who only played the final half hour or so, Bayern stayed eight points clear of defending champion Bayer Leverkusen with 11 rounds remaining. The only blemish from Bayern's point of view was an injury to Joshua Kimmich in the first half. The Bayern midfielder had to go off after clutching the back of his left thigh. Bayern coach Vincent Kompany opted against starting Kane, who sustained a facial injury in the draw against Leverkusen last weekend. Altogether he made six changes to the team



that drew with Celtic 1-1 in the Champions League playoffs on Tuesday, with Bayern veteran Thomas Müller leading the attack. "We heard a few things about ourselves last week," Bayern board member for sport Max Eberl said of the team's two draws. "We stayed calm. We focused on what we wanted to achieve, namely beating the third-placed team in the German league at home. And that's what we did." Frankfurt forward Hugo Ekitike had the best chance early on after a mistake from Hiroki Ito, before Musiala had Bayern's first opportunity cleared off the line. There were more to come. Bayern dominated proceedings and duly took the lead through Michael

Bengaluru FC seek win against Chennaiyin FC

PTI ■ BENGALURU
A play-offs spot at stake, Bengaluru FC will bank on their impressive home record when they host their southern neighbours Chennaiyin FC in an Indian Super League (ISL) match here on Tuesday. Mohun Bagan Super Giant have already clinched the ISL Shield on Sunday with three rounds of matches remaining, thereby earning a berth in the AFC Champions League 2, but the trophy is still up for grabs. The top two teams at the end of the league will automatically qualify for the semifinals while the four teams from third to sixth will play a single-leg round to fill up the remaining two spots. Both Bengaluru FC and Chennaiyin FC are in two-game-long winning runs currently, with the Blues placed fourth in the table, having 34 points from 21 games on the back of 10 wins and four draws. Chennaiyin FC are eighth with 24 points, eight behind the sixth-placed Mumbai City FC (32), and they will want to keep their qualification hopes

afloat with a positive outcome here. The Blues have a formidable hold over this fixture at home, winning each of their last four games against the Marina Machans and keeping a clean sheet in three of them. However, Chennaiyin FC are stitching a positive string of results, winning their last two matches 3-0 and 2-1 against East Bengal and Punjab FC respectively. The two sides have played 16 matches against each other, with Bengaluru FC winning nine games and Chennaiyin FC emerging victorious four times. Three matches have produced draws. Bengaluru head coach Gerard Zaragoza said that his team needs to produce a positive result and get the three points to confirm their place in the top-6. "We deserve the six points that we won in the last two matches. Now, we have to achieve our objective, which is to arrive in the playoffs," he said. Chennaiyin head coach Owen Coyle laid down straightforward objectives for his team ahead of the match against Bengaluru FC.



Real Madrid 2-0 win against Girona in Spanish league

PTI ■ MADRID
Luka Modric scored a beautiful long-range goal in Real Madrid's 2-0 home win against Girona that moved the defending champion level on points in the Spanish league with leader Barcelona. The veteran midfielder chested the ball down in the 41st minute before firing a right-footed shot into the top corner. "To score a goal like that, you have to keep shooting," Modric said. "I was by myself, controlled the ball, I struck it well and thank God it went in. It was a nice goal and it's always special to score at home in front of the fans at the Bernabeu." Modric received a huge ovation from the crowd at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. "I'm very grateful and proud of the affection that Madrid fans show me every day," he said. "Today they've done it again and I can only say 'thank you.'" Vinicius Junior scored Madrid's second goal after an assist from Kylian Mbappé in the 83rd to leave Madrid with the same 54 points as Barcelona, which won 2-0 at Las Palmas on Saturday. Barcelona leads on the head-to-head tiebreaker against Madrid. Atletico Madrid is one point behind the two rivals. Diego Simeone's team won 3-0 at Valencia on Saturday.

