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Photo: PTI

DONALD TRUMP AND HIS TRUMPET ENGULFS INDIA

PTI/AGENCIES ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has once again raised USAID's purported \$21-million grant for 'voter turnout' in India, which his administration has purportedly cancelled, and linked it to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Trump, as usual, also questioned why such a significant amount was spent abroad when a similar sum could have been used to boost voter turnout in the US. "And \$21 million going to my friend, Prime Minister Modi in India, for voter turnout. We are giving 21 million for voter turnout in India. What about us? I want voter turnout too," Trump said at the Governors

Working Session. "\$29 million to strengthen the political landscape in Bangladesh went to a firm that nobody ever heard of. Got 29 million. They got a check. Can you imagine? You have a little firm, you get 10,000 here, 10,000 there, and then you get 29 million from the United States government. There are two people working in that firm. Two people. I think they're very happy, they're very rich. They'll be on the cover of a very good business magazine pretty soon for being great," he added. Meanwhile, a federal judge has cleared the way for the Trump administration to pull thousands of US Agency for International Development staffers off the job.

US District Judge Carl Nichols on Friday removed his temporary block on the effort to remove all but a small fraction of USAID staffers from their posts and give those abroad a 30-day deadline to move back to the US at government expense. His ruling comes in a lawsuit filed by unions on behalf of workers. They say the rush to dismantle the agency had cut off some staffers overseas from emergency communications systems, including some in danger of political violence in Congo. Nichols found that the unions' challenge must be dealt with under federal employment laws rather than in district court.

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BJP, Congress slugfest over USAID

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Trump Administration raising the issue of USAID funding has created massive political ramifications, allegations and counter allegations amongst the Centre, ruling party BJP and Opposition Congress. Trump's remark has evoked a sharp response from the Congress which urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to "talk to his friend" and strongly refute the allegation. The Opposition party has demanded a white paper on the funds received in India from developmental agencies, aid mechanisms and multilateral forums. Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar called the accusations "worrisome" and said that "if there's something to it, then the country should know who the people are involved in it." BJP IT Cell Chief Amit Malviya shared Trump's remarks in a social media post on X and took a swipe at the Opposition which later posted the complete statement of Trump where he called Modi his friend. "For the third day in a row, US President Donald Trump reiterates his claim about USAID funding efforts to promote voter turnout in India. He says, 'We're giving \$21 million for voter turnout in India. What about us? I want voter turnout too. But what does he know about his own country's spending,'" Malviya said. Malviya faced wrath of Congress Media and Publicity Head Pawan Khera who said perhaps Malviya erred in sharing the video of Trump



The Congress has demanded a white paper on the USAID funding in India

who has clearly named PM Modi yet he tries to defend and implicate Congress aimlessly. Congress also sought legal action against the RSS-BJP and "their ecosystem" for making wild allegations against credible civil society members, NGOs and political parties. Jaishankar on Saturday for the first time spoke about the allegations levied by former US President Donald Trump against USAID's \$21 million funding for 'voter turnout in India.' While speaking at the Delhi University Literature Festival, EAM Jaishankar said, "Some information has been put out there by the Trump administration people, and obviously, that is concerning... I think, as a government, we're looking into it. My sense is that the facts will come out... USAID was allowed here in good faith, to do good faith activities; now, suggestions are being laid out from America that there are activities which are in bad faith. It's worrisome, and if

there's something to it, then the country should know who the people are involved in it." Khera said the Modi government, its ministers, its economic advisor, BJP's IT department head, its ecosystem and "one-fourth media," which acts as cheerleaders for the BJP are cheerily tying themselves in knots to somehow prove their allegation of 'deep state' and 'foreign intervention' with regards to 'USD 21 million USAID funds narrative.' "The white paper should not only focus on USAID funding, but all such agencies which fund both governments, individuals and all other entities under Indian law," Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera told a press conference. Khera pointed at "three significant developments," including Trump's remark about "my friend Prime Minister Modi." "More Indian news media outlets have fact-checked the claim by BJP and Modi

government's minister as untrue. Funds went to Bangladesh, not India; although India received USAID funds, but not for increasing voter turnout," he said. Now, an American newspaper, Washington Post, has come up with a fact check and "found no evidence that USD 21 million was due to be spent for voter turnout in India or for any other purpose," even as the MEA spokesperson called this "very deeply troubling" and announced that "relevant departments and agencies are looking into this matter," he said. Khera alleged that the RSS-BJP and its ilk are "habitual offenders" in two aspects - crafting fake narratives and propagating lies and seeking external assistance to destabilise the Indian state, democracy and the Constitution. Khera alleged that there is no record of a Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) programme matching US government's description in India. CEPPS did have a USD 21 million USAID contract - not for India, but for neighboring Bangladesh, he said. "During 2012, the Anna Hazare movement was at its peak, Arvind Kejriwal was forming his own party, Chief Minister Narendra Modi was gearing to be BJP's PM candidate. So, who benefited from these funds? Who got 282 seats in Lok Sabha? The remaining amount started pouring in between US FY2020 and US FY2024," Khera said.

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Need new legal framework on OTT platforms: I&B

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry is examining the existing statutory provisions and the need for a new legal framework to regulate "harmful" content amid complaints of "obscenity and violence" being shown on digital platforms. In its reply to a parliamentary panel, the ministry said there is a growing concern in the society that the constitutional right of "freedom of expression is being misused to showcase obscene and violent content on digital platforms." It told the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology headed by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey that while certain provisions exist under the current laws, there is a growing demand for a stricter and effective legal framework to regulate such harmful content. "This ministry has taken note of these developments and is in process of examining current statutory provisions and need for a new legal framework," it said. The ministry said that many high courts and the Supreme Court, MPs and statutory bodies like the National Commission of Women have spoken on the issue.

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WEATHER

LUCKNOW
MAX 27.5°C(-0.3)
MIN 15.1°C(+3.2)

Flight turbulence: Shivraj Singh Chouhan vs Air India

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has sought a response from Air India, its pilot, and crew regarding the incident involving Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who slammed the airline after he was allotted a broken seat during his flight AI436 searing his journey from Bhopal to Delhi. He expressed disappointment that the airline had not improved its management and how his expectations turned out to be misconception. "Isn't this cheating the passengers?" Chouhan asked. The DGCA has asked for a reply within a day. Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu has spoken to Chouhan regarding his "uncomfortable" flight experience with Air India and



Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan addresses during the inauguration of Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela

assured him of prompt action. He expressed disappointment that the airline had not improved its management and how his expectations turned out to be misconception. "Isn't this cheating the passengers?" Chouhan asked. The airline has apologised for the "inconvenience" caused to the Minister and said it was looking into the matter.

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Punjab minister ran ghost department for 21 months

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

In a bizarre political development within 1 days after the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) poll defeat in the Delhi Assembly Elections 2025, senior party leader and Punjab Cabinet Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhalwal has been found running a department that never existed for 21 months. This came into light after a gazette notification was issued by the chief secretary of the state saying that the department allotted to Dhalwal was "not in existence". The opposition BJP missed no opportunity to take a jibe at the AAP government in Punjab and sarcastically termed the move a "Kejriwal Model". "In partial modification of the previous Punjab Government notification No 2/1/2022-2Cabinet/2230 dated 23.09.2024, regarding the allocation of portfolios, among ministers, the Department of Administrative Reforms earlier allotted to Kuldeep Singh Dhalwal is not in existence as on date. Therefore, on the advice of the Chief Minister, the Governor of Punjab is pleased to make the amendment wef 07-02-2025," the notification read.



Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann with minister Kuldeep Singh Dhalwal

With this amendment, Dhalwal is now left with only the NRI Affairs department. The amendment was done on February 7 on the order of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwat Mann. Dhalwal had earlier been stripped of the Agriculture and Rural Development departments in May 2023 and was instead given Administrative Reforms Department.

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Organisers leave brides in lurch at event

PTI ■ RAJKOT

For more than 50 prospective brides and grooms, a mass wedding ceremony in Rajkot was going to be etched in lifelong memories, instead, their emotions swung from hope to despair and finally into anger after the unscrupulous organisers gave the event a

miss. Moved by the plight of the marriage hopefuls, police took the initiative to make arrangements for marrying off at least six couples on the spot on Saturday, officials said. When the families of 28 pairs of brides and bridegrooms arrived at the venue, they were shocked to find that no

arrangement was made for the function and organisers were missing with their mobile phones switched off, said Assistant Commissioner of Police Radhika Bharai. The families, who came from different parts of Rajkot and other districts, created a ruckus, prompting the police to intervene.

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First session of new Delhi Assembly to begin Monday

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Sunday convened a meeting of newly elected MLAs on Sunday, ahead of the first session of the eighth Legislative Assembly of Delhi, beginning from Monday with newly elected members taking oath at 11 am. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has appointed senior BJP leader and MLA from Gandhi Nagar Arvinder Singh Lovely as the pro-tem Speaker of the Delhi Assembly to chair the proceedings during the first sitting of the legislature on Monday. The appointment came ahead of the first sitting of the new 70-member Assembly that will take place on February 24. According to a list by the Delhi Assembly, the three-day session will see the election of the House, Speaker and Deputy Speaker as well as the tabling of the 14 pending CAG reports on the performance of the previous AAP government. The oath/affirmation of the newly elected members will take place at 11 am on February 24. The election of the Speaker will be held at 2 pm. Four-time MLA Arvinder Singh will perform the duties of the Office of the Speaker till the new Speaker is elected. The new members of the House will take oath before the pro-tem speaker, according to the bulletin. Senior BJP MLA and former Delhi BJP president Vijender Gupta will be the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta during a meeting

Delhi Assembly Speaker and Mohan Singh Bisht will be his deputy. According to the business list, LG Saxena will address the assembly on February 25, after which the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports will be tabled. Later in the day, the assembly will be open for motion of thanks on LG's address. On February 26, the discussion on the motion of thanks on LG's address will commence at 11:00 am, after which the Deputy Speaker of the Delhi assembly will be elected. "Being the first sitting of the Eighth

Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi constituted after the General Election held in February in 2025, the Members shall observe two minutes silence to mark the solemnity of the occasion. First, Chief Minister & other Ministers shall make or subscribe to oath or affirmation and thereafter other Hon'ble Members, constituency wise, shall make or subscribe to oath or affirmation. "Notice of motion for the election of the speaker can be given up to Saturday, February 22, before noon to the secretary, legislative assembly," the bulletin read.

Continued on page 5

'Probing all angles in IRS officer death'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOCHI/RANCHI

The Kerala Police on Saturday said it is probing various angles regarding the mysterious deaths of an IRS officer and his kin here and has intensified the investigation, days after the Customs official and his sister were found hanging inside their house here while their mother's body was also found there. One of the victims, Shalini Vijay who was summoned by a court in a CBI case earlier, was a state government officer in Jharkhand. A personnel department official in Ranchi said there was no information about her since 2020 after she went to Kerala on vacation. The deceased have been identified as Maneesh Vijay (43), an IRS officer and additional commissioner with Central Excise and Customs in Kochi, his sister Shalini Vijay, and their mother, Shakuntala Agarwal.

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Murder accused arrested after week-long manhunt

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bijnor police on Saturday arrested Suraj Yadav aka Kalyan Singh aka Hukum Singh, who was wanted for the murder of his lover, Puja Lodhi. The arrest came a week after the case was registered on February 16. The accused, a resident of Ahmedkheda village here, allegedly killed Puja on February 15 in a rented room in Saryu Bihar Colony, Bijnor. Police tracked Suraj down and apprehended him at 9:30 am on Saturday near the Kisanpath underpass in Alinagar Khurd. In his confession, Suraj explained that he had met Puja five years ago at a temple in Mohanlanjan. They developed a relationship, and Puja confided in Suraj about her abusive marriage. The two began living together in Bijnor, where Suraj would visit her rented room. On the evening of February 15, during an argument over marriage and infidelity, Suraj allegedly strangled Puja with a dupatta. After she died, he locked the room and fled with her scooter. Suraj was on the run for several days, visiting relatives, and had planned to sur-

render in court, but a strike by lawyers prevented him from doing so. Police arrested him while he was en route to his home via Alinagar Khurd. Meanwhile, Thakurganj police on Saturday arrested a youth who had allegedly misled authorities by providing false information about a shooting incident he claimed was an attempt on his life. The accused, identified as Mohammed Raj aka Mohammed Rahil Siddiqui (27), a resident of Generalganj, Balaganj, Thakurganj, had reported on February 21 that Aman Singh and Adarsh Shukla had shot at him due to old enmity, with the intent to kill him. The police immediately took action upon receiving the information, detaining and questioning the individuals named by Siddiqui. However, after reviewing CCTV footage and speaking with local residents, the report of the shooting turned out to be fabricated. Upon further interrogation, Siddiqui admitted that Aman Singh and Adarsh Shukla had previously assaulted him at a cafe in Dubagga on October 4, 2024. In an attempt to implicate them, he falsely reported a shooting and called the emergency helpline, 112. Legal action is being taken against Siddiqui for filing false information and misleading

the police. Furthermore, police have arrested Aman Singh (26), and Adarsh Shukla (22) for their involvement in the earlier assault on Siddiqui. Both were taken into custody by the police from their respective residences in Balaganj.

YOUTH HANGS SELF

A youth allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in Hasanganj area here, police said on Saturday. Upon being informed, police broke the door and rushed the youth to hospital where doctors declared him dead. Police got the postmortem done and handed over the body to the family of the deceased. As per reports, the incident took place at 10.30 am on Saturday. The deceased, Ashish Saxena (21), was a resident of Daliganj. On Saturday morning, Ashish was found hanging from the fan. Inspector, Hasanganj, said no complaint has been received so far. Further action will be taken on the basis of the postmortem report, he added.

ROAD MISHAP

Mahendra Mishra, a resident of Satrikh in Chinhath, and his nephew Pranav Mishra, were injured after being allegedly struck by a motorcycle in the BBD police station area. Reports said Pranav's finger was severed, and he also suffered a fracture. It was alleged that the bike riders called their associates over the phone and abused and threatened the victims. Mahendra alleged that he filed a complaint, but the BBD police sided with the accused and tried to hush up the matter.

DM reviews preps for Mahashivratri

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To ensure proper arrangements for the upcoming Mahashivratri festival, District Magistrate Visakh G conducted an inspection of Mankameshwar Temple in Daliganj and Buddheshwar Temple in Para on Saturday. The district magistrate first visited Mankameshwar Temple, inspecting both the route leading to the temple and its premises. He instructed the municipal corporation to ensure that all street lights along the path to the temple were checked, with any faulty lights being replaced immediately. He emphasised the importance of a reliable and comprehensive street lighting system to ensure safety and visibility for devotees. Additional city magistrate during Mahashivratri, the temple sees a massive influx of devotees from 3 am to 11 pm. Consequently, the movement of vehicles on the road is prohibited, with only pedestrians allowed access. The devotees will be directed into separate lines for men

and women using barricades to ensure smooth darshan. The DM also directed the municipal corporation to maintain cleanliness around the temple premises. He further instructed that parking spaces should be clearly marked, and a proper parking and crowd management plan be developed to accommodate the large number of visitors. Additionally, an integrated control room, staffed by officers from the police, additional city magistrate, municipal corporation, Health department, and Electricity department, was mandated to operate round the clock at both the Mankameshwar police outpost and temple premises. To ensure a smooth flow of devotees, the DM stressed the need to coordinate with local shopkeepers for proper crowd and space management. He also instructed the health officials to arrange ambulances and medical camps near the temple, and for the municipal corporation to ensure the provision of drinking water tankers for the convenience of visitors.



The DM later proceeded to Buddheshwar Temple, where the local police station head briefed him that the area from Buddheshwar Crossing to the temple is a no-vehicle zone, and devotees walk to the temple along the road leading to the temple. SDM Sadar reported that a joint control room had

exit through Gate No. 3, with separate lines for men and women. The DM visited the temple premises, Sita Kund, and Sita Rasoil. He instructed the LMC zonal officer to ensure cleanliness and proper lighting along the road leading to the temple. SDM Sadar reported that a joint control room had

been established at the district administration camp office within the temple premises, for live CCTV monitoring. The DM emphasised the removal of encroachments under the flyover by the evening of February 24, as well as the completion of cleanliness efforts in the area.

'80% of child cancers curable'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The paediatric surgery department of King George's Medical University organised a programme to celebrate International Childhood Cancer Day on Saturday. The programme aimed to encourage children battling cancer and their families, offering support and well wishes for their speedy recovery. The event highlighted that nearly 80% of childhood cancers are curable

with timely treatment. HoD Dr JD Rawat emphasised the importance of spreading awareness to the public about this fact. The paediatric surgery department, open 24/7, provides comprehensive care, including surgeries, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and other treatments for children with cancer and tumours. A painting competition and puppet show were organised for the children receiving treatment, bringing joy to all attendees. The children were also given snacks, toys, and gifts. KGMU VC Soniya Nityanand and Pro-VC Apjit Kaur commended the dedication and hard work of the doctors, staff, and residents for making the event a success. Prof Nishant Verma, along with Prof SN Kuri, Dr Archika Gupta, Dr Anand Pandey, Dr Sudhir Singh, Dr Nitin Pant, Dr Piyush Kumar, Dr Gurmeet Singh, and Dr Rahul Kumar were also present on the occasion.

52-year-old neighbour rapes minor girl, held

Deoria (PTI): A 52-year-old man allegedly raped a 12-year-old girl from his neighbourhood here in Deoria when she came over to his house for an errand, police said on Saturday. Hearing the girl's screams, her mother rushed in where the man threatened her and fled, Superintendent of Police (SP) Vikrant Vir said about the incident that happened on Friday. He was later arrested. The girl's mother gave a complaint to the police, and a case was registered against the accused under the relevant sections and the POCSO Act. Police sent the victim to Maharishi Devraha Baba Medical College Deoria for medical examination. Police said the crime scene was inspected and the forensic team was called to collect all necessary evidence. Further legal action is being taken, they said.

CLASSIFIEDS NOTICE

I have changed my name from MOHAMMAD YASHIN To MOHD. YASEEN S/o IRSHAD ALI R/o- 132/437, Babupurwa, T.P. Nagar Kanpur. In future I would be known & recognise by this name only

CLASSIFIEDS NOTICE

I have changed my name from Roobina Idrisi to Rubina Bano. In future i shall be known as Rubina Bano W/o Mohammad Saleem, Bunglow No.111, Bobson Public School, Meerpur Cantt., Kanpur.