Modric made his ninth start in 25 league matches for Madrid in a season in which the 39-year-old has played few minutes off the bench. The former world player of the year scored his fourth goal this season with his neat strike to put Madrid ahead at the Bernabeu. "Modric is a gift for soccer," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We've had the luck of having a legend with us." Vinicius scored his first league goal since November from inside the area after a nice through ball by Mbappé, who on Wednesday scored a hat trick to lead Madrid to a 3-1 win over Manchester City at the Bernabeu in the Champions League playoffs. **REGULARS RESTED, ALABA STARTS** Ancelotti rested a few regular starters following the City match at the Bernabeu, including central defender Antonio Rudiger and Federico Valverde, the midfielder who for the first time this season didn't play any minutes. Defender David Alaba made his first start in more than a year following a knee injury, while Lucas Vázquez was back in the lineup after missing a few games to nurse a left hamstring issue. Modric had also started in the league draw at Osasuna last weekend as Ancelotti rotated his squad for the Champions League playoff

games against City. Brahim Diaz was another who got to start on Sunday. Midfielder Jude Bellingham served the first of a two-game suspension for cursing at a referee in the match against Osasuna. Girona, sitting in 12th place, has lost seven of its last eight games in all competitions, including three in a row in the Spanish league. **SEVEN-GOAL ROUT FOR ATHLETIC** Forward Nico Williams scored a goal in each half as Athletic Bilbao trounced last-place Valladolid 7-1 at home. Mikel Jauregizar, Maroan Sannadi, Oihan Sancet, Gorka Guruzeta and Iñaki Williams, Nico's brother, also scored for Athletic. Valladolid, which has lost six in a row, played with 10 men from the 66th after a red card for Stanko Juric. The visitors had what would have been the 1-1 equalizer in the first half disallowed for offside. Before each match, a banner with the words "respect the referee" and "respect soccer" was displayed as players from both teams posed for photos. The campaign comes after several complaints from clubs against refereeing decisions and some threats by fans against the officials. **OTHER RESULTS** Japan forward Takefusa Kubo scored a second-half goal as eighth-placed Real Sociedad comfortably beat Leganes 3-0 at home.

Nobody can handle pressure like Kohli: BCCI, IPL top brass

PTI ■ DUBAI
Virat Kohli provides unmatched stability to the Indian team, according to former Sports Minister Anurag Thakur and BCCI Vice President Rajeev Shukla, who felt the superstar batter displayed exceptional composure under pressure during his century against Pakistan. Kohli's majestic unbeaten century was the backbone of India's six-wicket victory over Pakistan in the Champions Trophy. "Virat Kohli has shown how to handle the pressure and how to play for the country. Through his outstanding innings, Virat has won many hearts and the match for the country," former BCCI



President Thakur said. "If you look at Virat's innings, he never went outright for the century. For him, the priority was India's win. He was rotating the strike, not going for his own runs only. "He wanted to play till the last and win the match for India. That is a big thing about Kohli. For big players like him individual innings is not very important, it's country's victory that matters," he added. After India's bowlers restricted Pakistan to an underwhelming 241, Kohli stitched match-winning partnerships with Shreyas Iyer and Shubman Gill to chase down the target with 45 balls to spare. "Kohli's century was simply

fabulous. The way he scored his century. The way he provided stability to Indian team, nobody can do it," Shukla said. "Shreyas and Gill also played very well. The Indian team is back to full form. All the players were fully fit and they were ready to take on Pakistan. And they did it in style. The team looks well oiled for the finals," he added. Kohli's century, his 51st in ODIs, was laced with seven

Paris Saint-Germain continues to dominate in France league

PTI ■ PARIS
Paris Saint-Germain has no serious rival in France this season and will soon find out if its crushing domestic dominance can translate into the team thriving on European soccer's biggest stage. Still unbeaten in the French league after 23 matches, PSG extended its massive lead at the top of the standings to 13 points on Sunday with a 3-2 win at sixth-placed Lyon. The match came to life after the interval and featured inspired attacking moves from both sides. PSG was the better side and led 2-0 with seven minutes left to play. The only downside for Luis Enrique's team was its players' inability to keep their lead intact when Lyon really upped the tempo. Inspired by the in-form Ousmane Dembélé — who

scored his 17th league goal at Lyon — PSG has made tremendous progress in recent weeks. Achraf Hakimi scored PSG's other goals. There appears little doubt that PSG will win a record-extending 13th league title this season. But a far tougher test looms in March against Premier League leader Liverpool when the two teams face off in a mouthwatering last-16 Champions League tie. The first leg is in Paris on March 5. It's the next big hurdle on the road that separates PSG from their ultimate goal of winning the Champions League, a task that has proved too difficult so far despite the millions injected by Qatari investors since 2011. The only French club to win the Champions League, second-placed Marseille,

made headlines for the wrong reason this weekend. It lost 3-0 at Auxerre, and its president accused French league referees of corruption. In Lyon, Hakimi put PSG ahead in the 53rd minute from Bradley Barcola's cross and Dembélé doubled the lead six minutes later with a superb strike in the opposite corner. Ryan Cherki ensured some suspense when he pulled one back at the end of a fine team move with seven minutes left to play. Hakimi completed his brace soon after to restore PSG's two-goal lead after Gonçalo Ramos delivered a scintillating backheel pass in the buildup, only for Corentin Tolisso to revive the suspense in stoppage time with a header. But that was too little, too late. **NANTES BOUNCES BACK**



Struggling Nantes moved five points clear off the relegation playoff spot with a 3-1 win against Lens. A week after getting hammered 7-1 at Monaco, Nantes bounced back to secure only its fifth win in 23

league games this season. The hosts put on a spirited display against a visiting side that lacked an attacking spark and was reduced to 10 men for the last 20 minutes. French teenager Louis Leroux celebrated his first Ligue 1 start by opening the scoring in the 36th minute with a powerful shot. Moses Simon then made it 2-0 with a penalty kick on the hourmark following a handball. Neil El Aynaoui pulled one back from the spot five

minutes later but Lens never looked capable of scrambling a comeback, especially after Mbala Nzola was sent off. Meschack Elia Lina secured a Nantes victory in stoppage time from former Arsenal midfielder Francis Coquelin's assist. Lens slumped to a third straight loss and remained in eighth place. **LONG WAIT** According to the league's statistics, Coquelin played his first Ligue 1 game since May 29, 2011, meaning he waited for 13 years and 270 days. The much-traveled Coquelin joined Nantes last month as a free agent. It's the second longest gap between two matches for a player in the French topflight since 1947-48 after Samuel Lobé — 14 years, 79 days between January 1986 and April 2000.

ABOUKHLAL'S SCISSOR-KICK GOAL Toulouse winger Zakaria Aboukhlal scored a stunning scissor-kick goal in a 4-1 win at Le Havre. The 25-year-old Dutch player put Toulouse in front with his left foot when he connected with a lofted ball from Shavy Babicka in the Le Havre area. With his back to the goal, close to the penalty spot, Aboukhlal rose and unleashed an acrobatic shot that hit the right post and went into the back of the net. It was Aboukhlal's seventh league goal this season. Le Havre remained in the relegation zone, two points above last-placed Montpellier, with Toulouse 10th. **OTHER RESULTS** Jonathan Claus and Hicham Boudaoui both scored as Nice moved back to third place with a 2-0 win over Montpellier.

Australia vs South Africa: Two batting firepower clash

PTI ■ RAWALPINDI

Australia and South Africa, two teams possessing plenty of batting firepower, will look to outmuscle each other here on Tuesday and put one foot in the semifinals of the Champions Trophy (CT). Not many were giving a depleted Australia a chance in the tournament but their record-breaking chase against England in Lahore has once again shown their penchant for rising to the occasion in ICC events. The dew played its part the other night in Lahore and could once again aid the chasing team in Rawalpindi. Australia are bound to miss the pace trio of Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood in the tournament but at least in the opener, the audacious batting display compensated for their absence.

Josh Inglis' confidence must be sky high after playing the innings of his life with runs also coming from the bat of Matthew Short, Marnus Labuschagne, Alex Carey and Glenn Maxwell. That leaves out only skipper Steve Smith and opener Travis Head in the batting department and they could score a big one against the



Proteas. A better bowling effort would be expected from left-arm pacer Spencer Johnson and Maxwell too was on the expensive side against England. The sixth bowler's role is likely to be shared by Labuschagne and Short. Like Inglis, Ryan Rickleton in the

South African dressing room would be beaming with confidence after an attacking hundred against Afghanistan. Number three, four, five striking half-centuries augurs well for the Temba Bavuma-led side. Heinrich Klaasen missed out on the last game due to injury and his participation in Tuesday's game is

not certain. South Africa's pace attack is certainly stronger than their opponents with Kagiso Rabada leading the charge. With first choice players not available, South Africa did not have the best of build ups for Champions Trophy but are backing themselves

to go all the way. "I think as a group we might not have had the best results coming into this tournament, but quietly I think everyone's quite confident. We do have incredibly good players in this team, not just in the team but obviously the whole squad as well," said Rickleton.