NOTICE

IMFORMATION

THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT ALLAHABAD (U.P.) First Appeal No. 512 of 2017 Ajay Kumar Jha S/o Late Ramesh Chandra Jha Add: 89-1, Block, Gujaini Police Station Govind Nagar, Kanpur Nagar (Appellant) Versus Smt. Anita Jha W/o Sri Ajay Kumar Jha D/o Late Ram Asare Jha Add: 223/1, Shastri Nagar Police Station Kakadev, Kanpur Nagar (Defendant) Information is Honorable Court on 04-03-2025. (INFORMER) Ajay Kumar Jha

NOTICE

I Had change name of my mother name mahipali devi Dob 09/05/1959 to Mahipali Dob 1/01/1994 and her aadhar no 331680400560, pan no DSBPP3394A Know in future mahipali all legal documents Manoj Kumar son mahipali J C. No 732762N Rank sub cod kanpur

NOTICE

It is to inform general public that Gendawati, Sarla, Padmawati, Murni Devi, Sunita Devi all D/o Late Shivpal Singh & Om Prakash Singh, Rajesh Singh, Narendra Singh, Anam Singh all s/o Late Shivpal Singh are recorded co tenure holders of land of Kharsa No. 1968, Village Amausi, Sarojani Nagar, Lucknow. Now only Sunita Devi is selling Plot area 450 sq. ft. part of Kharsa No. 1968, Village Amausi, Sarojani Nagar, Lucknow in favour of Anusmiti Mishra from her share which will be mortgaged with MHIL against loan after execution of Sale Deed in her favour. If any person or financial institution any interest or objection in this regard, please contact to Advocate mentioned below with objection in writing and with relevant documents, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Mr. Amit Kumar Singh Rathaur Advocate, Chamber No.7, UGF, Krishna Tower, Chakbast Road, Quatserbagh, Lucknow. Mobile No. 9559811119

NOTICE

I have changed my son's name from Mohd. Samad Ansari to Mohd. Samad. In future he will be known by his new name MOHD. SAMAD only. Tanveer Alam S/o Liyakat Ali R/o-446/89/1 Musahubganj, Thakurganj, Lucknow.

NOTICE

I Ranu Sareen D/o Mr. Umesh Kumar Agrawal R/o D 201, 202 Lake pleasant Lake home phase 2, near Gopal Sharma school off AS marg Powai, Mumbai, Maharashtra do hereby declare that the original Lease deed dated 26/01/1981 Bahi No.1 Jild No. 2690 Ganje no. 220/224 serial no. 1884. The address of the property is HIG 115 Sector E Alliganj Lucknow. I am selling the above mentioned property to Mr Aniket Ani and Mrs Sweta Shrivastava, that will be financed by SBI RACPC Alliganj Lucknow. If anyone have objection kindly contact SBI RACPC Alliganj Lucknow. An FIR has been lodged with the police in respect of lost Lease deed vide FIR no. 20250000127733 dated 20/02/2025.

NOTICE

General Public is Here by Informed that Original Sale Deed Dated 01.04.1978 executed by Kanpur Nagar Mahapalika in favour of Motilal S/O Mangali Prasad and Ram Swarup S/O Mahabir for 999 years in respect of Plot no. 543/15, Block- K, Measuring- 272 sq. yard, Situated at Mohalla- Scheme-II, Kidwai Nagar, Dist.- Kanpur Nagar, which is duly registered in the office of Chief Sub Registrar- Kanpur Nagar vide Book No. 1, Volume 260/269 at serial no. 2373 dated on 20.09.1974, Has Been Lost From present owner Rajiv Kumar Prasad s/o Shiv Kumar Pandey WHILE GOING TO MARKET at Naubasta, Kanpur, on 03.03.2024 around 3.00 PM for getting its photocopy. Please return to undersign if find by anyone or contact with undersign with written objection with supporting documents if anyone having any claim/objection, within 7 days from today. Its use by anyone is void. ILM & Associates, Civil court Compound, Opposite Muslim hotel, Gate No-4 Kanpur Na gar- 2 0 8 0 0 1, M O B : 9936427876.

सूचना

सूचित हो कि मैं देवेन्द्र नाथ तिवारी पुत्र श्री बी. एन. तिवारी व श्रीमती अंजु तिवारी पत्नी देवेन्द्र नाथ तिवारी निवासी-8003 आदर्शकॉन अपार्टमेंट्स चक्रवर्तिया एस्टेट चि-3, गेटर रोड, गौतम बुद्धनगर उप.प्र. 201310 मेरे मवन स. 5/861, बिगमखंड, मोदीनगर, लखनऊ का मूल मूखालतनाम आम, जो कि दिनांक 8-12-1999, बही-4, जिल्द-127, पृष्ठ-383/388, क्रम संख्या-1087 उपनिबंधक द्वितीय में पंजीकृत है, तथा मुखातलनाम आम, जो कि दिनांक 8-09-2001 जो की मेंगलोर में नोटरपब्लिक तथा लखनऊ विकारा प्राधिकरण, लखनऊ द्वारा मुख्य आवंटि के पक्ष में दिनांक 19-9-2001 बही-1, जिल्द संख्या. 255, पृष्ठ 763/848, क्रमांक 6554/2001 में पृष्ठ (847/848) वास्तव में कहीं खो गया है, अतः देवेन्द्र है की जिस किस्ती को भी यह मिले वह हमारे पते पे पोस्ट कर दे, और किस्ती अन्य द्वारा इसका उपयोग अथवा माय्य होगा । मो. 9305353070

CITY BRIEFS

ESM RALLY



An Ex-Servicemen (ESM) rally was organised at AMC Stadium, Lucknow Cantt, on Saturday, with a large turnout of veterans, veer naris, veer matas, and family members of ex-servicemen. UP Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak inaugurated the rally alongside Lt Gen Anindya Sengupta, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Central Command. The event provided educational opportunities, especially for students from remote areas. The new hostel can accommodate 100 students.

and the Uttar Pradesh government, was inaugurated at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University on Saturday. President of the Uttar Pradesh State Commission for Backward Classes, Rajesh Verma, was the chief guest. Also present were BBAU Vice-Chancellor Prof SK Dwivedi, Registrar Prof UV Kiran, member of the State Commission for Backward Classes Ramashankar Sahu, Deputy Registrar Ranjeev Kumar Sahu, DSW Prof Narendra Kumar, and hostel warden Dr OP Saini. Rajesh Verma congratulated everyone, highlighting the hostel as a significant step for student welfare. Prof Dwivedi emphasised the importance of the hostel in providing better educational opportunities, especially for students from remote areas. The new hostel can accommodate 100 students.

ANNUAL FEST

Babu Banarasi Das Educational Group will host its annual fest, Utkarsh '25, in Lucknow from February 23 to 25. The event will see participation from 20,000 BBD students and thousands others from colleges across UP. Themed 'Future Tech', Utkarsh '25 will feature competitions in technology, culture, hotel management, sports, literature, and fine arts, offering a platform for top talent. The closing ceremony on February 25 will honour competition winners. Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta Student of the Year Award will also be given away on the occasion.

SCIFIESTA 2.0

In celebration of National Science Day, 'SciFiesta 2.0: Where Minds Meet and Ideas Ignite' was held at Navvyg Kanya Mahavidyalaya on Saturday. The event provided a platform for students passionate about science and technology, featuring scientific models in physics, chemistry, biology, and botany. Guests, including Dr Ritu Trivedi from CDRI, Sandeep Kumar Shivhare from BSIP, and faculty from various institutions, evaluated the models. Cultural programmes and entertaining games added to the excitement. BSNV College, IT College, and SKD College emerged as winners in different categories. Principal Prof Manjula Upadhyay praised the students for their enthusiasm.

OBC BOYS' HOSTEL

The OBC Boys' Hostel, constructed with the support of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Heritage Walk celebrates city's cultural legacy

Lucknow (PNS): A Heritage Walk was organised in Lucknow on Saturday by the CSR arm of a private airline, in collaboration with other organisations, as part of the 'My City My Heritage' campaign. This curated walk was designed to celebrate and promote the rich cultural heritage of Lucknow, highlighting the city's deep historical roots and magnificent architecture. The 'My City My Heritage' campaign aims to raise awareness about India's cultural and historical legacy. It fosters dialogue and collaboration to preserve the city's tangible and intangible heritage, empowering local residents to rediscover the history and culture around them. The initiative has previously hosted similar heritage walks in cities like Prayagraj, Bhubaneswar, Shillong, Nashik, Hyderabad, and Kozhikode. Titled 'Awadhi Begum, Nawab aur British', the walk explored



Lucknow's fascinating history and the fusion of Mughal and Awadhi traditions that shape its cultural identity. Starting at Begum Hazrat Mahal Park and concluding at Amir-ud-Daulah Park, the route passed iconic landmarks such as Sher Darwaza, Maqbara Saadat Ali Khan, Sapper's Tomb, and Butler Park.

The walk delved into the city's vibrant cultural blend, reflected in its architecture, music, and cuisine. The event was led by conservation architect Nishant Upadhyay and attended by local community members and government officials. Rohini Bhatia, chairperson of a private organisation, expressed her enthusiasm, say-

ing, "We are thrilled to bring the Heritage Walk to Lucknow, where tradition seamlessly merges with modern India. By exploring the city's historical landmarks and hidden gems, we hope to inspire people to connect with Lucknow's vibrant past and become stewards of its cultural legacy. This initiative underscores our commitment to showcasing India's heritage and fostering a deeper appreciation for our shared history." Pieter Elbers, CEO of the private airline, added, "Lucknow is a treasure trove of India's cultural heritage, offering a mesmerising blend of traditional elegance and modern charm. As the seventh city in our 'My City My Heritage' campaign, Lucknow's rich history, culture, and architecture are truly captivating. This heritage walk celebrates the city's glorious past, connecting visitors with the people, places, and stories that have shaped its identity."

Mosque razed to make way for RRTS Corridor

Meerut (PTI): A decades-old mosque located on Delhi Road in Meerut was demolished to make way for the construction of the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor. The demolition was carried out with the consent of the local Muslim community after consultations with officials and the mosque's management, officials said. According to authorities, the mosque was causing obstruction in the progress of the Rapid Rail project, prompting the decision to remove it. The process began with members of the Muslim community using hammers to dismantle parts of the mosque on Thursday. Later, when most of the structure had been taken down, the administration used a bulldozer to complete the demolition in the late hours of the night. The debris was also cleared during this time. In a statement to PTI, Additional District Magistrate (City) Brijesh Kumar Singh confirmed that the mosque's removal was carried out with mutual agreement. "The Muslim community took the initiative in removing the mosque, and I facilitated discussions with them, alongside officials from the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC). However, the removal was done only with the consent of the Muslim community," Singh said. Haji Swale Heen, a representative from the mosque, said, "We removed the mosque on our own, but we possess documents from 1857 that prove the historicity of this mosque."

KGMU honours nursing staff with first-ever 'Nurses Festival'



King George's Medical University (KGMU) hosted its inaugural 'Nurses Festival' (FETE-2025) on Saturday. The programme aimed to foster unity, leadership, teamwork, and organisational skills among the nursing staff while offering a variety of cultural and recreational activities, including food stalls, game stalls, and exhibitions of art and crafts. KGMU Vice-

Chancellor Prof Soniya Nityanand, in her address, described the nursing profession as a symbol of service, compassion, and unwavering dedication. She praised the tireless work of nurses, emphasising their essential role in healthcare and patient welfare, reinforcing the profession's significance in society. The festival featured various competitions, allowing the nursing staff to showcase talents beyond their profession-

al roles. Colorful performances, dance and singing contests, and interactive sessions added to the celebrations. Team-building activities further strengthened camaraderie among the nursing professionals. Registrar Archana Gaharwar awarded prizes to outstanding participants. KGMU spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh highlighted the success of the event as a landmark in recognising and empowering healthcare professionals, ensuring they receive the recognition they truly deserve.

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES ADMISSION 2025 IIM Ranchi invites applications for admission in Ph.D. (with financial support) in the following areas: Economics, Finance & Accounting, Information Systems & Business Analytics, Liberal Arts & Sciences, Marketing, Organisation Behaviour & Human Resource, Operations Management, Strategy & Entrepreneurship, Legal Studies & Responsible Business. For eligibility criteria, application process and other details, please visit: https://imranchi.ac.in/Reservation as per the GOI rules. Only online applications will be accepted. Last date of receiving completed online application form: March 23, 2025.

HDFC BANK Legal Cell: HDFC Bank Ltd 2nd Floor Vardhan Khand, Gomti Nagar Extn, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 226010. DEMAND NOTICE Under Sec 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002. The following borrowers & co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from HDFC Bank Ltd. The loans of below mentioned borrowers & co-borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms & conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loans were classified as NPAs as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to HDFC Bank Ltd are mentioned in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be payable as applicable and the same will be charged with effect from their respective dates. Name Of Borrowers & Co-Borrowers/Mortgagor :- 1. Ms Shree Mobile (Borrower) Through Its Proprietor Mr. Avadhesh Ojha Address At:- C/o Smt Gayatri Devi, Lala Khara, Ali Nagar, Sunhra, Sarojini Nagar, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226016. Schedule of Immovable Property & Security :- House Built On Plot Over Kharsa No. 655 Min. Admesuring- 249.44 Sq. Mtr, Situated At-Gram- Ali Nagar, Sunahara, Ward- Sarojini Nagar, Tehsil & Distt- Lucknow. (property Owned By Mrs. Gayatri Devi). Bounded As Under:- East:- 15 Ft. Wide Road West :- Araji Of Nankhah/North :- Araji Digar. South :- Araji Of Ram Kishore. 2. Mrs. Gayatri Devi (Co-Borrower & Mortgagor) W/o Mr. Prag Dutt Ojha Address: at - Type- 2, 182/B, Multi Storey, V. G. Colony, Alambagh, Lucknow G.P.O. Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226001. 3. Mr. Avadhesh Ojha (Co-Borrower) S/o Mr. Prag Dutt Ojha Address: At- 182/B, Tal Katora Road, Near Krishna Oil Mill, Multi Storey V. G. Colony Alambagh, P. O. Alambagh Benti Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226005. Type Of Loan Facility and A/c No. - Loan Against property A/c No. 86656051 Outstanding as per 13(2) Notice Date :- Rs. 27,52,675.00/- as on 10-01-2025. Date of NPA 06/12/2024 Date: 23.02.2025, Place: Uttar Pradesh Authorised Officer, For HDFC Bank Ltd.

Double-engine govt to boost spiritual, eco tourism: Yogi

PNS ■ LAKHIMPUR KHERI

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, declared that the double-engine government will boost spiritual and eco tourism, creating ample employment opportunities and there were no regulatory hurdles to realise this vision.

The chief minister said this on Saturday while inaugurating and laying the foundation for 373 development projects worth ₹1,622 crore in Lakhimpur. He also launched the Chhoti Kashi Gola Gokarnath Shiva Temple Corridor. He said with its fertile land yielding gold, Lakhimpur Kheri was on the path to transformation. He recalled the lack of development in Lakhimpur Kheri when the country gained independence.

"Malaria was a major issue, and Dudhwa National Park lacked proper access. However, now, even an airport is being developed in Palia," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi emphasised that Lakhimpur Kheri has progressed beyond its status as a backward district with projects worth nearly ₹4,500 crore inaugurated and launched in the district. These include the Gola Gokarnath Temple Corridor and the country's first PLA plant (bio-plastic manufacturing) set up by Balrampur Chini Mills Limited.

He also laid the foundation stone for a Rs 2,850 crore plastic plant in Kumbhi.

The chief minister pointed out that Lakhimpur now boasts not just Dudhwa National Park but also a new medical college.

He said numerous development projects would ease the lives of the people and create new employment opportunities. "This progress has been made possible through the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, government support, and the dedication of public representatives," he said.

The chief minister addressed Lakhimpur Kheri's past connectivity challenges, particularly the uncertainty surrounding the Bahraich-Maithani railway line. He assured that the government would allocate necessary funds to enhance tourism through improved rail connectivity,

CM lays foundation of bioplastic plant

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath laid the foundation stone of the country's first biopolymer plant at the Kumbhi Sugar Mill complex in Lakhimpur Kheri at a cost of ₹2,850 crore on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, he said,

"The MoU that the government had signed for the country's first bioplastic plant has been brought to the ground today. This is the first investment of its kind in the country." Balrampur Chini Mills Limited is set to establish the country's first biopolymer plant in Lakhimpur Kheri at an investment of ₹2,850 crore. Chief Minister Yogi said that this bioplastic plant would realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve of self-reliant India and environmental protection. The bottles, plates, cups and carry bags made here will be completely disposable and will dissolve in the soil in just three months, he added. He said this plant would be India's first integrat-



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with others during the foundation stone-laying ceremony for India's first biopolymer plant at Kumbhi in Lakhimpur Kheri on Saturday.

ed unit, creating thousands of jobs and increasing farmers' income. The chief minister requested Balrampur Chini Mills Limited to collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics and local colleges to train youth and provide them with employment opportunities. He expressed confidence that this plant will be a milestone in achieving environmental conservation, the 'Make in India' initiative, and the vision of a self-reliant India. The UP government will sign an MoU with the plant for skill development, helping students connect directly with employ-

ment. Expressing concern over environmental issues, Chief Minister Yogi emphasised the critical link between "inclement weather patterns and global warming" and rising environmental pollution. "The world is increasingly concerned about environmental pollution. Unseasonal rains, prolonged droughts, and heavy downpours are all consequences of global warming," he said. The chief minister added that if human activity has contributed to the deterioration of the environment, it is our responsibility to restore and heal the planet.

expressing confidence in Indian Railways' positive initiatives to boost tourism. Additionally, he lauded the Tharu tribal women's efforts in preserving their culture and producing handicrafts, which have been recognised under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme. He added that even the prime minister has acknowledged their efforts.

The chief minister lauded the region's public representatives for actively participating in development initiatives. From building a medical college and developing an airstrip into an airport to enhancing eco-tourism at Dudhwa National Park, setting up a PLA plant, and constructing the Gola Gokarnath Corridor, each initiative reflects their dedication, he said and expressed optimism that Lakhimpur Kheri would soon

become one of the most developed districts in the state. He criticised detractors attempting to tarnish the state's reputation and emphasised that development fosters job creation and self-reliance, laying the foundation for a developed India. The successful Maha Kumbh has, according to him, silenced critics opposing progress and innovation. Chief Minister Yogi directed the administration to ensure proper rehabilitation for those displaced by the development of Gola Gokarnath Corridor. Families losing homes are to be provided with suitable housing, and shop owners are to receive commercial spaces. "The government's goal is to enhance the region's beauty and improve residents' lives without leaving anyone without shelter or livelihood," the chief minister remarked. Before the event,

Chief Minister Yogi offered prayers at the Gola Gokarnath Shiva temple, extending Mahashivratri greetings and expressing gratitude for contributing to the temple's development. He requested citizens to include him in their Shivratri prayers. Additionally, he paid tribute to late MLA Arvind Giri, stating that his dreams for the region are now being realised. The event was attended by Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh, Excise Minister Nitin Agarwal, MLAs Aman Giri, Harvinder Kumar Sahni 'Romi', Saurabh Singh 'Sonu', Shashank Verma, Vinod Shankar Awasthi, Lokendra Pratap Singh, Yogesh Verma, Manju Tyagi, MLC Anoop Gupta, Bharatiya Janata Party regional president Kamlesh Mishra and district president Sunil Singh, and several other prominent leaders.

Mahashivratri snan preparations in full swing

PNS ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

As Maha Kumbh 2025 enters its final phase, preparations for the last major bathing day on Mahashivratri on February 26 are in full swing. Every day, crores of devotees are flocking to Prayagraj to take a holy dip in the sacred Triveni Sangam before the conclusion of this mega religious event.

The administration has turned preparations into a mission, ensuring seamless crowd management for the final weekend rush and last snan. Strategic plans for railway operations, traffic diversions and parking facilities are being implemented to provide a smooth pilgrimage experience.

To prevent inconvenience to devotees, senior officials have taken charge on the ground, actively monitoring and executing management strategies. With unprecedented participation expected, the Yogi



A devotee takes a holy dip during the ongoing Mahakumbh Mela at Sangam in Prayagraj on Saturday

Adityanath government is leaving no stone unturned to make the last holy dip a historic and well-organised event.