"There's guys that are maybe a bit young in the side as well that are also looking to make an impact. But I don't think we're too burdened by the hunt to win the whole thing. "Obviously, we're here to do that. But we don't let that restrict us. We have to play our best game, have fun, enjoy each other's company," he added.

Squad:
Australia: Matthew Short, Travis Head, Steven Smith (captain), Marnus Labuschagne, Josh Inglis (wk), Alex Carey, Glenn Maxwell, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Adam Zampa, Spencer Johnson, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Sean Abbott, Tanveer Sangha.
South Africa: Ryan Rickleton (wicketkeeper), Tony de Zorzi, Temba Bavuma (captain), Rassie van der Dussen, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Kagiso Rabada, Lungi Ngidi, Heinrich Klaasen, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, Corbin Bosch.



Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Giants eye improved batting effort

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Struggling with batting frailties, Gujarat Giants and Delhi Capitals will look to return to winning ways when they clash in the Women's Premier League here on Tuesday. Both teams head into this fixture on the back of defeats. Gujarat Giants, who finished last in the previous two seasons, remain at the bottom of the points table with just one win in three games. Meanwhile, Delhi Capitals have slipped to third after a 33-run loss to UP Warriorz, their third defeat in five matches. Despite being one of the most consistent teams since the league's inception, Delhi Capitals have endured a patchy run this season. They are yet to live up to their pre-tournament favourites tag, struggling to put together commanding performances. Their batting lineup, in particular, has failed to fire consistently. Openers Shafali Verma and Meg Lanning have shown glimpses of form but haven't capitalised. Lanning, in particular, has struggled, with just one strong performance so far, suggesting that international retirement might have impacted her game. While Shafali, Jemimah Rodrigues, and Annabel Sutherland have provided occasional fireworks, none have converted their starts into substantial innings.

"We have played extremely well in patches but haven't been as good at other times. We just have to put everything together moving forward," Lanning said after the loss to Warriorz. Gujarat Giants, on the other hand, have been heavily reliant on Australian all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner, who has been their standout performer. Gardner is the third-highest run-scorer in the tournament, amassing 141 runs in three innings. However, in the match against Mumbai Indians, her failure exposed the team's lack of batting depth, as Gujarat crumbled for just 120. The pressure is mounting on the Indian batters, particularly number three D Hemalatha, to step up. South African batter Laura Wolvaardt is also due for a big innings. With the ball, Gardner has led from the front, receiving good support from leg-spinner Priya Mishra. However, Gujarat will need an all-round effort if they hope to turn their season around. Squads: **Gujarat Giants:** Ashleigh Gardner (c), Bharti Fulmal, Laura Wolvaardt, Phoebe Litchfield, Simran Shaikh, Danielle Gibson, Dayalan Hemalatha, Deandra Dottin, Harleen Deol, Sayali Satghare, Tanuja Kanwar, Beth Mooney (wk), Kashvee Gautam, Mannat Kashyap, Meghna Singh, Prakashika Naik, Priya Mishra, Shabnam Shakil.



Our Champions Trophy campaign as good as over, says Rizwan

PTI ■ DUBAI

Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan has conceded that his team's Champions Trophy (CT) campaign is as good as over following the loss to India here. The six-wicket defeat to India was Pakistan's second in as many games. From Group A, India and New Zealand are expected to reach the semifinals. Pakistan's last league game is against Bangladesh on February 27. "We can say that our campaign is as good as over. We have to depend on results of other matches. There is hope as there is one more game left. As a captain, I don't like this scenario (depending on other teams). We should have our fate in our hands," said Rizwan at the post-match press conference. He gave due credit to India and especially Virat Kohli, who completed his 51st ODI hundred and his fourth against the arch-rivals. "I am amazed at the hardwork he puts in. The whole world was saying he was out of form but coming into such a big game, he scored runs effortlessly. His fitness and work ethic is indeed praiseworthy. We tried our best to get him out but we could not. "As far as the match is concerned, we are obviously disappointed. We made mistakes in all three

departments. We were not able to take wickets in the middle overs," he added. Pakistan came into the tournament as defending champions having won the last edition back in 2017. They are hosting an ICC event for the first time in 29 years and an early exit as hosts will indeed be a big setback for Rizwan's team. Pakistan had lost to New Zealand in their tournament opener. The Blackcaps had also beaten them twice in the preceding tri-series in Pakistan. Rizwan said the team is not learning from its mistakes. "Look, honestly, we made the same mistake that we have been making in the past with four matches. "We are trying to do our work and put in our efforts. Because what I believe in is that our Indian team put in more effort than us today. Maybe they were more brave than us. And we needed energy in our fielding. So maybe we lacked that energy," said the wicket-keeper batter. Rizwan acknowledged the injuries to openers Saim Ayub and more recently Fakhar Zaman did impact them adversely. "Our loss occurred when we missed out on Saim Ayub, because we had a package with Saim Ayub because of which our team had settled down. But when Saim Ayub left, our balance and our team's combination faced a big impact," he said.

Playing cover drive is 'catch-22': Kohli

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian batting maestro Virat Kohli admitted that his trademark cover drive puts him in a "catch-22" situation as it has been a weakness lately but playing the shot gives him control over the innings. Kohli crafted a memorable unbeaten century against Pakistan, steering India to a six-wicket win. His 111-ball masterclass featured the cover drive prominently, a shot that has in recent time led to his downfall but remains a signature weapon in his arsenal. "It's a 'catch-22'. I mean, it's (cover drive) kind of been my weakness as well over the years, but I've scored a lot of runs on that shot," Kohli said in a video posted by BCCI. "I think today was just about backing my shots and I think the first couple of boundaries I got were cover drives on the rise, so I really had to just let it go a little bit and take a bit of risk and follow through with my shots. "Because when I hit that kind of shots, then I feel in control when I bat out there. So, it was a good innings for me personally and it was a great team win," he added. An India-Pakistan game is always a blockbuster, but Kohli felt Sunday's



clash was even more electrifying, with Dubai's stands packed with passionate fans from both nations. "The occasion is a bit more lively when you play against Pakistan, especially in this region because you have an equal number of fans from both countries, yeah, it was a great day for us as a team and for me personally as well." Delighted to contribute to India's victory once again, Kohli, who became the fastest batter to complete 14,000 ODI runs, said his role at number three has remained unchanged over the years

- minimising risk, stabilising the innings, and, when possible, finishing the chase. "One thing that I've always thought of batting at three is to minimise risk and make sure that I put my team in a winning position and if you have a chance to finish off the game in a chase, obviously, that's much better and I always preferred that kind of a situation. "My role over the years has remained the same, whatever the demand of the game, I put my head down and try to do that," he added.

He gave due credit to India and especially Virat Kohli, who completed his 51st ODI hundred and his fourth against the arch-rivals. "I am amazed at the hardwork he puts in. The whole world was saying he was out of form but coming into such a big game, he scored runs effortlessly. His fitness and work ethic is indeed praiseworthy. We tried our best to get him out but we could not. "As far as the match is concerned, we are obviously disappointed. We made mistakes in all three

Love to take on bowlers when we are under pressure: Shreyas Iyer

PTI ■ DUBAI

Giving a peek into his mindset when faced with high pressure situations, India batter Shreyas Iyer has said that he likes to be aggressive to "steady the ship", something that he demonstrated quite well in the Champions Trophy (CT) win over arch-rivals Pakistan after making a sedate start. Iyer's 56 off 67 was the perfect supporting act to

Virat Kohli's unbeaten 100 as India chased a 242-run target with more than seven overs to spare on Sunday night. The win has pushed Pakistan to the brink of elimination and taken India within touching distance of a semifinal berth. "I love to take on the bowlers when we are under pressure. And that is my mindset. If we take charge, if we gain the momentum towards us, then it is easy to steady the ship," Iyer said in the

post-match press conference. "And from there on, the rest of the batsmen, when they come in, it becomes easy for them." He expected India to take away less than the 42.3 overs that the side consumed for the six-wicket victory. "I think we could have won a bit earlier, could have been a convincing win based on how the wicket was playing. It was initially coming on pretty well with the

new ball and after that it was difficult to score runs when the ball got a bit old," he said. "But if we would have played more aggressively we would have won a bit earlier I felt," he added.