Prayagraj District Magistrate Ravindra Mandar shared that as per Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, there has been a significant increase in the number of devotees arriving for the final Mahashivratri snan via railways, airports,

roadways and personal vehicles. The chief minister had envisioned that over 50 crore devotees from across the world would take a holy dip at Maha Kumbh, and a detailed framework was prepared accordingly.

To manage the massive crowd efficiently, a well-structured plan was implemented to ensure a smooth and comfort-

able experience for all devotees. With the final bathing day approaching, these efforts have been intensified.

Mandar pointed out that officials and staff are continuously on the ground, monitoring arrangements to enhance the overall experience for devotees. The administration is actively working on feedback-based improvements and ensuring traffic management plans are effectively executed, especially during weekends, peak days and holidays. Traffic diversion strategies are being enforced by the police, with officers being briefed and alerted to handle any issues.

Chief Minister Yogi himself is personally monitoring the entire event to ensure a seamless experience for both devotees and local residents. Coordination between districts, police, and administrative authorities is being strengthened.

Nadda, TN Guv take holy dip

PNS ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Bharatiya Janata Party president JP Nadda and Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi took a holy dip at Sangam on Saturday.

BJP president JP Nadda, along with his family, took a holy dip at the Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh on Saturday, an official statement said.

Along with Nadda, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Cabinet ministers Swatantra Dev Singh and Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' also took a dip at the Triveni Sangam, the statement added.

Nadda and his family offered prayers to the Sun God and also presented a sari, coconut, flowers and other offerings to the Ganga river, the statement said. The BJP president reached Prayagraj airport on Saturday afternoon, where he was welcomed by Deputy Chief Minister Brjesh Pathak, UP BJP Chief Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary, minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' and Phulpur MP Praveen Patel.

On reaching Arail in Mahakumbh Nagar, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath welcomed Nadda and took him to the Sangam by boat. Nadda and his family also fed grains to the Siberian birds chirping in the



Union Minister and BJP National President JP Nadda and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath take a holy dip at Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj on Saturday

Sangam area. Meanwhile Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi also took a holy dip at Sangam on Saturday, embracing its spiritual energy. He offered prayers for Tamil Nadu's prosperity and the nation's well-being, calling Maha Kumbh a symbol of India's spiritual and cultural renaissance, reinforcing the

vision of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. Calling Maha Kumbh a living expression of Sanatan culture, Governor RN Ravi described it as a symbol of India's unity and cultural pride. He emphasised that India's soul lies in its eternal traditions and Maha Kumbh embodies this heritage, uniting the nation in a shared spiritual thread.

Governor RN Ravi emphasised that this festival not only offers spiritual purification but also reinforces the spirit of global welfare. "Maha Kumbh reflects India's deeply-rooted spiritual consciousness, where millions gather at Sangam with a shared purpose - spiritual elevation and global welfare," he added.

Over 60 cr devotees take holy dip so far

PNS ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Maha Kumbh, underway in Prayagraj since January 13, has made history. Over 60 crore devotees have taken a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam as of Saturday with five more days remaining before the Mahakumbh concludes, showcasing an extraordinary display of religious and cultural unity. This record gathering stands as the largest human participation in any religious, cultural, or social event in history. With an estimated 120 crore Sanatanis worldwide, this means that more than half of the global Sanatani community has already bathed in the holy confluence, seeking spiritual blessings. With the massive daily influx of tourists and devotees at Maha Kumbh, the total number of pilgrims is expect-



ed to surpass 65 crore by the final Mahashivratri snan on February 26. India's ancient tradition, with its divine and grand aura, has captivated the entire world, reaffirming the spiritual and cultural significance of Maha Kumbh,

which has welcomed diplomats from 73 countries, including Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, along with many international guests who came to take the sacred dip. More than 50 lakh people from Nepal, the maternal home of Maa Janaki, have also bathed in the holy waters of Triveni Sangam, becoming part of this historic event. India is a deeply religious country, home to multiple faiths, with Sanatan dharma having the largest following. According to World Population Review and Pew Research, India's estimated population is 143 crore, out of which 110 crore people follow Sanatan dharma. Globally, the number of Sanatanis stands at 120 crore.

A comparison of the number of devotees who have taken a dip at Triveni Sangam reveals that more than 50 per

cent of the global Sanatani population has participated in the Maha Kumbh. In relation to India's total population, over 55 per cent of Indians have already taken part in this sacred ritual. According to Pew Research 2024, the global Sanatani population is estimated to be 120 crore. A breakdown of the major bathing events shows that the highest number of pilgrims - eight crore - participated in the Mauni Amavasya snan. The Makar Sankranti Snan saw 3.5 crore devotees, while on January 30 and February 1, more than two crore pilgrims bathed each day. On Paus Purnima, 1.7 crore devotees took a dip, while Basant Panchami recorded 2.57 crore participants. Similarly, on Maghi Purnima, more than two crore devotees took the sacred bath at the Triveni Sangam.

AKY takes dig at UP govt claim

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, on Saturday, took a dig at the Uttar Pradesh government's claim of making the state's economy one trillion dollars by the year 2029, saying that "those who fail in their work, change the time limit of the target".

The SP chief in a post on X said, "In 2021, the BJP people had said that by 2024, the economy of UP will become one-trillion-dollars (1,000 billion dollars) and

now in 2025 they are saying, in 2029, the economy of UP will become one trillion dollars." Yadav said, "People neither believed in their promises of yesterday nor do they believe in their claims of tomorrow."

"Those who fail in their work, they change the time limit of the target, not the future of the country and state," he claimed.

"Lies have become synonymous with the BJP. People say that they don't want today's BJP!" he added.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the assembly on Friday said that as per the inspiration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the state is moving towards becoming a trillion-dollar economy.

Responding to the questions of Samajwadi Party MLA Dr Ragini Sonkar during the Question Hour in the assembly on Friday, Yogi said that "due to the efforts of the double-engine government of the last eight years, it has become the second largest economy. In 2029, UP will also become a one-trillion-dollar economy and the largest economy of the country, I assure the entire House of this."

3 students killed in road accident in Balrampur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Three students were killed in a road accident in Balrampur while two persons died and five were injured when a car rammmed into a tree in Ballia. Three students were killed after they were hit by a speeding truck while they were on their way to check the location of their examination centre in Balrampur on Saturday. Police identified the victims as Shivam (16), Vikas Yadav (18) and Ajay Yadav (16). The accident occurred on the Balrampur-Bahraich National Highway when the students were riding a motorcycle. A speeding truck hit their two-wheeler near Pilibhit village and they died on the spot, Superintendent of Police Vikash Kumar said. The students were going to check the location of their examination centre for the UP Board examinations starting from February 24, Kumar said.

He added that the police had seized the truck, while its driver fled. In Ballia, two men were killed and five others were injured when a speeding car returning from a marriage ceremony in Ghazipur district lost control and rammmed into a tree.

Station House Officer of Bansdih, Sanjay Singh, said the police sent all the injured to Bansdih community health centre where the doctors pronounced Sanjay Gond (35) dead. He said the other six injured were referred to the district hospital, where Kuber Shah (38) died during treatment.

Police sent both the bodies for post-mortem examination.

Meanwhile in Gorakhpur Three Nepalese nationals died and seven others were injured when their SUV rammmed into a tractor-trolley from behind on the Gorakhpur Link Expressway, police said on Saturday.

Officials said the accident occurred on Friday night when the passengers were returning from Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. Harihar Devi and Vakilni Devi, both aged 42 and Parshuram (45) respectively, all residents of Kanchanpur in Nepal, died in the accident, a police officer said.

The injured, Upendra Yadav, Lalu Devi, Jeetu Yadav, and Mukeya, were taken to the district hospital for treatment, he said.

Additional Superintendent of Police (South) Jitendra Kumar said that 10 devotees from Nepal had booked a Scorpio for their pilgrimage to Maha Kumbh. While returning, their vehicle collided with a tractor-trolley carrying sacks. The impact was fatal for Parshuram, seated in the front and two women in the middle row, who died in the spot, the officer said. Locals told police that the Scorpio was speeding and the driver failed to control the vehicle upon spotting the tractor-trolley suddenly.

Additionally, the trolley had no reflectors or rear lights, making it difficult for approaching vehicles to detect it at night, the additional superintendent of police said. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, while the injured persons are undergoing treatment, he added.

Legal Cell: HDFC Bank Ltd 2nd Floor Vardhan Khand, Gomti Nagar Extn, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 226010. **POSSESSION NOTICE APPENDIX IV (RULE 8(1))**

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of the HDFC Bank Ltd. under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notices, and calling upon to pay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. Details are given as under:-

Customer Name	Description of the Immovable Property	13(2) Notice Date
1. Mr. Dheeraj Kumar Mishra S/o Mr. Ganesh Prasad Mishra (borrower & mortgagor)	House Built Over Arazai No. 328, Admeasuring 173.22 Sq. Mtr. Situated At- Mauza Mubarakpur Kotwa, Pargana & Tehsil Sadar, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh (property Owned By Mr. Dheeraj Kumar Mishra). Bounded As Under: - East: Part Of Sold Arazai, South: Part Of Sold Arazai, West: 18 Ft. Wide Kachcha Rasta, North: Plot Of Akanksha Devi W/o Lavkush	28-10-2024 Notice Amt. Rs. 10,41,263.00/- Possession Date 19-02-2025 Location : Prayagraj
2. Mr. Ganesh Prasad Mishra S/o Amrit Lal Mishra (Co-Borrower)		
1. M/s Jaliwala Private Limited Through Its Directors Mrs. Ruby Rani Agarwal, Mr. Siddharth Kumar Agarwal & Surendra Kumar Agarwal (Borrower) 2. Mrs. Ruby Rani Agarwal W/o Mr. Surendra Kumar Agarwal (Co-borrower & Director) 3. Mr. Siddharth Kumar Agarwal S/o Surendra Kumar Agarwal (Co-Borrower & Director)	Property Shop No. 42, Situated At- Gautam Buddha Marg And Also Known As Premises Of M/s Agarwal Sales, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh. 226018 (Property Owned By Mr. Surendra Kumar Agarwal). Bounded As Under: - East: Property Of Shri Abdul Rehman And Abdul Sattar North: Shop Of Shri Mahesh Kumar West: Gautam Buddha Marg South: Shop Of Sri Pawan Kumar	13(2) Notice Date 26-11-2024 Notice Amt. Rs. 29,38,967.00/- Possession Date 19-02-2025 Location : Lucknow
4. Mr. Surendra Kumar Agarwal S/o Mr. Shrawan Kumar Agarwal (Co-Borrower & Director & Mortgagor) 5. M/s Jaliwala Through Its Proprietor Mrs. Ruby Rani Agarwal (Co-Borrower)		

The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on above mentioned dates. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to charge of the HDFC Bank Ltd. for an amount of notices mentioned above and interest thereon together with expenses and charges etc. less amount paid, if any. 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.

Place :- Prayagraj / Lucknow **Authorised Officer, HDFC Bank Ltd.**

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank

ALLAHABAD

Zonal Office: 15/287, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, The Mall, Bada Chauraha, Kanpur U.P.-208001

POSSESSION NOTICE (Rule 8(1) for immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank, 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 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice (details of which have been mentioned hereunder) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with les 8 & 9 of the said Rules. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount and interest & charges there on as described here in below: We draw attention to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act and the Rules framed there under which deals with your rights of redemption over the securities.

S. No.	Name of the Borrowers	Name of Mortgagors	Description of the Immovable property	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession Notice	Outstanding Amt.
1.	M/s Arnava Chemicals (Prop. S/o Arnav Srivastava)	Smt. Sanju Srivastava w/o Shri Praveen Kumar Srivastava	Mortgaged assets:- All that part and parcel of land and building consisting of Flat No. B-10/1, 10th floor, Aman Patel Complex, Constructed over H. No. 3/15, Vishnuপুরी, Nawab Ganj, Company Bagh Chauraha, Katarjiyora Kheora, Kanpur Nagar 208002, Area- 83.61 Sq Meter, in the name of Mrs. Sanju Srivastava	11.12.2024	18.02.2025	Rs. 11,83,645.00 (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Eighty Three Thousand Six Hundred Forty Five Only) as on 17.02.2025 with further interest w.e.f. 18.02.2025, charges and other expenses thereon
			Bounded by: Aman Patel Complex: East: Bungalow of Shri Satya Narain Kaseria, West: 20 ft wide approach road, North: Bungalow of vijay pratap Jain & Nand Kishore, South: Bungalow of Shri Satya Narain Kaseria			
			FLAT NO B 10/1: East: Staircase thereafter Flat no A-10/1, West: Open space thereafter 20 ft wide Road, North: Flat no B-10/2, South: Open space thereafter boundary wall			
2.	Smt. Sunita Gupta W/o Shri Arun Kumar Gupta	Smt. Sunita Gupta W/o Shri Arun Kumar Gupta	All that Part & Parcel of Land & Building built over Plot No. E-334 D, Block: EWS, Yojana: Swarn Jayanti Vihar Part-1, situated at Mohallah: Swarn Jayanti Vihar, Kanpur Nagar	06.12.2024	20.02.2025	Rs. 10,13,237.00 (Rupees Ten Lakhs Thirteen Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Seven Only) as on 18.02.2025 with further interest w.e.f. 19.02.2025, charges and other expenses thereon
			Area of the Property: 30.83 Sq. Mtr. Owner of Property: Smt. Sunita W/o Shri Arun Kumar Gupta Boundaries: East: 6 Mtr. Wide Road, West: Other's Land, North: Plot No. E-334/C, South: Plot No. E-334/E			

Date : 22.02.2025 Place: Kanpur The Authorized Officer: Indian Bank

Nadda highlights efforts made by PM to unite India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Chemicals and Fertilisers Jagat Prakash Nadda participated in the third edition of Kashi-Tamil Sangamam (KTS) being held from February 15 to 24 at Namoh Ghat on Friday evening. While addressing the people, Nadda said many efforts have been made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to unite India from North to South and East to West. "The Kashi Tamil Sangamam, Kashi Telugu Sangamam and Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam are examples of the efforts made by the PM to unite the country," he said, adding that such efforts help in preserving economic and cultural heritage of the country as well as enriching languages. Nadda further said the PM has established Sengol in the new Parliament of the country which is an effort to re-establish its prestige as well as bring the tradition of South India into the mainstream. The PM believes in unity in



Union Minister Dr. JP Nadda at KTS 3.0 event at Namoh Ghat in Varanasi

diversity in the relationship between Kashi and Tamil Nadu and now he himself is feeling this sentiment by coming here, the union minister said, recalling the efforts made by Subrahmanya Bharati, Adiveera Pandyan and Agastya Rishi to strengthen the unity of the country. On the occasion,

Nadda visited the exhibitions organised by various ministries at KTS and also attended the cultural evening based on culture of Kashi and Tamil Nadu organised by the Union Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The union minister expressed happiness over the establishment of Subrahmanya

Bharati Chair in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and congratulated the university for this. During the programme, the book 'Kashi Kumbhabhishekam' written by Subbu Sundaram was also released by the union minister. Later, Nadda also offered prayers at Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Meanwhile, on the occasion of International Mother Language Day, poetry recitation, poster painting, quiz competition and dialogue programme were organised among the students of Hindi Department, Vasanta College for Women (VCW), Rajghat, in the picture exhibition organised by Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India in KTS 3.0 organised at Namoh Ghat. Chief guest of the programme Prof Meenu Awasthi of VCW said mother tongue is the language that a human speaks after birth. "Anyone's mother tongue is not just a language but an emotion. All-round

development of a person is not possible without the knowledge of his mother tongue. Mother tongue is the carrier of our civilisation and cultures and a powerful medium of social harmony, national unity and mass communication", Prof Awasthi said, adding that there are many local languages and dialects in India. She said in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a provision has been made to encourage mother tongue-based education from the initial stages of education to higher education. Dr Rajesh Chaudhary said mother tongue is connected to the emotions of human beings. "There are many languages in the world which are medium of communication among the people in their geographical environment", he said, adding that we should respect all languages. Assistant Director of CBC Varanasi Dr Lalji conducted the programme. The winners of various types of competitions were honoured by giving prizes.

Maha Shivratri: DRM reviews preparations for crowd control

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For efficient management of a crowd of devotees gathering on the occasion of Maha Shivratri (February 26), the last bathing date of the ongoing Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) Vineet Kumar Srivastava inspected the Banaras and Varanasi City railway stations of the division on Friday and reviewed preparations for crowd control.



DRM VK Srivastava inspecting Varanasi City railway station

He held a meeting with divisional officials and discussed in detail issues related to entry-exit points, passenger shelter, safety and security in the circulating area and passed necessary instructions. The DRM checked safety in operational system at both stations, interacted with passengers at Varanasi City station and encouraged them for e-ticketing and digital transactions. In view of heavy crowd at Banaras station, the possibility of running Mela special trains from Varanasi City station were also considered. The DRM said the NER administration is fully committed to the safety and convenience of passengers on Maha Shivratri. He directed all the departments to ensure crowd management and make the journey of Maha Kumbh passengers comfortable and memorable. For efficient management of passengers the DRM has given several guidelines to senior officers of the division — accurate monitoring of crowds inside and outside Banaras and Varanasi City stations, monitoring of Mela Special trains and passenger facilities, giving information about trains to passengers, avoiding gathering of crowd at one place and ensuring proper arrangements, giving accurate information to passengers about trains and their status. Besides, three assistance counters have also been oper-

ated at Varanasi City and Banaras stations, which will provide assistance 24 hours a day. Proper arrangements have been made for crowd management at Banaras railway station for devotees coming with the desire to visit Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) after bathing at Maha Kumbh which includes holding area, passenger shelter centre, separate exit and entry gates, barricading with steel pillars and ropes on the platform. Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM) will be available at Banaras railway station and along with Assistant Security Commissioner (ASC) Nagendra Mahadev Yadav and Railway Protection Force (RPF) Banaras team will monitor crowd management and other arrangements at both entry gates, platforms, foot over bridges, general passenger hall, food stalls and main entry and exit gates of circulating area at Banaras railway station. The RPF personnel will request passengers not to gather at one place and guide those who have to catch trains. The waiting passengers will be sent to holding area. Information about Mela special trains will be continuously broadcast to the passengers. Passengers gathering on the platform without any valid reason will be

removed from time to time. RPF teams will instruct and make passengers aware through mega mikes at station premises, passenger shelters, foot over bridges (FOBs) and platforms in Varanasi City and Banaras for security purposes. Mela special trains are passing through both the said stations at regular intervals for Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi and a plan has been made to run more if number of passengers increases. The entire process of bringing passengers from holding area/passenger shelter built at said stations to sending them off is to be successfully completed in a very planned manner through mutual coordination of all departments. During the inspection ADRM (Operation) Rajesh Kumar Singh, ADRM (Infrastructure) Roshan Lal Yadav, Senior Divisional Engineer (SDE/Coordination) Rakesh Ranjan, Senior Divisional Operations Manager (SDOM) Ajay Pratap Singh, Senior Divisional Safety Commissioner (SDSC) S Ramakrishnan, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (SDEE/General) Pankaj Kesharwani, SDEE (Traction) RN Singh, Divisional Commercial Manager (DCM) Ramesh Pandey and senior supervisors of various departments were also present.