Iyer, nonetheless, termed India's as a "sweet" one because it came against a competitive team and involved warding off a lot of "external pressures." "I haven't played that many matches in Pakistan, so I don't know exactly how it would have felt. But it's a neutral venue and it's a challenge for both the teams. But any victory against Pakistan is sweet because they are always competitive," Iyer told reporters. "It's a challenge and there's a lot of pressure externally as well. It was a lot of fun. It was my third game in Pakistan," he added but did not elaborate what exactly he meant by external pressure. Iyer, who formed a vital 114-run alliance with Kohli for the third wicket, lauded his senior colleague for making a fluent hundred. It was Kohli's 51st ODI hundred, and he also completed 14,000 runs in the format during the course of the



an hour before us for the practice session and he played a few balls and he was looking from outside," the 30-year-old said. "He looked as crisp as he looks all the time. So, I never feel that he is struggling for his runs," he added.

knock. "I have never thought of Virat struggling for runs. He is always hungry for runs. I remember yesterday, he had come almost

No injury to Shami, Rohit The Mumbaikar also alleged injury concerns over skipper Rohit Sharma and veteran pacer Mohammed Shami. Both had to 'Adapting is important' Iyer played a two-layered innings, in which he focused on singles early on before opening up to punish the Pakistan bowlers. He explained the rationale behind his approach. "See, it is clear as sweeps and reverse sweeps cannot be played straightaway. But rotating the strike is going to be important because that puts a decent amount of pressure on the bowlers. "They keep changing their line lengths. And once you keep taking singles, the bowlers are more under pressure and you can keep hitting the scoreboard from there on," he added. Iyer also lauded the Indian spinners for keeping Pakistan batters quiet in the middle overs. "They bowled tremendously, especially in the middle phase where the ball was turning. As we know, even in the previous game when we played over here, the wicket is a bit slow. "It's spinner friendly and the way they have been bowling consistently over a period of time, I think the amalgamation of all three bowlers mixing up

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Person namely **Virender Singh S/o: Amar Singh, R/o: Dalip Nagar, Gularbhoj, Gadarpur, Uttaranchal-263157** (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **CT No. 9336/2019, U/s 138 NI Act**, registered at P.S.: Tilak Nagar, Delhi and the warrant has been returned writing upon that the said accused **Virender Singh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Virender Singh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Virender Singh** accused **CT No. 9336/2019, U/s 138 NI Act**, registered at P.S.: Tilak Nagar, Delhi required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **26.04.2025**.

By Order
Sh. Subham Gupta
Judicial Magistrate First Class
Room No. 4, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

Bank of India Zonal Office, Dehradun: Mahavir Tower, St. Jude's Crossing, Shimla Bypass Road, Sevia Kalan, Dist. Dehradun - 248171
Tel No. - 0135-2640046, 2641002, Email: Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in

E-AUCTION NOTICE

"APPENDIX-IV-A" (See proviso to rule 8(6)) Sale notice for sale of Immovable/Movable property

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable/ Movable Assets Under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable/immovable properties Hypothecated / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive/Physical/Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of Bank of India, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is, Without Recourse" Basis. For detailed terms and condition of sale, please refer to the link provided in (a) [\(b\) https://www.ebkray.in](https://www.bankofindia.co.in).

DATE OF INSPECTION OF THE ASSETS	LAST DATE AND TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS ON OR BEFORE	DATE AND TIME OF E AUCTION
26.03.2025 From 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM with concerned Branch	Date : 27.03.2025 to 28.03.2025 upto 04.00 PM by ONLINE	Date : 29.03.2025 from 11.00 AM onwards till 05.00 PM with unlimited extensions of 10 Minutes duration

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor/ Mortgagee	Description of Immovable/Movable Assets	Demand Notice Date	Name of Auth. Officer/ Phone No./ Email I.D	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increment Value
1.	Branch: New Tehri Borrower: Geeta Negi And Rajpal Singh Negi	Residential Flat no. A-137 Sector 5 A, Baurari New Tehri, Tehri Garhwal 49.99 SQM. Bounded and Butted as under:- East- Road West- Parking, North: Flat no. 136, South: Flat no. 77	29.06.2024	Mr. N.S. Garkhar Phone No. 8299607187 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 23,13,658/- Rs. 9,91,321,50/- + interest thereon Rs. 2,31,365/- Rs. 10,000/-

However The measurement of above properties however to verified by bidders at site and also from the revenue records prior to participating in auction.