Acharya Agastya Muni's influence on national health system emphasised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A national seminar on Acharya Agastya Muni was successfully organised at the Department of Siddhant Darshan, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (IMS-BHU) here on Saturday. The event received technical support from the Central Council of Siddha, Ministry of AYUSH and the National Institute of Siddha, Chennai. It was held in conjunction with the Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS) 3.0. The seminar was inaugurated by Director of IMS-BHU Prof SN Sankhwar, who served as the chief guest. He offered his blessings and commended the successful organisation of the

event. In his keynote address, Prof PK Goswami, Dean of the Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS-BHU, highlighted the profound influence of Acharya Agastya Muni on the national health system. He referenced several teachings of Acharya Agastya, particularly those concerning the maintenance of health and well-being. The seminar featured guest lectures from Dr K Venila, Dr Gayatri R and Dr B Anbarshan from the National Institute of Siddha, Chennai, who provided insightful perspectives on the role of the Siddha system in modern healthcare. Dr A Rajendra Kumar from the Central Council of Siddha, Ministry of AYUSH, New Delhi, also delivered a thought-provoking talk to the audience. Prof KHHV

Murthy, organising chairman and Prof OP Singh, the organising secretary, emphasised the increasing national importance of the Siddha system and its growing acceptance within society, particularly in the post-Covid era. Their addresses highlighted the relevance of traditional medicine in contemporary health challenges. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr Anurag Pandey, acknowledging the contribution of all participants and support provided by the organising bodies. The seminar saw active participation from several distinguished faculty members, including Vaidhya Sushil Dubey, Dr Anurag Pandey, Prof CS Pandey, Prof Rani Singh, Prof KN Singh, Prof B Ram and Prof Vandana Verma.

Health dept taking new initiatives

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Health department is continuously taking new initiatives in medical services. In this sequence, information about vaccination centres and online booking facility is being provided on the 'U-WIN' portal for children from birth to five years of age and pregnant women to get vaccinated. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that through this portal, beneficiaries can easily book for getting vaccinated. After getting vaccinated, they will also get a digital certificate through the portal. The most important thing about this facility is that after registration on U-WIN portal, new born babies, children and

pregnant women will get the facility to get vaccinated anywhere in the country, the CMO said, informing that in the last three months, 1,11,859 pregnant women and children have been vaccinated using U-WIN vaccination app, which includes 16,303 pregnant women and 95,556 children. ACMO and District Immunisation Officer (DIO) Dr AK Maurya informed that beneficiaries can download U-WIN app on their mobile and register themselves and their family members and avail the benefits. Beneficiaries will have to register their mobile number on U-WIN app, as soon as they register, their name, address, Aadhaar number etc. details will appear.

Over 1.27 lakh cancer patients registered in past 6 yrs: Gupta

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Director of Tata Memorial Centre (Mumbai) Dr Sudeep Gupta said in the past six years, over 1.27 lakh (total 1,27,105) cancer patients have been registered at the Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Cancer Centre and Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital (MPMCC & HBCH) in Varanasi. Addressing a press conference on Saturday, Dr Gupta said along with providing treatment to cancer patients, these institutions are also making rapid progress in the fields of education and research. MPMCC and HBCH Director Dr Satyajit Pradhan and Deputy Director of HBCH Dr BK Mishra were also present. Dr Gupta said recently Varanasi hospital set up a dedicated lab to promote basic research in the field of cancer. He added that the University Grants Commission (UGC) has granted MPMCC and HBCH the status of an off-site campus of the Homi Bhabha National Institute (a deemed university under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India), which has enabled the operation of postgraduate and super-specialty courses in medical oncology, surgical oncology, radiation oncology, onco-pathology, and anesthesiology.



Director of Tata Memorial Centre (Mumbai) Dr Sudeep Gupta addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Saturday.

"To provide quality treatment to cancer patients from UP and neighbouring states, both hospitals are expanding new services every year to ensure that patients do not have to travel to bigger cities for treatment," Dr Gupta said and added that new services and facilities introduced last year include an additional linear accelerator radiation machine, an extra CT simulator, barrier laundry, compost machines and more. Dr Gupta mentioned that number of patients is increasing every year. When the hospital started in 2018, the new patient registration was 6,307

and by 2024, the number had grown to 26,732. Since 2018, a total of 1,27,105 patients have been registered at both hospitals, 65,000 surgeries have been performed, 15,363 patients have received radiotherapy, and over 400,000 chemotherapy treatments have been given, he said. "The increasing number of patients is concerning; however, it can largely be attributed to greater awareness about the disease and availability of all cancer-related services under one roof close to home", he said, adding that with quality and affordable treatment, cancer patients not only from UP but

also from neighbouring states come here for care. According to him, early detection of any disease helps not only in preventing its progression but also in its effective management. Keeping this in mind, Dr Gupta said the hospital has been running various screening campaigns and so far, over 2,00,000 people have been screened for cancer, including 1,68,000 women. The screenings primarily focus on oral cancer, breast cancer and cervical cancer. He said that most cancer patients visiting the hospital are financially weak. "To assist these patients, the hospital has a Medical Social Work (MSW) department, which has helped provide treatment worth more than ₹350 crore to 38,262 patients through various government and non-government schemes. The department not only informs these patients about government schemes but also assists them with all necessary paperwork", Dr Gupta said, further mentioning that with the increasing number of patients, it is essential to expand current services alongside introduction of new facilities. This is being achieved through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Till now the hospital has received more than ₹136 crore in CSR funds, for which we are grateful to all donors.

Woman's murder worked out

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

With the arrest of the main accused, Jhansi police claimed to have worked out the sensational murder case of a woman in a lodge. The police said the main accused, husband of the deceased, Ashok Valmiki of Delhi had killed his wife due to his illicit relationship with another woman. During interrogation he told the police that his wife Meenakshi oppose it and used to quarrel every day. Therefore he hatched a conspiracy to kill her. He brought her from Delhi and took a bath at Sangam. The accused rented a room in a lodge and killed her by slitting her throat with a sharp weapon on the night of February 18. After that, he fled with all the belongings. He called the family members and told them that his wife got lost somewhere in Maha Kumbh. Then he fled to Delhi. Jhansi Station House Officer (SHO) Upendra Pratap Singh said on February 21, son Ashwin (22) reached Prayagraj in search of mother and identified her body. After this the police arrested the husband. The SHO said the woman was originally from Bulandshahr. She had been living in Delhi with her family for the last several years. Her husband has been arrested.

UPRTOU to include literature of 4 languages in revised syllabus of MA Hindi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon Open University (UPRTOU) is working towards including the literature of Bhojpur, Awadhi, Braj and Bundelkhandi languages in the revised syllabus of MA Hindi. Vice-Chancellor (V-C) Professor Satyakam said this revised syllabus will be available in the July admission session. The university has been working continuously for the last six months for the development of local languages. The V-C has welcomed the decision to give place to dialects of UP like Bhojpur, Awadhi, Braj and Bundelkhandi in the UP Legislative Assembly. proceedings. He said this is a welcome step which will promote linguistic diversity and make the democratic process more inclusive. He said UP has become the first state in the country to start the facility of multilingual dialogue in the Legislative Assembly. Prof Satyakam said this is a pioneering step in compliance with the National Education Policy (NEP). UPRTOU is moving towards imparting education in mother tongue by including these four languages Awadhi, Bhojpur, Braj and Bundelkhandi in its curriculum in the light of NEP. He said the UPRTOU is organising

a two-day national seminar on the contribution of Bhojpur, Awadhi, Braj and Bundelkhandi languages in the development of Hindi on March 20 and 21 under the joint aegis of Sahitya Akademi. In this, various language experts of the country will brainstorm and the university will set a new standard in furthering the development of local languages and dialects. Since the working area of the university is the whole of UP the reach of the university is easily available to the areas of Awadhi, Braj, Purvanchal and Bundelkhand. Due to this reach, the university has resolved to bring the benefits of the development of local language dialects to as many people as possible. The interest shown by the state government in development of these dialects has also provided support to the university. **MISHAP:** A 20-year-old youth died in a road accident in the Kaundhiara police station area on Friday night. The accident occurred near Jari Bazar Power House when Pradeep Patel, driver of a tractor going to Ghurpur, suddenly applied brakes after seeing the crowd in the market due to which Chandan Patel, sitting on it came under the wheel of trolley and died. The deceased was a resident of Karma village under Ghurpur police station.

Workshop on Indian languages concludes

Varanasi (PNS): A five-day workshop on 'Training of Trainers: Promoting Indian Languages and Integrating Indian Knowledge Tradition in Higher Education Curricula' concluded at Inter-University Centre for Teacher Education (IUCTE) organised under the joint aegis of IUCTE BHU (Varanasi), Vidya Bharati Higher Education Institute (Tamil Nadu) and Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti (New Delhi) here on Friday. The chief guest of the closing ceremony was former Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) and Director of Society for Higher Education and Practical Applications (SHEPA), Varanasi, Prof Prithvisha Nag. In his address, Prof Nag told about the history of Indian languages. He also screened a film on the mapping of India 200 years ago. The guest of honour and Joint Director, Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi, Dr Alok Kumar Mishra stressed on understanding the brain through Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and said by combining ancient practices like yoga, meditation and Ayurveda with modern neuroscience, mental clarity, emotional balance and happiness can be achieved.

3D sketching computer workshop organised

Varanasi (PNS): A two-day 3D sketching computer workshop organised by Fashion Technology and Apparel Designing, Deendayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra at Rajiv Gandhi Southern Campus (RGSC) of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Mirzapur, ended on Saturday. Eminent experts from Delhi, including Saurabh Srivastava (FDDI, Noida) and Yamini Vats (freelance Clo illustration expert), were present. They described the importance of 3D figure as necessary for future jobs. The programme concluded with a ceremony in which RGSC Prof-in-Charge Prof Vinod Kumar Mishra, course coordinator Dr BMN Kumar, coordinator of Deendayal Upadhyay Skill Centre garlanded and offered flowers to the statue of the founder of the university Pt Madan Mohan Malaviya. The special guests were honoured with mementos and *angavastram* by Prof Vinod Kumar Mishra who highlighted the importance of computers in the field of fashion and told how dresses can be displayed by learning new techniques in the portfolio using this technology. Dr BMN Kumar blessed the students.

12-year-old boy's body recovered

Pratapgarh (PTI): The body of a 12-year-old boy was found in a mustard field in Saraibahelia village here, police said on Saturday. Bhupiyamau police outpost in-charge Varun Singh on Saturday said Ansh Tiwari was playing with other children on Friday evening. When he did not reach home till late night, the family started searching for him and his body was later found in a mustard field, he said. According to the villagers, there is a potato field next to the mustard field, in which an electric fence has been installed to protect the crop from wild boars. Probably, the child touched the fence and died due to electric shock. The body has been sent for post-mortem, the police said.

NCR advancing in revolutionising energy consumption

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Committed to a sustainable and environmentally responsible future, North Central Railway (NCR) is at the forefront of Indian Railways' transition towards green energy. Embracing renewable solutions as a mission, NCR is steadily advancing in its efforts to revolutionise energy consumption within its infrastructure. Achieving a significant milestone in sustainable energy management, the Electric Loco Shed, Kanpur, has received the prestigious Zero and Zero Plus Energy Certification. This recognition highlights its commitment to environmental conservation and energy self-sufficiency, strengthening NCR's dedication to green energy. Senior Public Relations Officer Amit Malviya

said NCR has undertaken an extensive initiative to secure Zero and Zero Plus Energy Certification for its office buildings. Under this initiative, the total energy consumption of each building is assessed and through advanced global technologies, consumption is reduced while an equivalent or greater amount of energy is generated through solar panels. This enables the buildings to become self-sufficient in energy, eliminating the need for external power sources and achieving the Zero and Zero Plus certification. These certifications are granted by accredited energy auditors designated by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Government of India, following a thorough energy audit of the buildings. In a significant milestone, the buildings of the Electric Loco Shed, Kanpur,

including the Planning, Research and Development office, sub-station, Traction depot, Time office and Store depot, received Zero and Zero Plus Energy Certification on February 12. Previously, the 'Ganga' and 'Powerhouse' buildings at the General Manager's office were awarded Zero Plus certification, while 'Saraswati' received Zero Energy certification. Certification for the passenger ticket reservation office in Dhoolpur, Supervisor Training Centre in Jhansi and the parcel office in Aligarh is also in progress. Malviya said NCR is also set to expand its green energy initiatives with the installation of solar power plants with a cumulative capacity of 17.84 MW across all three divisions, targeted for completion by June 2025 as per the Railway Board's directive. This initiative is

projected to generate 32.3 million units of cost-effective and environmentally friendly electricity annually, resulting in savings of approximately Rs 14.9 crore. Additionally, this will lead to a reduction of 27,187 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually. In the current fiscal year (April 2024 - January 2025), NCR has already generated 9.75 million units of solar electricity from its 12.47 MWp installed capacity, resulting in ₹4.37 crore in savings and preventing 8,192 metric tonnes of carbon emissions. Consistently excelling in energy conservation, NCR has emerged as a leader in the field over the past two years. The zone has achieved notable accolades, including the first prize in the 'Zonal Railway Category' at the National Energy Conservation

Awards 2023, the first prize at the 'Uttar Pradesh Energy Conservation Awards 2024', and a 'Certificate of Merit' in the 'Building Category' for Subedarganj railway station. These prestigious recognitions underscore NCR's efforts and contributions to energy conservation on both national and international platforms. This ambitious green energy programme has been led by Principal Chief Electrical Engineer (PCEE) Anoop Kumar Agrawal along with Chief Electrical Engineer (Energy Management) Krishna Mohan Singh and his dedicated team, including senior engineer Praveen Nalkar and junior engineer Chandan Bhai Rawal. Their commitment continues to drive NCR's sustainability initiatives towards a greener future.

Shantikanta Das appointed Principal Secretary to PM



Former governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Shantikanta Das during a press conference. Das was on Saturday appointed the second Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Reserve Bank of India governor Shantikanta Das was on Saturday appointed the second Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. P K Mishra, a retired IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre, is currently serving as the Principal Secretary to the prime minister. According to an official order, the tenure of Das, a retired IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre, will be "co-terminus" with the term of the prime minister or until further orders, whichever is earlier. This is the first time that two persons will simultaneously serve as principal secretaries to the prime minister. Both Mishra and Das are from Odisha. Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Shri Shantikanta Das, IAS (Retired), as Principal Secretary-2 to Prime Minister with effect from the date he assumes the office. His appointment will be co-terminus with the term of the Prime Minister or until further orders, whichever is earlier," the order said. Sixty-eight-year old Das has been a career civil servant with over 44 years of

distinguished service, primarily in the areas of finance, taxation, investment and infrastructure. He was the central government's revenue secretary. During his tenure as economic affairs secretary in 2016, the Modi government had announced the demonetisation. Das played a key role when multiple indirect taxes were merged into one GST, which came into effect on July 1, 2017. Post-retirement, he was appointed as a member of the 15th Finance Commission and G20 Sherpa of India. Das became the 25th governor of the RBI in 2018 after Urjit Patel resigned. Initially appointed for three years, his tenure was extended for a further period of three years in 2021. He demitted office in December 2024 when Sanjay Malhotra was appointed as RBI governor. Das was the second longest serving governor of the RBI in its 90-year history after Benegal Rama Rau, who had a seven-and-a-half-year tenure in the 1950s. Das, a 1980-batch IAS officer, holds a Master's degree in history from Delhi's St Stephen's College and a postgraduate degree in public administration from the University of Birmingham.

As the RBI governor, he focused on maintaining financial stability, curbing inflation and promoting economic growth. He took several measures to address the liquidity crunch in the non-banking financial sector and took steps to strengthen the regulatory framework for banks and non-banking financial companies. Das is credited with navigating the RBI's economic policies through the Covid pandemic. As a key economic policymaker, he faced challenging times in managing the disruptions caused by the lockdown. He chose to cut the policy repo rate to a historic low of 4 per cent, continuing with the low-interest rate regime for almost two years to help the economy hit badly by the lockdown. During his tenure, the RBI handed over the highest-ever dividend of Rs 2.11 lakh crore to the Centre for 2023-24. He was also conferred with the 'Central Bank Governor of the Year' award by Central Banking, UK. Das had also served as India's Alternate Governor in the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

Health central to to global cooperation: EAM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India envisages health as central to development, and development as key to international cooperation, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday as he cited the 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative of the Centre during the Covid period, and the medical aid extended to people in Ukraine, Afghanistan and other countries in recent years. Addressing the 12th International Patient Safety Conference being hosted here by the Apollo healthcare group, Jaishankar said the private health industry in India has also contributed to facilities and capacities in different geographies, and "we value this industry as a partner". "We in India envisage health as central to development, and development as key to international cooperation. In recent years, many of our global initiatives have revolved around health security. This is a domain where India has been the first responder, a development partner, a supply chain link, a health solution provider, and in many ways, an

exemplar over the last decade," Jaishankar said. He underlined that India today has delivered more than 600 significant development projects to 78 nations across the world and many of those are in the health sector. "Recently, we dispatched 66.5 tonnes of medical supplies to deal with the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. A little before that, a consignment of 1,400 kg of anti-cancer medicine were sent to strengthen the medical capabilities of hospitals in Syria. "Even in Afghanistan, India has stepped forward with 300 tonnes of medicines in the last few years, as well as the despatch of specialists to a hospital that we built in Kabul." Jaishankar also cited the instance of aid provided to Sri Lankan hospitals during the 2022 economic crisis in the island nation, to Ukraine as the casualties in the conflict with Russia spiked, or to Myanmar when it was struck by Typhoon Yagi. "In this pursuit, Indian diplomacy has worked with Indian partners, big and small, islands and landlocked, close and distant, but united in their



Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addresses the 12th International Health Dialogue, in New Delhi

desire to ensure better lives for their citizens," he said. Jaishankar also recalled India's role during the Covid-19 pandemic, and its 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative. "When the Covid pandemic started engulfing the world, the initial deliberations, and I myself was present at some of them, envisaged India as potentially the biggest concern. Ironically, India ended up not only looking after its own needs, but actually stepped

forward to contribute to the world," Jaishankar said. At that time, India provided medicines to 150 nations, vaccines to 99 countries and two international organisations as well masks, PPE kits, gloves and ventilators, among others, Jaishankar said. "Equally important is the fact that India chose to do this when its own vaccination programme was still unfolding. A large number of

developing nations received Made-in-India vaccine either through our Vaccine Maitri initiative or through other global programmes," the minister said. This was in contrast to many developed countries which stockpiled vaccines to the multiples of their population, he said. "Indian medical teams also went out in the Indian Ocean Region to deal with the pressing situations in some smaller countries. And this was not just an exception made during the Covid era. It is part of our approach to the world, both before and after (the pandemic)," Jaishankar said. He also mentioned that through the 'Heal in India' initiative, the Centre is committed to promoting medical value travel and making it easier for foreign patients to avail treatment in India. And, "as we seek to balance tradition and technology as the twin forces of national progress, it is also natural that we will explore the relevance of our own heritage and culture, to the health of our people," he underlined.

Army to boost air defence with guns, radars

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With drones and other disruptive technologies impacting the dynamics of warfare as demonstrated in recent conflicts, the Army Air Defence has drawn a roadmap to boost its capabilities through replacement of two of its old platforms, induction of new fragmentation ammunition for existing air defence guns, and deployment of more potent radars. Besides, the army is also hoping to place a contract for the indigenously developed Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) system within 4-5 months, a top official said on Friday. The Corps of Army Air Defence holds a large variety of missile systems and guns in its inventory such as the L70, Zu-23mm, Schilka, Tanguska and Osa-AK missile system. "The fashion of guns is back. The army sustained them for good reason and these guns can be effectively used with fragmentation ammunition," Director General of Army Air Defence (AAD), Lt Gen Sumer Ivan D'Cunha, said. Asserting the need for modernisation with an emphasis on 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', Lt Gen D'Cunha also cautioned that the Indian industry must offer "reduced timelines" when it comes to delivery. The AAD, initially part of the Territorial Army, was later separated

from the Artillery in 1994 as a separate corps that looks after destruction of air threat "before it manifests", officials said. The army is planning to replace the L70 and ZU-23mm with "successor" platforms. However, as of now, it is not looking to import, as far as guns are concerned, they said. The first trials of the indigenous successor platform to replace the old L70 guns is likely to be carried out in July, the officials said, adding that an RFP (request for proposal) is already out for the procurement of 220 such guns. The L70 guns were originally manufactured by Swedish defence firm Bofors AB in 1950s, and India started inducting over 1,000 of them in the 1960s. On QRSAM, the AAD DG said, "We are hoping to place a contract within 4-5 months. And once it is done, the First of Prototype Model (FoPM) will be there over a period of several months." In September 2022, the defence ministry in a statement said that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Army had successfully completed six flight-tests of the QRSAM system from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur off the Odisha coast. The flight tests were conducted as part of evaluation trials by the Indian

Army. The While Schilka and Tanguska are planned to be replaced by indigenous successor platforms, while Osa-AK missile system is planned to be replaced by QRSAM, thus boosting the air defence capabilities of the Corps, the officials said. On February 1, the ministry said the DRDO has successfully conducted three successive flight-trials of Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) from Chandipur. These tests were carried out against high-speed targets flying at very low altitude. VSHORADS is a man-portable air defence system designed and developed indigenously by the Research Center Imarat in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and development-cum-production partners. The missile system has the capability to meet the needs of all the three services of the armed forces -- the army, navy and air force -- it said. "As you look at higher variety of drones, we have VSHORADS, we need to carry out a cost-benefit analysis and it would be cost prohibitive to use missiles against all drones. So, fragmentation ammunition is the way forward," Lt Gen D'Cunha said. The AAD is also in the process of acquiring radars such as the Low-

Level Light Weight (LLLR) radar. "We had bought LLLR radars as part of an emergency procurement which is capable of picking up Mavic drone without grenade, and can definitely pick up with grenade. Nano drones beyond this size may be able to carry out surveillance but can't carry weapons. So, we are looking at increasing the density of these radars," he said. Greater density is required for mountains and valley, the senior officer said. Lt Gen D'Cunha also cited the Russia-Ukraine conflict and other recent conflicts to emphasise the importance and growing threat of drones, counter-drones and other disruptive technologies. The employment of drones as a concept manifested in a different way in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Both drones and counter-drone systems came up in a "big way", he said. The development of this capability was so "escalatory in matrix" that every day there is new technology coming in, which becomes a challenge for air power, the AAD DG said. "Integrated with proper surveillance grid of radars, it ensured that Russian started flying higher and their vulnerability increased. This has allowed Ukraine to maintain control over its airspace and support its ground forces more effectively," Lt Gen D'Cunha said.

Punjab minister ran ghost department for 21 months

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Dhaliwal, the fifth senior-most minister in the Punjab Cabinet after Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema, New and Renewable Energy Minister Aman Arora, and Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr Baljit Kaur, was recently in the news for handling US

deportees landing in Amritsar as the Minister for NRI Affairs. Talking to the social media platform BJP IT Cell head Amit Malviya said, "You can imagine the crisis in Punjab government if it took nearly 20 months to realise that a department assigned to one of its prominent ministers never actually existed. Arvind Kejriwal is a charlatan who

must be banished from public life. Expressing his views on the matter, Punjab Congress President Amarinder Singh Raja Warring said, "I am surprised, the ministry that was given to Dhaliwal, doesn't even exist...why didn't he resign then? This is a very serious issue...how are they (AAP) even running the govt?"

BJP, Congress slugfest over USAID

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Putting forward the Congress' demands, Khera said PM Modi must talk to "his friend, US President Trump" and strongly refute the allegation on him that America was

about to give USD 21 million to him and India for increasing voter turnout. "RSS-BJP and all their ecosystem actors making wild allegations to bolster their fake narrative against credible civil society members, NGOs,

Political parties, must not only be named and shamed on public forums, but legal action must also be taken against them for spreading lies and misleading the nation," he said. Hitting back at Congress BJP leader Ajay Alok said the

Congress people have probably lost their mind. "We have already shown that the government got USD 2119 million between 2004-14 and just 1.5 million between 2014-25. We are shutting down these things. The Indian

government is now acting, the US government has issued a list of who has got the money from where... this is part of a deep state. The Bharat Jodo Yatra was also being funded from this money," Alok claimed.

'Probing all angles in IRS officer death'

From page 1

According to police sources, Shalini had recently received court summons directing for her appearance in Jharkhand on February 15 in connection with a case investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation. She was an accused in the case pertaining to alleged irregularities in her appointment in the Jharkhand government service, sources added. She was the topper of the first batch of the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) and her last posting was in Garhwa as district social welfare officer, the official in Ranchi said. While Maneesh and Shalini were found hanging, Shakuntala was discovered dead on her bed with the body draped in a white cloth, and flowers sprinkled over it. According to Kerala police, preliminary findings suggest the siblings died by suicide. However, the exact cause of their mother's death can be ascertained only after an

autopsy, a senior officer said. Police have found Maneesh had purchased flowers on February 14. They also found an entry in his diary dated February 15, instructing that certain documents be handed over to his younger sister, who is currently in Dubai, the officer said. Police added that their younger sister is expected to arrive in Kochi on Saturday, following which the autopsy will be conducted. While investigators are exploring all angles, they have not yet established a direct link between the deaths and the case. "If the mother's death is found to be natural, the siblings' suicides could be due to grief. Right now, our focus is to confirm the cause of death through the autopsy," said an officer. Maneesh Vijay was residing at the Central Excise Staff Quarters at Kakkanadu. The officer had been on leave for a few days, but when he failed to return to work, colleagues visited his residence on Thursday night.

Organisers leave brides in lurch at event

From page 1

Police took up the responsibility for completing the wedding ceremony and called up the grooms who had left. "Six couples tied the knot following arrangements made by the police," the ACP said. While many couples had already left the venue to get married at nearby temples and elsewhere, arrangements were made for six couples present at the spot, the police officer said. Bharat said a case would be registered against the organisers after family members of marriage hopefuls claimed that organisers had collected Rs 15,000 each from them for arranging the function. The organisers had promised to arrange everything along with gifts for the newly-married couples, family members claimed. Shilpaben Bagtharia, who attended the wedding of her relative's daughter, said the organisers had taken Rs 15,000 each from both the parties and also promised to give dowry.

Flight turbulence: Shivraj Singh Chouhan vs Air India

From page 1

The minister further mentioned that the issue was not limited to just his seat. "There are several such seats on the aircraft," he added. Despite fellow passengers offering to swap seats, Chouhan declined, stating, "Why should I cause discomfort to another traveller? I decided to complete my journey in the same seat." He urged Air India to take corrective action to prevent such issues for future travellers to which Air India replied on X, "Dear Sir, we apologize for the inconvenience caused. Please be rest assured that we are looking into this matter carefully to prevent any such occurrences in the future. We would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you, kindly DM us a convenient time to connect".

Need new legal framework...

From page 1

It made headlines after the crass comments of social media influencer Ranveer Allahbadia drew wide condemnation. Criminal cases have been registered against him, and his apology has done little to damp down the controversy. While the Supreme Court granted him protection from arrest, it also made very critical observations over his vulgar comments. The ministry told the committee, which will hold its next meeting on February 25, that it will submit a detailed note after due deliberations. The committee had asked the ministry on February 13 regarding the amendments needed in the existing laws to clamp down on

controversial content in the wake of the emergence of new technology and media platforms. Unlike the conventional print and electronic content, which are covered under specific laws, new media services powered by internet such as OTT platforms or YouTube have no specific regulatory framework, triggering demands for amending the laws. While there have been some concern that authorities may use new provisions to censor content for extraneous reasons, frequent outrage triggered by episodes like the one involving Allahbadia have given rise to the demand for strengthening the legal framework through amendments in the existing laws or enacting new ones.

First session of new Delhi Assembly to begin Monday

From page 1

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta will move the motion for Gupta to be chosen as speaker and minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa will second it on February 24, said Assembly's list of business. Both Gupta and Bisht would get elected to the posts as the BJP has 48 MLAs in the 70-member Assembly. The AAP, which has 22 MLAs, is yet to name a leader of opposition although former chief minister Atishi and the party's Delhi unit convener Gopal Rai are said to be frontrunners for the post. The speaker's post will fall vacant immediately before the commencement of the first meeting of the newly

constituted Assembly while the post of deputy speaker is already vacant. The pro-tem speaker will perform the duties of the Office of the Speaker from the start of the House meeting until a new speaker is elected. Each member of the House has been provisionally allotted a seat under Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Assembly, said the bulletin. A member who is unable to make and subscribe oath or affirmation on February 24, may do so on any subsequent sitting of the Assembly after giving advance information to the House secretary, it said. Meanwhile, in a notification published in Delhi Gazette, the legislative Assembly secretariat quoted an L-G's

order which said, "I hereby appoint Arvinder Singh Lovely, a member of the newly elected Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi to perform the duties of the Office of the Speaker from the commencement of the said meeting and until the new Speaker is elected." The LG's order added, "I also hereby appoint Arvinder Singh Lovely to be the person before whom Members of the newly elected Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi shall make and subscribe oath or affirmation in accordance with the provisions of section 12 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991."

TRUMP AND HIS TRUMPET...

From page 1

The Trump administration and the cost-cutting Department of Government Efficiency tied to billionaire Elon Musk have moved swiftly to shutter USAID, asserting that its work is wasteful and out of line with the president's agenda. Staffers, however, assert that the courts' temporary blocks have had only limited effect in slowing the Trump administration's dismantling of USAID and have left some USAID workers stationed worldwide in precarious situations. The Trump administration has stalled medical evacuations for as many as 25 USAID staffers and spouses in the later stages of high-risk pregnancies overseas, according to testimony in lawsuits and a person familiar with the cases. The person was

not authorised to speak publicly so spoke on condition of anonymity. USAID "will undertake all measures as appropriate to ensure the safety and security of current employees", deputy administrator Pete Marocco said in a court filing Thursday. The administration says it is taking all required care of staffers as it terminates USAID programmes and aims to recall thousands of workers and their families abroad. Multiple lawsuits from groups representing USAID workers and nonprofits and businesses are challenging President Donald Trump's freeze on foreign assistance, USAID job cuts and the sudden shutdown of the agency overall. Another court order has temporarily blocked the halt to funding. The administration has accused USAID's programmes of being wasteful and promoting a liberal agenda.

Hamas frees 6 more hostages

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Hamas freed all six hostages in the latest exchange on Saturday, even as heightened tension between the adversaries clouded the future of the fragile ceasefire deal. The six included three Israeli men seized from the Nova music festival and another abducted while visiting his family in southern Israel when militants stormed across the border in the October 7, 2023, attacks that triggered Israel's nearly 16-month campaign in the Gaza Strip. Two of the hostages had been held by Hamas for around a decade since they each entered Gaza on their own. Five of the captives were handed over in staged ceremonies that the Red Cross and Israel have condemned in the past — brought out by masked, armed Hamas fighters in front of hundreds of Palestinians before being transferred to Red Cross vehicles. In the central town of Nuseirat, Omer Wenkert, Omer Shem Tov, and Eliya Cohen were posed alongside Hamas fighters on the stage. A beaming Shem Tov even kissed two



Friends of Omer Wenkert, 23, gather to watch the TV broadcast of his release by Palestinian militants in Gaza, in Herzliya, Israel, on Saturday. AP/PTI

militants next to him on the head and blew kisses to the crowd. Hamas has come under heavy criticism for such public displays, with Israel, the UN and the Red Cross saying they are cruel and do not respect the dignity of the hostages. Watching the release, Cohen's

family and friends in Israel chanted "Eliya! Eliya! Eliya!" and cheered when they saw him for the first time. Shem Tov's grandmother ululated in joy, shrieking, "Omer, my joy! My life!" as she saw him. The Israeli military says the final hostage was released by

Hamas later Saturday. He was not immediately identified but is expected to be Hisham Al-Sayed, 36, a Bedouin Israeli, who crossed on his own into Gaza in 2015 and had been held since. His family has told Israeli media Al-Sayed was previously diagnosed with

schizophrenia. The latest releases, to be followed by the freeing of hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, went ahead after tensions mounted over a grisly and heart-wrenching dispute triggered this week when Hamas initially handed over the wrong body for Shiri Bibas, an Israeli mother of two young boys abducted by the militants. The remains that Hamas transferred with her sons' bodies on Thursday were later determined to be those of an unidentified Palestinian woman. In response, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed revenge for "a cruel and malicious violation," while Hamas suggested it had been a mistake. On Friday night, the small militant group believed to have been holding Bibas and her sons — the Palestinian Mujahadeen Brigades — handed over a second body. Bibas' family said Israeli forensic authorities had confirmed the remains were hers. "For 16 months we sought certainty, and now that it's here, it brings no comfort though we hope it marks the beginning of closure," the family said.

Difficult negotiations likely over ceasefire's next phase

AP ■ TEL AVIV

The ceasefire deal has paused the war but is nearing the end of its first phase. Negotiations over a second phase, in which Hamas would release dozens more hostages in exchange for a lasting ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal, are likely to be even more difficult. The six hostages being freed Saturday are the last living ones to be released under the first phase. Cohen, Shem Tov and Wenkert, all in their 20s, were abducted by Hamas fighters at the Nova music festival. During their release, they were brought out wearing fake army uniforms, though they were not soldiers when they were kidnapped. Earlier Saturday, two other hostages — Tal Shoham, 40, and Avera Mengistu, 38 — were freed in the southern Gaza city of Rafah. Arriving back in Israel, both were taken to medical centres for examination. "This is an unforgettable moment, where all emotions are rapidly mixing together. Our Tal is with us," Shoham's family said in a statement, calling for a deal to free all those still captive. "There is a window of opportunity; we must not miss it." Shoham, who also holds Austrian citizenship, was visiting his family in Kibbutz Beeri when Hamas militants stormed into the community during the October 7, 2023 attacks. Shoham's wife, two young children, and three other relatives who were abducted with him were freed in a November 2023 exchange. Mengistu, an Ethiopian-Israeli, had been held in Gaza since entering on his own in 2014.

Watching the handover on Israeli media, Mengistu's family and friends broke out into a Hebrew song, "Here is the Light," as they saw him for the first time in more than a decade. "Do you remember me?" one of his brothers asks as they embraced at the hospital. **Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners set for release:** Later Saturday, Israel is to release 620 imprisoned Palestinians. They include 151 who were serving life or other sentences, around 100 of whom will be deported to other countries, according to the Palestinian prisoners media office. They also include 445 men and 17, five aged between 18-19, and a woman, all of whom were seized by Israeli troops in Gaza during the current war, according to the media office. Hamas has said it will also release four more bodies next week, completing the first phase of the ceasefire. If that plan is carried out, Hamas would retain about 60 hostages, about half of whom are believed to be alive. Hamas has said it won't release the remaining captives without a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal. Netanyahu, with the full backing of the Trump administration, says he's committed to destroying Hamas' military and governing capacities and returning all the hostages, goals widely seen as mutually exclusive. Israel's military offensive killed more than 48,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants. Israel says it has killed more than 17,000 fighters, without providing evidence.

Kash Patel takes oath as FBI chief on Bhagwat Gita

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Kash Patel took oath as the ninth director of the FBI on the Bhagavad Gita and spoke about how a first-generation Indian kid is living the American dream, reflecting on his heritage. The US Senate voted 51 to 49 to confirm Patel on Thursday. Patel's family members and girlfriend were present during the oath ceremony on Friday. The oath ceremony was administered by US Attorney General Pam Bondi in the Indian Treaty Room in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) on the White House campus. She asked Patel to place his hand on the Gita and raise his right hand to take the oath. "I am living the American dream. Anyone who thinks the American dream is dead, just look right here. You're talking to a first-generation Indian kid who's about to lead the law enforcement community, the greatest nation on God's green earth. That can't happen anywhere else," Patel, 44, said. New York-born Patel has his roots in Gujarat. However, his parents are from East Africa - his mother is from Tanzania and his father is from Uganda. They came to the US from Canada in 1970. The family moved to Queens in New York - often called Little India - in the late 70s. Patel was born and grew up there. Patel's parents are retired now and spend their time in both the US and Gujarat. During his swearing-in ceremony, Patel expressed gratitude to President Donald Trump, his family and the senators who voted for his confirmation, saying they'd put an "enormous leap of faith" in him. "Look, I know the media's in here, and if you have a target, the target's right here," Patel said as he pointed to himself. "It is not the men and women at the FBI."

Trump fires chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, two other military officers

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump abruptly fired Air Force Gen CQ Brown Jr as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Friday, sidelining a history-making fighter pilot and respected officer as part of a campaign led by his defence secretary to rid the military of leaders who support diversity and equity in the ranks. The ouster of Brown, only the second Black general to serve as chairman, is sure to send shock waves through the Pentagon. His 16 months in the job had been consumed with the war in Ukraine and the expanded conflict in the Middle East. "I want to thank General Charles CQ Brown for his over 40 years of service to our country, including as our current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He is a fine gentleman and an outstanding leader, and I wish a great future for him and his family," Trump posted on social media. Brown's public support of Black

Lives Matter after the police killing of George Floyd had made him fodder for the administration's wars against "wokeism" in the military. His ouster is the latest upheaval at the Pentagon, which plans to cut 5,400 civilian probationary workers starting next week and identify USD 50 billion in programs that could be cut next year to redirect those savings to fund Trump's priorities. Trump said he's nominating retired Air Force Lt Gen Dan "Razin" Caine to be the next chairman. Caine is a career F-16 pilot who served on active duty and in the National Guard, and was most recently the associate director for military affairs at the CIA, according to his military biography. Caine's military service includes combat roles in Iraq, special operations postings and positions inside some of the Pentagon's most classified special access programs. However, he has not had key assignments identified in law as prerequisites for the job, including serving as either the vice



Air Force Gen CQ Brown Jr

chairman, a combatant commander or a service chief. That requirement could be waived if the "president determines such action is necessary in the national interest." **More Pentagon firings:** Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, in a statement praising both Caine and Brown, announced the firings of two additional senior officers: Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Jim Slife. Franchetti becomes the second top female military officer to be fired by the Trump administration. Trump fired Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan just a day after he was sworn in.

A surface warfare officer, Franchetti has commanded at all levels, heading US 6th Fleet and US Naval Forces Korea. She was the second woman ever to be promoted to four-star admiral, and she did multiple deployments, including as commander of a naval destroyer and two stints as aircraft carrier strike group commander. Slife led Air Force Special Operations Command prior to becoming the service's vice chief of staff and had deployed to the Middle East and Afghanistan. The chairman role was established in 1949 as an adviser to the president and secretary of defence, as a way to filter all of the views of the service chiefs and more readily provide that information to the White House without the president having to reach out to each individual military branch, according to an Atlantic Council briefing written by retired Maj. Gen. Arnold Punaro. The role has no actual command authority.