Terms & conditions of E-Auction are as under:- 1. E-Auction is being held on "as is where basis" "as what is basis" and will be conducted "On Line" before submitting bid EMD shall be deposited through NEFT/Fund Transfer from 27.03.2025 to 28.03.2025 4.00 P.M. 2. For downloading further details Process Compliance and Terms & Conditions, Please visit <https://www.bankofindia.co.in> B. Website address of our e-Auction Service Provider M/s PSB Alliance e-auctionportal-psba@psballiance.com Bidder may visit: <https://www.ebkray.in> where "Guidelines" or bidders are available with educational videos Bidders have to complete following formalities well in Advance. Step 1: Bidders/Purchaser Registration Bidder to register on e-Auction Platform (link given above) using his mobile number and email-id. Step 2: KYC Verification Bidder to upload requisite KYC documents shall be verified by e-Auction service provider (may take 2 working days) Step 3: Transfer of EMD amount to Bidder Global EMD Wallet Online/offline of fund using NEFT/Transfer using challan generated on e-Auction Platform. Step 4: Bidding Process and Auction Result: interested Registered bidders can bid online on e-Auction Platform after completing. Step 1, 2 and 3/Pease note Step 1 to Step 2 should be completed by bidder well in advance before e-Auction date. 3. To the best of knowledge and information of the [Authorised Officer], there is no encumbrance on the properties. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims/rights/dues/affecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be demand to constitute any commitment of any representation of the bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the bank. The Authorised officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/ right/dues. No claim of whatsoever nature will be entertained after submission of the online bid regarding properties put for sale. 4. Date of Inspection 26.03.2025 from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm with prior appointment with mentioned respective branches on the contact numbers given against respective branches. 5. Bids shall be submitted through online procedure only. 6. Bidders shall be deemed to have read & understood the terms & conditions of sale & be bounded by them. 7. The Bid price to be submitted shall be above the Reserve price & bidders shall improve their further offers in multiples Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only). 8. It shall be the responsibility of the interested bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the property before submission of the bid. 9. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refund. 10. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price including EMD already paid, immediately on acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance of the sale price on or before 15th day of sale. The auction sale is subject confirm by the Bank Default in deposit of amount by the successful bidder would entail forfeiture of the whole money, already deposited and property shall be put to re-auction and the defaulting bidder shall have no claim/right in respect of property amount. 11. Neither the Authorised Officer/ Bank nor e-Auction service provider will be held responsible for any internet Network problem failure/any other technical lapses/failure etc. in order to ward-off such contingent situation the interested bidders are requested to ensure that they are technically well equipped with adequate power back-up etc for successfully participating in the Auction event. 12. The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/Registration fee/other charges etc. and also all the statutory dues, taxes, assessment charges etc. owing to any body. 13. The Authorised Officer/ Bank is not bounded to accept the highest offer and has the absolute right & discretion to accept or reject any or all offer (s) or adjourn/postpond/cancel the e-Auction or withdraw any property or portion thereof from the auction proceeding at any stage without assigning any reason there for. 14. The Sale Certificate will be issued in the name of the purchaser (s) applicant (s) and will not be issued in any other name (s). 15. The Successful bidder/purchaser would bear all taxes including TDS @ 1% of sale price payable on purchase of property (if sale price is Rs. 50 lacs/ & above) and the taxes payable to service provider for conduction online sale. Also the fees payable for execution of sale certificate such as stamp duty, registration fee, etc. shall be borne by the successful bidder. 16. The sale is subject to rules/conditions prescribed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. Further details/enquires if any on the terms and conditions of sale can be obtained from the respective branches on the contact number given. 17. This is also a mandatory notice of 30 days as per provision of the SARFAESI Act to the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagees of the above accounts informing them about holding of sale/Auction aforesaid etc.

Date: 24.02.2025 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer, Bank of India