Preparations underway for Trump-Putin summit

AP ■ KYIV

Preparations are underway for a face-to-face meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin, Russia's deputy foreign minister said Saturday, marking a dramatic shift away from Western isolation of Moscow over its war in Ukraine. Speaking to Russian state media, Sergei Ryabkov said a possible Putin-Trump summit could involve broad talks on global issues, not just the war in Ukraine. "The question is about starting to move towards normalising relations between our countries, finding ways to resolve the most acute and potentially very, very dangerous situations, of which there are many, Ukraine among them," he said. But he said efforts to organise such a meeting are at an early stage, and that making it happen will require "the most

intensive preparatory work." Ryabkov added that US and Russian envoys could meet "within the next two weeks," to pave the way for further talks between senior officials. Russian and US representatives on Tuesday agreed to start working toward ending the war in Ukraine and improving their diplomatic and economic ties, according to the two countries' top diplomats, at a high-level meeting in Saudi Arabia that marked an extraordinary about-face in US foreign policy under President Trump. After the meeting, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told the AP that he and the two sides agreed broadly to pursue three goals: to restore staffing at their respective embassies in Washington and Moscow; to create a high-level team to support Ukraine peace talks; and to explore closer relations and economic cooperation. He stressed, however, that the

talks — which were attended by his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, and other senior Russian and US officials — marked the beginning of a conversation, and more work needs to be done. Lavrov, for his part, hailed the meeting as "very useful." No Ukrainian officials were present at the meeting, which came as the beleaguered country is slowly but steadily losing ground against more numerous Russian troops, nearly three years after Moscow launched an all-out invasion of its smaller neighbour. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country would not accept any outcome from the talks since Kyiv didn't take part, and he postponed his own trip to Saudi Arabia scheduled for last Wednesday. European allies have also expressed concerns that they are being sidelined.

Mallya pursues annulment of UK bankruptcy order

PTI ■ LONDON

Embattled businessman Vijay Mallya believes Indian banks pursuing bankruptcy proceedings against him in the English courts have assumed an "unreal quality" in the wake of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's recent statement in Parliament and has instructed his lawyers to pursue an annulment application. It emerged as Justice Anthony Mann reserved judgment, to be handed down at a later date after hearings of three interlinked appeals related to Mallya's bankruptcy order concluded at the High Court in London this week. The judge heard a set of complicated arguments involving a consortium of banks led by the State Bank of India (SBI) seeking repayment of an estimated judgment debt of around GBP 1.05 billion owed by the 69-year-

old businessman's now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines. "From Dr Mallya's perspective, these English bankruptcy proceedings have an unreal quality," Leigh Crestohl, Managing Partner of Zaiwalla and Co—Mallya's recently appointed lawyers, told PTI. "Evidence has now come to light that shows that the banks' debt has not only been paid but, moreover, the banks have recovered in excess of what was due from Dr Mallya. This was confirmed by the Honourable Finance Minister of India, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, in a statement she made in the Indian Parliament on 17 December 2024, in which she confirmed that a sum of INR 14,131.6 crore has been collected and restored to the banks," he said. Crestohl stressed that "it must be presumed" that the public sector banks will accept the accu-



racy of the minister's statement made in Parliament. "This is why immediately after instructing Zaiwalla and Co. in place of his previous lawyer Reynolds Porter Chamberlain last week, Mallya has now applied to annul the Bankruptcy Order on that basis. He intends to pursue that application regardless of what the court may decide on the appeals that were heard this week," added

Crestohl. Separately wanted in India on fraud and money laundering charges, Mallya took to social media a day after Sitharaman's Lok Sabha statement to claim he was "entitled to relief" in the matter. In a post on X dated December 18 last year, he said: "Unless the ED (Enforcement Directorate) and banks can legally justify how they have taken more than two times the debt, I am entitled to the relief which I will pursue." Meanwhile this week, Justice Mann heard appeals related to a decision of Chief Insolvency and Companies Court (ICC) Judge Michael Briggs made in the context of bankruptcy proceedings initiated by the banks against Mallya around six years ago. The first appeal, referred to as the security appeal, challenges Judge Briggs' conclusion that the banks — represented by TLT LLP

and barrister Tony Beswetherick — were "estopped because of an Indian court judgment" from denying that they hold security over certain of Mallya's assets. Two further appeals against the amendment of the bankruptcy order and the July 2021 bankruptcy order itself were also heard alongside, with Zaiwalla and Co. lawyer Kartik Mittal and barrister Mark Watson-Gandy appearing on behalf of Mallya in court. The hearings in the case of State Bank of India and Others date back to May 2018, when the banks were granted a worldwide freezing order (WFO) based on a judgment of the Bangalore Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT). Since then, there have been a series of hearings in this case, which led to a bankruptcy order against Mallya on July 26, 2021. Appeals against that order and related matters have remained ongoing ever since.

White House, Ukraine nearing rare earths deal that would tighten relationship

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The White House and Ukraine have made significant progress toward reaching an agreement that would provide the US with access to Ukraine's rare earth minerals and tighten the long-term relationship between Kyiv and Washington, according to a person familiar with the matter. The progress in talks comes after President Donald Trump and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy traded sharp rhetoric this week about their differences over the matter. Zelenskyy said he balked at signing off on a deal that US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent pushed during a visit to Kyiv last week, and the Ukrainian leader objected again days later during a meeting in Munich with Vice President JD Vance because the American proposal did not include security guarantees. Trump earlier Friday renewed his criticism of Zelenskyy's handling of the three-year war and accused the Ukrainians of wasting Bessent's time. But the two sides made significant progress during a three-day visit to Ukraine this week by retired Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg, Trump's special envoy to Ukraine and Russia, according to the person familiar with the ongoing negotiations who was not authorized to comment publicly. While the Ukrainians were rattled by Trump, the still-not-completed agreement came into

focus over three days of meetings in Ukraine between Kellogg and Zelenskyy and other top-ranking Ukrainian officials, the person said. In addition to Zelenskyy, the talks included Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha, Rada speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk and others, the person said. As Kellogg returned to Washington on Friday evening, Zelenskyy in his nightly address said the two sides were still working on a draft agreement. It was a notably optimistic tone after Trump earlier in the day in a Fox News Radio interview said Bessent's visit to Kyiv had been a "wasted trip." "Today, Ukrainian and US teams are working on a draft agreement between our governments," Zelenskyy said in his address. "This agreement can add value to our relations — what matters most is getting the details right to ensure it truly works. I look forward to a just result." Trump said he wanted such a deal earlier this month, and it was initially proposed last fall by Zelenskyy as part of his plan to strengthen Kyiv's hand in future negotiations with Moscow. Rare earth elements are a set of 17 elements that are essential to many kinds of consumer technology, including cellphones, hard drives and electric and hybrid vehicles. Trump's national security adviser also expressed confidence Friday that Zelenskyy would eventually accept a deal letting the US access his country's rare earth minerals.

Chinese virologists warn of new Covid-19 type virus

PTI ■ BEIJING

A Chinese team of virologists have found a new bat coronavirus that carries the risk of animal-to-human transmission because it uses the same human receptor as the virus that causes Covid-19, a media report said. The study was led by Shi Zhengli, Chinese virologist from the controversial Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), where the COVID-19 was alleged to have emanated from. Shi, who is known as the Bat Woman for her research on viruses from the Bats, as well as the Chinese government deny that the virus was leaked from the Wuhan lab. The latest discovery is a new lineage of the HKU5 coronavirus first identified in the Japanese pipistrelle bat in Hong Kong. The new virus comes from the mer-

becovirus subgenus, which also includes the virus that causes Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), the Hong Kong based South China Morning Post reported. The virus is able to bind to the human angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE2), the same receptor used by the Sars-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19, to infect cells. "We report the discovery and isolation of a distinct lineage (lineage 2) of HKU5-CoV, which can utilise not only bat ACE2 but also human ACE2 and various mammalian ACE2 orthologs [— genes found in different species with a common origin]," the team of virologists headed by Shi wrote in a paper published in the peer-reviewed journal Cell on Tuesday, according to the Post report. The researchers found that when the virus was isolated from bat samples it

The virus is able to bind to the human angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE2), the same receptor used by the Sars-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19, to infect cells.

could infect human cells as well as artificially grown masses of cell or tissue that resembled miniaturised respiratory or intestinal organs. Earlier this month, China said its biolab in Wuhan which faced allegations leaking the COVID-19 causing the global pandemic has never engaged in "gain-of-function studies" on coronavirus amid allegations that USAID has funded the study of the infectious disease.

"China has also made it clear more than once that the Wuhan Institute of Virology has never engaged in gain-of-function studies of coronavirus," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here responding to allegations in US that the USAID taxpayers' money was used to fund gain-of-function studies at the Chinese bio-lab. Gain-of-function research is medical research that genetically alters the organism in a way that may enhance the biological functions of gene products. "Never has it designed, made or leaked COVID-19. On the origins-tracing of the virus, China firmly opposes all forms of political manipulation", Guo said. According to recent American media reports, the US Agency for International Development (USAID)

used taxpayers' money to fund gain-of-function studies at China's Wuhan Institute of Virology, which may have caused the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the deaths of millions around the world. Trump has shut down the USAID work that was not aligned with American strategic interests and wastes money. The Wuhan bio-lab was constantly under scanner, especially during the previous Trump presidency. Guo said at a media briefing on February 12 here that "It is 'extremely unlikely' that the COVID-19 pandemic was caused by a lab leak — this is the authoritative conclusion reached by the experts of the WHO-China joint mission based on science following their field trips to the lab in Wuhan and in-depth communication with researchers."

India aim for semifinal, Pakistan eye survival in Champions Trophy

PTI ■ DUBAI

Hyped as a marquee showdown but mostly lopsided on the field, India and Pakistan lock horns in the ICC Champions Trophy here on Sunday with Rohit Sharma's men aiming to seal a semifinal spot and Mohammad Rizwan's team desperate to avoid early elimination from the tournament.

While India are on a high after claiming a measured six-wicket win over a sprightly Bangladesh, Pakistan are evidently tense after the 60-run loss in the tournament-opener against New Zealand. The sub-continental rivals' last Champion Trophy clash was the 2017 final in which Pakistan walked away with the win and the trophy. Rizwan and Co would look to draw inspiration from that triumph in London but would also need to scale up their performance in every department.

Though the buzz surrounding the match is nowhere close to being what it used to be at the peak of diplomatic tensions

between the two countries, there is an air of quiet anticipation for the Group A clash at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. India will have a distinct advantage in every aspect. The side has settled in nicely while Pakistan have flown in a couple of days ago after the drubbing handed by the Black Caps in Karachi. More often than not, an India-Pakistan clash is as much a battle of nerves as cricketing abilities and India would be in a much better space on both counts come Sunday afternoon.

For starters, skipper Rohit, whose form was a major concern in the run-up to the tournament, seems to be getting back to his best if the lucid stroke-making against Bangladesh was anything to go by. His 41-run cameo was a crucial contribution in the tricky chase of 229 which was masterfully anchored by Shubman Gill with his eighth ODI hundred.

In contrast, Pakistan would be fretting over the form and approach of their biggest star Babar Azam. The 90-ball 64 against New Zealand in a chase



Indian cricketers during a practice session ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy match between India and Pakistan in Dubai

PTI

of 320 has been roundly criticised for being too slow. Azam's inability to accelerate even when the asking rate kept climbing has come under scrutiny and he would be under

tremendous pressure against India. Adding to their woes is the injury-forced ouster of game-changing opener Fakhar Zaman from the squad. Imam ul Haq has replaced him in the side and has

joined the squad here. However, middle-order batter Khushdil Shah's counter-attacking 69 in the tournament-opener is a positive. Shah has amusingly stated that he has no

idea how he made the squad given his lean run in the recent past but Pakistan would be happy that the punt has paid off. Pakistan would also be hoping to prove a point by getting the better

of India, who refused to travel across the border for the tournament which is otherwise wholly scheduled in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. The man who is feeling the heat in the Indian team right now is Virat Kohli after yet again failing to convert a fairly decent start. His focus hasn't looked the same for a while but Kohli does have the knack of coming up with special efforts against Pakistan.

However, in the larger scheme of things, it could well boil down to key defining moments from the bowlers and here too Pakistan have lots to ponder after the hammering that the Shaheen Afridi-led attack took from the Kiwis. On the other hand, India have a fit-again and in-form Mohammed Shami, who is being brilliantly backed up by Harshit Rana. Shami's fifer against Bangladesh ensured that India did not miss injured talisman Jasprit Bumrah just yet.

All-rounder Hardik Pandya has always turned up with his best against Pakistan in major ICC tournaments. He will be hoping to make up for the 2017

Champions Trophy final disappointment where he fought as a lone warrior for India but failed to take his team over the line. India is likely to continue with their winning combination and remain unchanged.

The spin trio of Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, and Axar Patel will be included once again on the tweaker-friendly surface to exploit the conditions.

Squads:
India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill (vice captain), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (wicketkeeper), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Rishabh Pant (wicketkeeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Varun Chakravarthy.
Pakistan: Mohammad Rizwan (captain), Salman Ali Agha (vice captain), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Kamran Ghulam, Saud Shakeel, Tayyab Tahir, Faheem Ashraf, Khushdil Shah, Usman Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Hasnain, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Kohli focuses on spin play before Pakistan clash



Virat Kohli during a practice session ahead of India-Pakistan CT match

PTI

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian superstar Virat Kohli meant business a day before the marquee clash against Pakistan in the Champions Trophy as he arrived at the International Cricket Council

(ICC) Academy two hours before scheduled practice time to iron out his issues against spin. Kohli, who was troubled by the ball outside off-stump from the pacers on the Test tour of Australia, has been found vulnerable against spin in the

recent ODIs he has played. The 36-year-old fell to leg-spinner Rishad Hossain in India's opening Champions Trophy game against Bangladesh on Thursday, his sixth dismissal in a row against spinners in ODIs.

He was caught at backward point while trying to cut Hossain. In the preceding series against England at home, leg spinner Adil Rashid had got the better of Kohli.

The former India captain will have to deal with the likes of Abrar Ahmed when India takes on Pakistan at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday. Irrespective of his form, Kohli's commitment to the game remains unquestionable, and his exemplary work ethic was on full display as he arrived for training well before his teammates, who also showed up an hour earlier than the scheduled time, and was the last to leave.

It was not a surprise that the majority of the net bowlers he faced were spinners, including a couple of leg-break bowlers, as

many off-spinners and a left-arm spinner. Pakistan have a part time left-arm spinner in Khushdil Shah, while Salman Agha bowls off-spin.

With due respect to the opposition, Indian batters would be fancying themselves against the Pakistan spin attack. The main challenge for them will come from the pace trio of Shaheen Afridi, Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah who all are under pressure after an underwhelming opening game against New Zealand. While India are sitting comfortably after the win over Bangladesh, Pakistan find themselves in a must-win situation.

The wicket is expected to be on the slower side, bringing a battery of Indian spinners into the game.

India have five spinners in the squad, including two specialists in Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarthy, while the all-rounders who bowl spin are Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Washington Sundar.

Josh's maiden ton pulls off Australia's record chase

PTI ■ LAHORE

Josh Inglis played the innings of his life, smashing his maiden ODI century (120 not out) to overshadow Ben Duckett's masterclass 165, as world champions Australia pulled off a record chase to beat England by five wickets in their Champions Trophy Group B opener here on Saturday. The five-wicket win marked the highest-ever chase by any team at an ICC white-ball tournament, the previous best being Pakistan's 345 against Sri Lanka at the 2023 men's World Cup.

Duckett's career-best knock from 143 balls that had 17 boundaries and three sixes had propelled England to 351/8 — the highest total of the Champions Trophy, surpassing New Zealand's 347/4 against USA way back in 2004.

But on a flat Gaddafi Stadium pitch with a lightning-quick outfield, no target was safe as two-time champions Australia cruised home in 47.3 overs. Inglis tore into England's attack, hammering six sixes and eight fours in an 86-ball 120 not out. His match-winning 146-run fifth-wicket stand with Alex Carey (69 off 63 balls, 8x4) turned the game on its head.

Carey was dismissed in the 42nd over with 70 needed from 50 balls but Glenn Maxwell (32 not out off 15 balls) gave a fine support. Inglis sealed the chase with 15 balls to spare in a befitting manner, hitting Mark Wood for a six over deep midwicket. Inglis reached his maiden ODI

hundred in his 28th appearance in emphatic fashion, launching Jofra Archer deep into the mid-wicket stands. Archer struck early to dismiss the dangerous Travis Head (6) in the fourth over, while Duckett plucked a sharp slip catch to remove stand-in skipper Steve Smith (5), leaving Australia wobbling at 27/2.

Marnus Labuschagne (47) and Matthew Short (63) counterattacked, stitching together a brisk 95-run stand off 91 balls. Labuschagne took on Brydon Carse, smashing 14 runs in an over, while Short continued the momentum.

But just when Australia seemed

to be back on track, England struck twice in 18 balls removing both of them. At 136/4, England had their tails up, but Inglis and Carey wrestled back the control with their counter-punching tactics. Inglis, relentless in his stroke play, took 15 off the 27th over, including four byes.

England's frustration grew when Archer dropped Carey on 49 at deep midwicket as the batter cruised to his 11th ODI fifty. Adding insult to injury, Inglis punished Archer in the next over with back-to-back boundaries.

Earlier, invited to bat, England were in early trouble at 43/2 inside powerplay, but Duckett stitched a 158-run stand with Joe Root (68) and later forged a crucial 61-run partnership with skipper Jos Buttler (23 off 21 balls) to take his side to 351 for 8.

Babar prioritised personal preferences over bench strength: Umar Akmal

PTI ■ KARACHI

Discarded Test batsman Umar Akmal has placed the blame for the current state of the Pakistan cricket team squarely on Babar Azam's shoulders, saying the former

disappointing start to their Champions Trophy campaign, losing to New Zealand in the opening match and jeopardizing their chances of qualifying for the semifinals.

The 34-year-old Umar, who has been out of the national side since 2019, did not hold

Babar served as Pakistan's captain from late 2019 until late 2023 before stepping down following the 2023 World Cup. He was reinstated as captain in 2024 for white-ball formats but relinquished the role after a disappointing World T20 Cup campaign last year.

Umar said that during a period when he was in good form and scoring runs in domestic cricket, he had approached Babar, asking for a chance to make a comeback.

"I told Babar that look give me a fair chance. You are doing well in the top order and I can be your finisher and we can win matches regularly and it will be good for Pakistan cricket," he said.

However, Umar said his request was ignored. "He didn't listen to me and for five years when he was captain he never bothered to try to build a strong bench because only teams with good back up players do consistently well in all formats," he added.

Umar, who is Babar's cousin, represented Pakistan in 16 Tests, 121 ODIs, and 84 T20Is before being dropped from the national team in 2019.

He stated that the Pakistan team has stagnated because talented players, who have performed consistently in domestic cricket, have not been given a fair chance under Babar's leadership.

Babar has been facing a lot of heat since Pakistan's loss in the final of the three-nation event on February 14 and his poor performance in the opening match of the Champions Trophy has only intensified the pressure.

captain failed to build bench strength during his nearly five-year tenure at the helm.

Defending champions Pakistan, hosting a major global tournament for the first time in nearly three decades, made a

back in criticising Babar's leadership, accusing him of lacking vision.

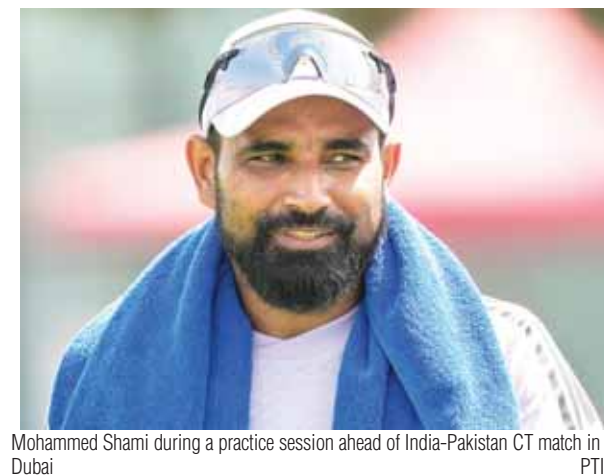
"Babar was captain for nearly five years most of the time in all formats and he never tried to build up the bench strength due to his likes and dislikes," Umar told a TV channel.



Babar Azam and Imam-ul-Haq during a practice session ahead of India and Pakistan CT match in Dubai

PTI

I only eat one meal a day: Shami



Mohammed Shami during a practice session ahead of India-Pakistan CT match in Dubai

PTI

giving an insight into how he keeps match-fit even at the age of 34, Indian bowling stalwart Mohammed Shami says he prefers to eat only one meal a day and avoids sweets. Shami has been the standout bowler for India in the ongoing Champions Trophy with the pace spearhead grabbing five wickets against Bangladesh in the marquee event in Dubai, thus becoming the fastest Indian bowler to take 200 ODI

wickets. "After 2015, I only have one meal a day. I only have dinner; no breakfast, no lunch. It is very difficult to do such a thing but once you get used to it then it becomes very easy," said Shami during an interaction with cricketer-turned-commentator Navjot Singh Sidhu on Star Sports.

He had been sidelined from international cricket for 14 months due to an ankle injury sustained during the 2023 ODI World Cup final against

Australia, which interrupted a remarkable run where he topped the tournament's wicket-taker's chart with 24 scalps.

The injury required surgery, and his recovery was further delayed by swelling on his left knee, keeping him out of international action for more than a year.

Shami said he gained quite a bit of weight during the recovery phase and had to shed nearly nine kgs to get back into shape. "I have lost nine kgs (during rehabilitation). The most difficult thing is you have to challenge yourself. When you are in this condition. When I was at the NCA, it was a very difficult phase," he said.

"My weight was touching 90kgs. The best thing about me is that I do not crave for delicacies. I stay away from sweets. I stay away from a lot of things, things that generally one shouldn't eat. So, I stay away from them," said Shami, who will have to shoulder a lot of responsibility in India's clash against arch-rivals Pakistan in the Champions Trophy here on Sunday.

PCB asks ICC on Pakistan's omission from broadcast

PTI ■ KARACHI

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has expressed its displeasure to the sport's governing body International Cricket Council (ICC) over the absence of country's name from the tournament logo shown during the live broadcast of India versus Bangladesh clash in the Champions Trophy.

The match was played in Dubai on Thursday.

According to PCB sources, the ICC has admitted the error and assured that it will use the three-line logo with Pakistan name in all matches in Dubai — the same broadcast graphic which has been shown in matches in the host country. India are playing all their games in Dubai as part of the hybrid model agreed by the concerned stakeholders.

"Yes, it's confirmed that PCB has written to ICC, and the ICC has assured the PCB that they will use the three-line horizontal logo with Pakistan name in all Dubai matches — the same broadcast logo graphic which was used in Karachi matches on February 19 and 21," a PCB source said. It has been learnt that the ICC has informally told PCB that it was a technical error.

During the India-Bangladesh match, the logo in the top left corner of the broadcast carried just the event name — Champions Trophy 2025 — but not Pakistan, the host country.

India defeated Bangladesh by six wickets in that match, which was their opening match in the eight-team competition.

The graphics are prepared and produced by UK-based Sunset and Vine under ICC's supervision, well in advance and are provided for live feed. The issue came to light before the marquee Champions Trophy clash between arch-rivals India and Pakistan in Dubai on Sunday.

Manu Bhaker to lead 35-member team for SA World Cups

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Acce pistol shooter Manu Bhaker will lead a 35-member Indian team in the season-opening International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cups in April in South America with almost all the shooters who featured in the Paris Olympics making the cut.

A notable member of the team is air pistol ace Saurabh Chaudhary, who returns to the national side after more than three years. Saurabh, who battled a shoulder injury and poor form following the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, recently shot a national record score in 10m air pistol qualification besides impressing in the trials.

He had paired with Manu in the 10m air pistol mixed team event in Tokyo.

The international shooting season will begin with a double-leg South American sojourn,

with the first World Cup (rifle or pistol or shotgun) scheduled in Buenos Aires, Argentina from April 1-11, which will be followed by a second combined World Cup in Lima, Peru from April 13-22. Manu, who was recently awarded the Dhyana Chand Khel Ratna award for her two bronze medals at the Paris Olympics in 10m women's air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event with Sarabjot Singh, will compete in the South American competitions in two individual events — women's air pistol and 25m pistol. She will be accompanied by other Paris Olympians like Anish Bhanwala and Vijayveer Sidhu (men's 25m rapid-fire pistol), Esha Singh (women's 25m pistol), Aishwary Prasad Singh Tomar (men's 50m rifle three positions), Sift Kaur Samra and Shriyanka Sadangi (women's 50m rifle 3 positions), Arjun Babuta (men's 10m air rifle), Prithviraj Tondaiman

(men's trap), Anant Jeet Singh Naruka (men's skeet) and Raiza Dhillon (women's skeet).

Ahead of the team's departure, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) will organise a training camp at the Karni Range Range here from March 14.

The biggest draw on the ISSF calendar this year will be the World Championships scheduled in October (shotgun) and November (rifle or pistol).

"There will be a total of three World Cup stages for each discipline while two junior World Cups, the second among them in New Delhi in September, are also scheduled. Also on the international roster this year is the 16th Asian Championships in Kazakhstan in August," said NRAI in a statement.

NRAI secretary-general Sultan Singh said it was time for the Indian shooters to raise the bar further following their success at the Paris Olympics, where the 21-

member contingent bagged three bronze medals.

"A new responsibility rests on the entire shooting fraternity to raise the bar even higher. We are confident that those selected for the international season openers will come out with flying colours," said Singh.

NRAI recently announced a long list of coaches and experts to guide the Indian shooters on their journey to the 2028 LA Games with Manu's coach Jaspal Rana heading the chart.

Rana was brought back into the Indian shooting's mainstream with the NRAI making him the high-performance coach for 25m pistol, while picking the decorated Jitu Rai for the 10m air pistol coaching job.

Also appointed as head coach (rifle) was the latest Dronacharya award recipient Deepali Deshpande, who guided rifle shooter Swapnil Kusale to bronze in Paris.

Ahlatwat makes cut with birdie-birdie finish in Kenya

PTI ■ NAIROBI

Veer Ahlatwat's rounds of 70-72 gave him an even par total, allowing him to make a last minute cut at the Magical Kenya Open here.

Ahlatwat started his second round very early and then had to wait for the rest of the afternoon to know whether he had made the cut.

The 28-year-old rookie, who shot a one-under 71 in the first round after a disappointing finish with three bogeys in his last four holes, was staring at a missed cut when he came to the 17th tee in the second round. This time Ahlatwat produced two great birdies on the closing holes to move from three-over to one-over and give himself a chance to make the cut.

Meanwhile, fellow Indian Shubhankar Sharma, endured another tough week as he carded 71-72 and missed the cut

by one.

Ahlatwat, who was runner-up at the Hero Indian Open last year, bogeyed the second and the seventh and got his first birdie on the eighth.

He dropped two more shots on the 14th and 16th and was two-over for the tournament when he came to the 17th tee.

He birdied the 17th and added one more on 18th, which he had eagled a day earlier.

That helped him squeeze inside the cut line and earned a chance at improving his position over the weekend.

Ahlatwat, who had made two cuts and missed two in four starts on DP World Tour in 2025, was making his third cut. He was T-27 in Ras Al Khaimah and T-49 in Bahrain and missed cuts in Dubai and Qatar.

Ahlatwat earned playing rights on DPWT after topping the Indian PGTI Tour's Order of Merit in 2024.

The PGTI and the DPWT have an arrangement by which the top Indian OOM gets a card to the DPWT and this is the third year of the alliance.

Sharma, however, has missed four cuts in a row on the DP World Tour and his only cut of 2025 came at the International Series in India.

John Parry produced a back-nine birdie blitz in his round of 5-under 66 to lead by one shot at the halfway stage.

Parry, who won the AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open in December, started the day alongside Benjamin Hebert at the top of the leaderboard.

Herbert finished early with 66 and was 13-under, till Parry (63-65) overtook him to get to 14-under.

A 15-year-old Kenyan amateur golfer, Shashwat Harish, whose parents are of Indian origin, was thrilled with a chance to play the event.



GILDED IN TRADITION

A collection that celebrates heritage, crafted with skill and passion, keeps traditions alive with grace, says SAKSHI PRIYA

Fashion with meaning is rare. Every stitch tells a story and every fabric holds a memory. In a world of fleeting trends, it is refreshing to see a designer who values artistry and tradition, ensuring that heritage remains a part of contemporary fashion.

Shilpi Gupta, the creative force behind House of Shilpi Gupta, presented her latest collection, Kanakmani, at Earthloom, The Threads of Heritage during Bharat Tex 2025. The showcase brought together craftsmanship, heritage and modern sensibilities, capturing the essence of Indian handloom traditions.

The collection, inspired by the richness of gold zari and heirloom textiles, reimagined heritage in a way that felt deeply personal. Each piece carried the weight of history while embracing the aesthetics of today. The garments were not only about embellishments or intricate work but about preserving the artistry that generations have passed down.

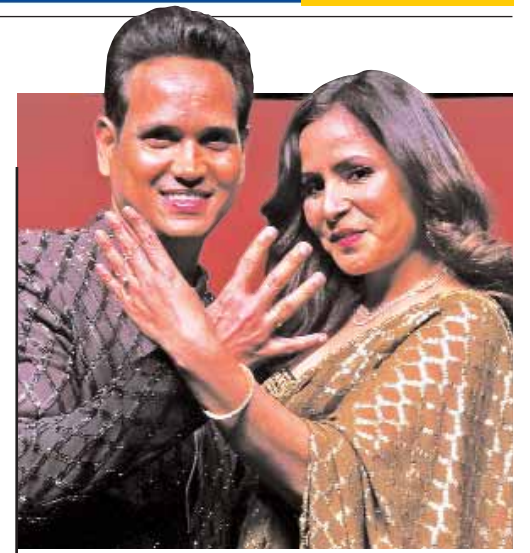
The showstopper, Sheetal Mallar, embodied the spirit of Kanakmani in an exquisite ensemble that exuded elegance. The collection blended structured silhouettes with fluid drapes, pairing blouses

with jackets and capes, offering a fresh take on traditional styles. It was a celebration of textures, colours and meticulous craftsmanship.

What stood out was the emotional connection in each piece. The idea of passing down heirloom textiles, of a mother gifting a piece to her daughter, who then treasures it for her own children, made the collection feel timeless. It was not about trends, it was about legacy.

Shilpi Gupta's vision goes beyond creating garments. She honours India's deep-rooted textile heritage, bringing forth the grandeur of pitambari, nilambari, shatavari, karwa, and bhoota work with gold and silver threads. The collection was a reminder that fashion can hold cultural significance while remaining relevant.

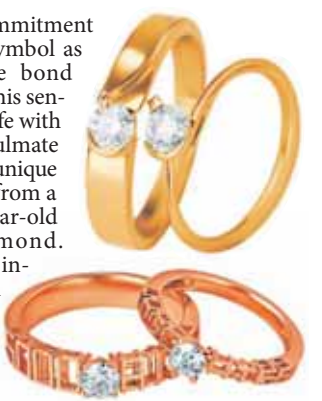
House of Shilpi Gupta has always been about reviving and reinterpreting India's textile traditions. Every fabric, every silhouette, carries a sense of nostalgia while embracing the present, proving that true fashion is never only about the clothes, it is about the stories they tell.



A Love Written in Diamond

A diamond's journey, like Tanishq's Soulmate Diamond Pair, is meant to last forever, says SAKSHI PRIYA

Love and commitment deserve a symbol as rare as the bond they represent. This sentiment came to life with Tanishq, The Soulmate Diamond Pair, a unique creation crafted from a single billion-year-old natural diamond.



Introduced at an intimate event in collaboration with De Beers, the collection celebrates the idea that true love, much like a diamond, is shaped over time and meant to last forever.

The highlight of the evening was the rings themselves, two intricately designed pieces that started as one. Their shared origin represents a connection that is both precious and unbreakable. Designed to mark life's most cherished moments, these rings become a part of a couple's journey, whether it's an engagement, anniversary or a special milestone.

Each ring carries a part of the same diamond, making them truly one of a kind. They became storytellers of love and shared journeys, crafted to be passed down through generations.

Beyond their sparkle, these rings hold a sig-



Showcasing India's Textile Strength

BY ABHI SINGHAL

Bharat Tex 2025, India's premier global textile event, was held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. The event featured over 5,000 exhibitors, providing a comprehensive showcase of India's textile ecosystem. The expo encompassed the entire textile value chain, from raw materials to finished products, including accessories. It featured special innovation and start-up pavilions, hackathons, and design challenges, providing funding opportunities for start-ups through leading investors. With stalls of everything like Vatsal Exports LLP, Jubilee Industries, JCI RC Velvet, Khadi stalls and so much more, the event was a textile hub.

On talking to Vatsal Gaudani, Founder of Vatsal Exports LLP, shared his impressions of Bharat Tex 2025 and the interest of the buyers, he said, "This diverse attendance underscores the event's significance as a premier platform for showcasing India's textile prowess. The address of Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the government's commitment to the textile sector.

The event concluded successfully, reinforcing India's position as a key player in the global textile supply chain and its commitment to innovation, sustainability, and global collaboration.



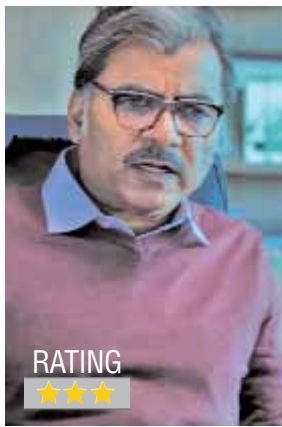
The Truth Behind Headlines and Bylines

With a big stellar cast and hooked storyline, Crime Beat delivers crime and suspense but its execution falls short at times, writes ABHI SINGHAL

Crime Beat currently streaming on Zee5 is a crime thriller directed by Sudhir Mishra and Sanjeev Kaul. The web series with a blend of investigative journalism and the crime world takes you through the lives of journalists and criminals showcasing the risk involved in both lives.

Starring Saqib Saleem, Rahul Bhat, Vipin Sharma, Sai Tamhankar, Danish Husain, Rajesh Tailang, and Saba Azad, the story starts from the world of how getting a byline or a good story is a struggle in the newspaper and frustrates the protagonist Saqib Saleem.

The cast has played sharp roles, adding masala (fun) and hook to the webseries. Saqib Saleem as Abhishek Sinha has portrayed emotions of all sorts in his scenes showcasing the frustration of struggling for a page one byline, changing jobs and a stolen hit byline. Rahul Bhat as Binny Chaudhary has fewer scenes but is there for a



RATING
☆☆☆



great grip to the story, Sai Tamhankar as Archana Pandey has played the queen of disguise perfectly.

The role of Danish Husain as Amir Akhtar,

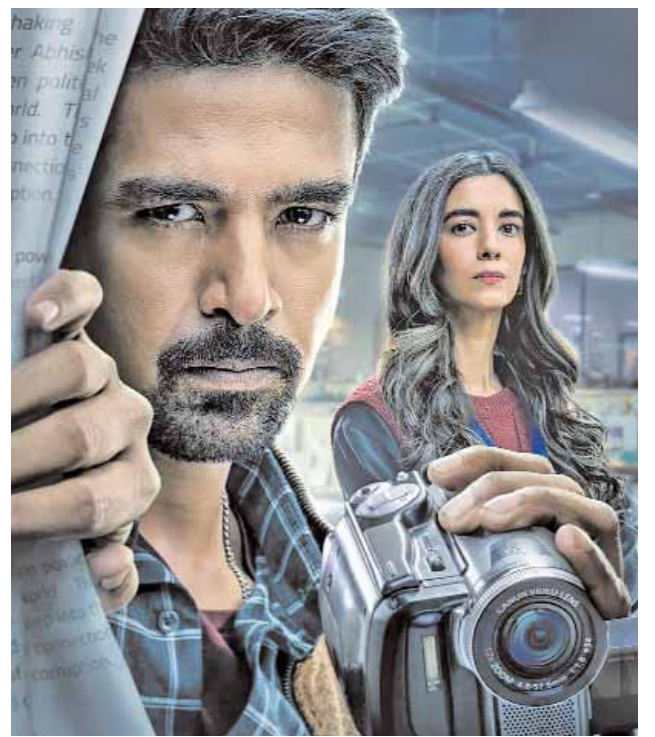
a senior crime journalist and his link to Binny uplifts the scenes of thrill. Rajesh Tailang as DCP Uday Kumar has always aced his acting part as the evil police officer and Vipin Sharma has

supported a great cast.

Although the cast is not a disappointment, the confusing beginning and unclear screen time for the characters are what will disappoint you. For instance, Saba Azad as Maya Kapoor opened as a strong character and could have possibly made a better impact but her fewer scenes and later introduction as the love interest of Abhishek was a dismay.

Crime Beat doesn't always make the most of its strengths and occasionally falls short of its potential, with its clunky dialogues sometimes making scenes feel mechanical.

However, if you enjoy shows packed with relentless crime, action, and suspense, Crime Beat is worth a watch, as the actors don't leave a room for disappointment.



SUGGESTED BINGES



Crime Beat
IMDB Rating - 7.1/10
OTT - Zee5
Cast - Saqib Saleem, Saba Azad, Rahul Bhat



Oops! Ab Kya?
IMDB Rating - 6.4/10
OTT - JioHotstar
Cast - Jaaved Jaaferi, Sonali Kulkarni, Shweta Basu Prasad



Reacher Season 3
IMDB Rating - 8/10
OTT - Amazon Prime Video
Cast - Alan Ritchson, Maria Sten



Surface Season 2
IMDB Rating - 6.4/10
OTT - Apple TV+
Cast - Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Oliver Jackson, Ari Graynor



The White Lotus Season 3
IMDB Rating - 8/10
OTT - JioHotstar
Cast - Leslie Bibb, Carrie Coon, Walton Goggins, Sarah Catherine Hook, Jason Isaacs

Get in touch at vivacity@dailypioneer.com

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the pioneer agenda

"Culture is the arts elevated to a set of beliefs"
— THOMAS WOLFE



Worlds Within the Fair

At Surajkund International Crafts Mela, every colour, every texture and every melody told a story of heritage and passion, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

The first thing that catches your senses is the smell, fresh jalebis sizzling in hot oil, the tangy aroma of bhel puri mixed with the sweetness of roasted nuts. People walk past, their hands full of colourful bags, carefully wrapped souvenirs and steaming cups of chai. A group of school children rushes by, laughing as they hold up the masks they just bought. Nearby, an elderly couple stands at a saree stall, running their fingers over the soft silk as they decide which one to take home.

The 38th Surajkund International Crafts Mela, taking place in Faridabad, Haryana, at Surajkund Mela Grounds, is a grand celebration of art, culture and heritage, featuring over 1,000 stalls, vibrant performances and a special Rajasthan-themed showcase. Every corner of the mela offers a glimpse into the past. It is a place where cultures converge, creativity flourishes and every turn unveils a new treasure waiting to be explored.

HANDCRAFTED TREASURES

Walking through the fair feels like stepping into a marketplace where every item has a story. The Department of Archaeology and Museum, Haryana, showcases artefacts from different periods of history. Odisha's stall is lined with handloom textiles, intricate Sambalpuri sarees and delicate silver jewellery. Banaras displays its famous silk sarees, their golden threads catching the light. Madhya Pradesh presents handcrafted lamps and umbrellas embroidered with elephant designs. Each stall holds something unique, drawing visitors eager to take home a piece of heritage.

"I have been coming here for years," says an artist from Madhya Pradesh. "People appreciate handmade crafts here and that gives us hope that our work will live on."

People walk around holding boards with messages spread across the mela. Among the many stalls, Bhutan's artisans display handcrafted meditation items. "These are used for meditation," says a vendor as a visitor calls their partner over to take a look. A wooden birdhouse sits at another stall, a symbol of the sustainable crafts that continue to be passed down through generations.

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



VINTAGE SIPS

The crockery section at Surajkund Mela is a visual delight, showcasing exquisite vintage and aesthetic tea sets from Iran and different parts of the world. Delicate porcelain, hand-painted kettles, and intricately designed cups transport visitors to another era. The Iranian sets, adorned with fine patterns and gold accents, stand out for their elegance. Each stall feels like a time capsule, drawing people in as they admire the charm of old-world tea traditions.

DANCE AND MUSIC

The sound of dhols leads the crowd towards the Odisha dance performance. Dancers dressed in traditional attire move with grace, their anklets jingling in sync. A group of visitors stands around them, making videos, clicking photos and cheering. Children try to copy the steps, laughing as they stumble.

College students and professionals move through the fair, capturing performances and interactions for their projects. "We're covering the mela for our college assignment," says a media student. "There's so much to learn from this experience."

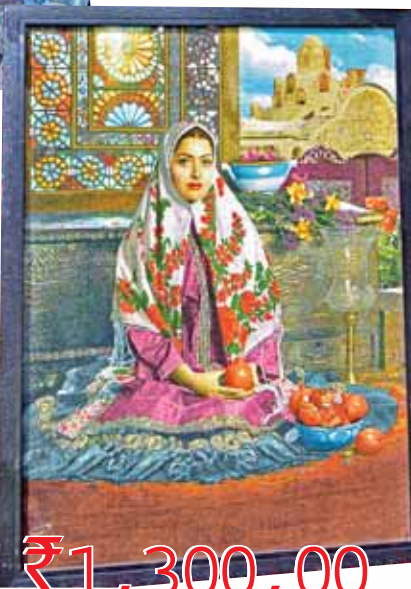
PERFORMERS FROM MOZAMBIQUE TAKE THE STAGE. THE EXCITEMENT SPREADS AND VISITORS CANNOT RESIST JOINING IN. FACES LIGHT UP AS PEOPLE DANCE TOGETHER, SHARING IN THE JOY OF THE MOMENT



GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

Surajkund brings together artisans from around the world. The Grand Bazaar of Istanbul showcases fine textiles and jewellery while Madagascar's stall offers handcrafted vegan bags. Lebanon's stall is filled with intricately designed hookah pots, Iran displays fragrant ittar and woven mats and Syria's section holds paintings, lamps and table décor.

A shopkeeper from Afghanistan carefully unrolls a handmade carpet. "This one costs ₹2,00,000," he says, running his fingers over the fabric. "A deep artist worked on this for an entire year. It may look like a mat but it is a painting in itself."



₹1,300,00

In 2024, 1.3 million visitors attended the Surajkund Mela

CHALLENGES OF ARTISANS

While the fair is filled with colour and excitement, it also highlights the struggles of artisans. Many crafts that have been passed down through generations now face the threat of being forgotten. "It's not easy to make a living from this," says a block print artist from Rajasthan. "Handmade work takes time but people now prefer cheaper machine-made products. Events like this give us a chance to show the beauty of our craft." Despite the challenges, there is hope.

A CULTURAL MELTING POT

Surajkund is a place where cultures meet, where an artist from Tunisia can sit next to a designer from Bangladesh and exchange ideas. It is where a student can witness centuries-old crafting techniques and imagine a future in design. It is where a photographer captures the joy of a child dancing to a tune she has never heard before.

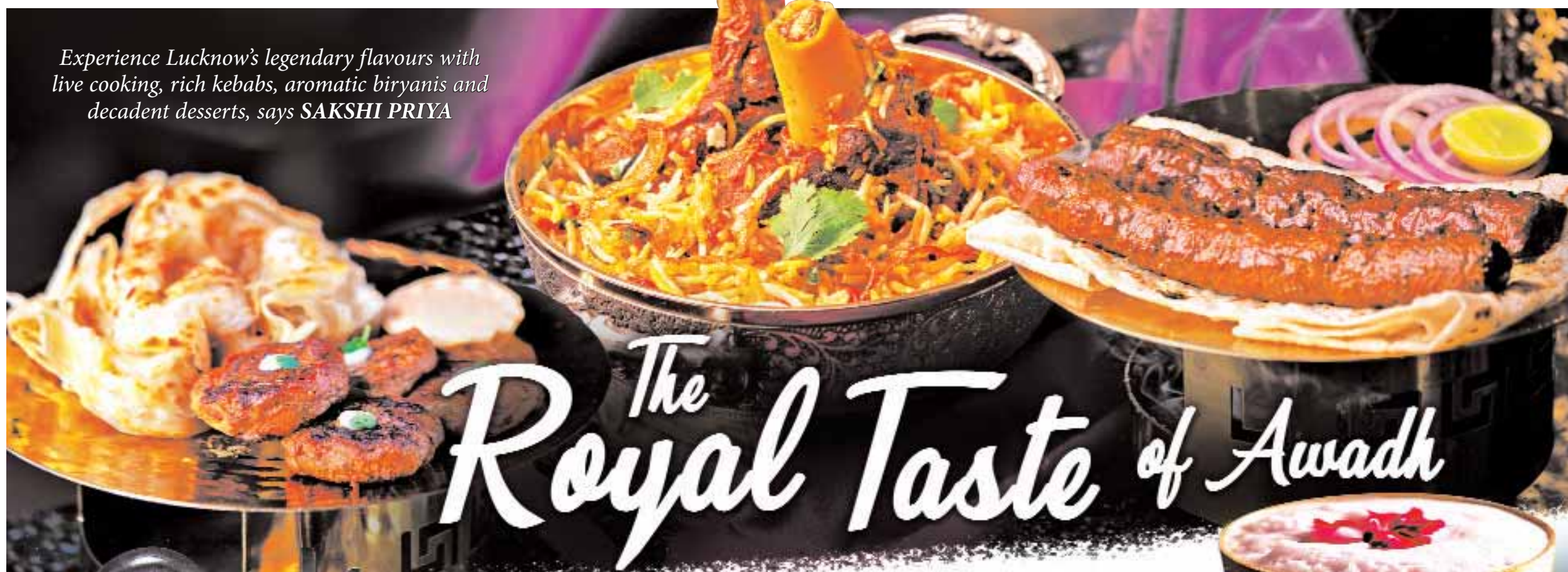
"This place has everything," says a vlogger recording the event. "If you love art, culture, photography or just good food, there's no place better than this."

From authentic crafts and mesmerising folk performances to global flavours, every moment is a celebration of colours, creativity, and culture. Visitors can engage with craftsmen, learn their traditions, and witness the beauty of handcrafted heritage. Performing arts take centre stage with cultural troupes showcasing folk dances and music at the open-air theatre, Natyashala. From ghazals and classical thumri to soul-stirring ragas, the cultural evenings add magic to the event.

This year, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha shine this year with Gond paintings, Maheshwari sarees, Dhokra figurines, Pattachitra art, Sambalpuri weaves, and Gotipua dance. BIMSTEC nations add cultural richness, while Apna Ghar showcases Haryana's heritage. Today is the last chance to experience it all!



Experience Lucknow's legendary flavours with live cooking, rich kebabs, aromatic biryanis and decadent desserts, says SAKSHI PRIYA



The Royal Taste of Awadh

Lucknow is a city where history and flavour walk hand in hand. Known for its tehzeeb, rich culinary traditions, and slow-cooked delicacies, every bite tells a story of Nawabs and royal kitchens. The aroma of saffron and kebabs fills its streets, the sound of clinking glasses and quiet conversations adding to its charm.

Now, this experience finds a new home in Noida at *Chica Loca* by Sunny Leone. A space where every detail reflects a love for food and culture. The atmosphere feels personal, as though the restaurant itself is telling you a secret. Here, *Zaika-e-Lucknow* is an experience that unfolds before your eyes.

A Feast for the Senses

There's something mesmerising about watching food being prepared right in front of you. The sizzle, the aroma, the way each ingredient is carefully added. At *Chica Loca* by *Zaika-e-Lucknow* is an experience.

Every dish carries the heart of Lucknow's legendary cuisine, steeped in history and rich in flavour. The chefs perform, turning centuries-old recipes into moments worth savouring.



The Chaat Experience

At the chaat counter, the experience begins with a flourish. A delicate kataifi basket is placed before you, crisp and golden.

A freshly fried aloo tikki is placed inside, followed by a drizzle of thick tamarind and jaggery sauce, its deep sweetness balanced by the tang of yoghurt. A spoonful of *Arala Galka* chutney, deep green, fragrant, bursting with spice, is added, the final flourish to a masterpiece of textures and tastes.

This chaat is layers of flavour, a balance of crisp, soft, sweet, and spicy. The first bite is a revelation, crunchy, creamy, tangy and warming, all at once. It's street food elevated to an art form.

Gulati Kebab & Katal Delight

On the live grill, the *Gulati Kebab* sizzles gently, its rich aroma of ghee, saffron, and warming spices filling the air. A delicate blend of khoya, lentils and paneer, infused with cashew paste and *Lazzat-e-Taam* masala, makes it irresistibly soft. Served with saffron-infused Sheermal and bold panch-phoron chutney, it melts on the tongue, releasing layers of spice and smoke.

Never thought of *Katal* as something this indulgent but here it was, stealing the spotlight. Slow-cooked in Lucknowi spices, the raw jackfruit transformed into a rich meaty delight. Paired with warm *Rumali Roti*, it absorbed the deep smokiness of cloves, cardamom and ghee, each bite a revelation.

The Non-Veg Secrets

For those who crave the richness of Lucknow's meat dishes, the live kitchen offers a spectacle of its own. The legendary *Chowk Ke Galawati Kebab*, soft, smoky, spiced to perfection, is prepared right before your eyes, each portion hand-minced with precision. Beside it, a pot of *Abu Bakar Ki Biryani* is gently stirred, the fragrance of saffron and rose water rising with the steam. The *Rann Mussallam*, slow-cooked to perfection with rich Lucknowi spices, makes a grand entrance, the meat tender, falling off the bone.

Pan-Asian Flair

While the heart of *Zaika-e-Lucknow* lies in its heritage, there's an unexpected twist, a live Pan-Asian station. The contrast is striking. Here, the preparation is fast, dynamic. Flames leap as a chef tosses fresh vegetables in a hot wok, the aroma of basil and soy hitting the air.

A dish of *Sticky Rice* with Vegetables in *Basil Sauce* comes together in mere minutes. The chef glances up, asking, "More spice?" A nod, and in goes a handful of

fresh chilli, the deep red cutting through the glossy sauce. Spice is adjusted on request. The final dish is bold and full of character, every grain of rice coated in a rich, aromatic sauce. It's a theatrical contrast to the slow, deliberate artistry of Lucknow's kebabs and chaats, yet equally hypnotic to watch.

A Sweet Mystery

Khushnuma Begum Ki Kulfi, what a name for a dessert. The story goes that a young chef once found an old spoon engraved with "Khushnuma" in the bustling bazaar bazaar, and it changed his fate forever. This dessert carries that same magic. A saffron and almond kulfi, layered with falooda and dry fruits, served with a paan-infused rabri blended with betel leaf and gulkaand. Each bite is a journey through Lucknow's rich culinary history, a perfect ending to an unforgettable meal.

Dining at *Chica Loca* is about feeling connected, to the past, to the craft, to the very moment when something beautiful is created. Watching the hands that shape the food, hearing the stories behind the dishes, inhaling the scents that fill the air, it all makes each bite more meaningful. At *Zaika-e-Lucknow*, tradition is alive, food is theatre and every meal is a story waiting to be told.

FACT SHEET

Restaurant: Chica Loca by sunny leone
Venue: 4th Floor, Plot Number-C3, One29, E1, Noida-Greater Noida Expy, above Gulshan, Sector 129, Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201301
Price: 2500+ for two (without alcohol)

COCKTAILS & MORE

The drinks here deserve a moment of their own. *Ishq*, what a name. A smooth rum-based drink with almond milk, cream, cinnamon, honey and egg white. Velvety and rich, it felt like a warm embrace. Then came *Suroor-e-Raan*, a vodka cocktail with betel leaf, cloves, honey and lime, served alongside a fragrant meetha paan. An unexpected yet perfect pairing. Finally, *Mehfi*, a mocktail inspired by qawwali, blended rose water, pomegranate, lime and honey. Refreshing, floral, and full of life, just like the city itself.

Taste of Purani Dilli in Every Bite

Zaiqa-e-Dilli returns with a love letter to flavours with iconic street flavours, says GYANESHWAR DAYAL

Ever dreamt of old times when you wanted to have lip smacking street food you headed to the walled city of Delhi and savoured everything that was sinful yet tasted like heaven - chole bhature, parathas of paratha wali gali, and maggi, papri chaat, Daulat ki chaat and what have you. Times have changed Delhi is far more crowded than it used to be but Delhi Street food is same. And the good news is you can have the same taste in same ambience in *Crowne Plaza Mayur Vihar* which is celebrating *Zaiqa-e-Dilli* till March 2. And here you get to taste not only the old Delhi street food from Lajpat Nagar but also get a feel of Majnu ka Tila.

Crowne Plaza New Delhi Mayur Vihar's signature dining destination, Infinity, has curated street food of Delhi for lovers on a flavourful journey through 'Zaiqa-e-Dilli' - a food festival that brings the essence of the capital's legendary street food to life. This year's theme, *Khat - A Culinary Love Letter to Dilwalo Ki Dilli*, is an ode to the city's deep-rooted love affair with its vibrant food culture, where every dish is a cherished memory, and every flavour a story waiting to be relished.

This year's edition of *Zaiqa-e-Dilli* takes an immersive approach to authenticity. Executive Chef Roushan Sharma and his team, in collaboration with *Namaste Culture*, embarked on a culinary treasure hunt across Delhi's bustling streets - from Jama Masjid's lanes to Daryaganj's historic eateries and Connaught Place's timeless food hubs. This meticulous exploration led them to the soul of Delhi's food scene - *Lotan Ke Chole Kulche*, *Sanjay Kumar's Daulat Ki Chaat*, *Aslam's Butter Chicken*, *Kuremal's Kulfi*, *Jain Fruit Sandwich*, and many more. To



recreate these flavours with precision, the team observed, tasted, and learned firsthand from the masters behind these legendary dishes.

"Food in Delhi is more than sustenance - it is an emotion, a tradition, and an inseparable part of the city's identity," shares Executive Chef Roushan Sharma. To add an authentic touch, original vendors will prepare signature delights, ensuring that guests experience these dishes exactly as they were meant to be savoured.

Dahleej-e-Dilli festival's atmosphere will transport you to the bustling streets of Chandni Chowk, writes ABHI SINGHAL



Tumse milna purani Dilli mein..... this always reminds me of Old Delhi and the flavourful food that one can eat while being there. To experience the same, all at a single restaurant, *Crowne Plaza Today New Delhi Okhla* hosted the 15th edition of its signature food festival - *Dilli 6 - Dahleej-e-Dilli* till 5th March, bringing the spirit of Purani Dilli to life. This food festival, which takes place every year, offers a genuine taste of Old Delhi's rich flavours and ageless customs while re-creating the ambience of its lively streets with desi decors.

A variety of classic delicacies that embody the essence of Dilli were available for the guests. Every mouthful reveals a tale, from the rich and creamy *Paneer Changezi Paratha* from the Parathe Vaali Gali to the tart joy of *Matar Kulche*, one could feel the flavour. From the making of *Chana Jor Garam* and ambience of love, shayari songs gave the feeling of spending time at Purani Dilli.

While those who prefer sweets could not pass up the *Shafiz Ki Phirni* and the smooth *Kulfi*, meat lovers could savour the slow-cooked excellence of *Mutton Nihari* and the hearty warmth of *Haleem*. Every element of the setup was homage to Dilli 6, from installations with a nod to heritage and the smells of sizzling kebabs.



ICONIC FOODS

Guests at *Zaiqa-e-Dilli* will indulge in over 100 of Delhi's most iconic dishes, served through a rotating menu featuring the capital's best street food. The culinary lineup includes Chandni Chowk's famous parathas, Connaught Place's comforting Rajma Chawal, Lajpat Nagar's crispy Ram Ladoo, and Jama Masjid's irresistible Chicken Changezi. Majnu Ka Tila's Momos, Rajouri Garden's Chole Bhature, and Karol Bagh's succulent kebabs will also take the center stage, alongside live hawkers crafting refreshing Bunta.



“THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN THE WORLD IS, OF COURSE, THE WORLD ITSELF”
— WALLACE STEVENS



VHAH: What a festival!

The Vedaaranya Heritage and Healing Festival (VHAH FEST 2025) breathes new life into the historic town of Ramgarh Shekhawati. Every winter, this once-forgotten town transforms into a vibrant cultural hub, drawing visitors from around the world to revel in its artistic splendor, architectural grandeur and deep-rooted traditions, says **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

For five days, the quiet, dusty town of Ramgarh Shekhawati transformed into a vibrant spectacle of music, dance, colors, and captivating performances that left audiences enthralled. Welcome to VHAH FEST 2025—a celebration that goes beyond mere entertainment. VHAH is a dedicated effort to rekindle tourism in Ramgarh Shekhawati, serving a greater purpose: reviving the town's rich heritage. This eagerly awaited event every year promises an immersive journey into the rich tapestry of heritage, music, dance, wellness, and artistic splendor, all set against the breathtaking backdrop of Rajasthan's architectural grandeur.

But how do these two elements – A cultural festival and Heritage conservation – come together? A silent yet a profound revolution is taking shape in a small town in Rajasthan' Sikar district – Ramgarh Shekhawati. Known for its exquisitely carved havelis and frescos, it is now one of the finest examples of how to protect and conserve the heritage. And more than money you need passion and dedication to do so; money follows. What began as an effort to restore an ancestral haveli by Shruti Poddar, now the convener of INTACH Shekhawati chapter, has grown into a full-blown revival of the town and an effort to put it on the world map of tourism. Indeed, it has been a long and arduous journey but is worth the pain and the



effort. Shruti tells us that when she returned from the UK, searching for her roots, she was amazed to see the heritage her ancestors left and was in tears that her own folk had abandoned such a rich heritage to settle in big towns.

She began brick by brick reviving the haveli that belonged to her. She lived with bats and bare minimum basics. Her dedication inspired people around and they gradually started taking interest in the revival of more havelis. Most of these havelis are over two hundred years and done in limestone, bricks and stones, carved with exquisite designs and painted with frescos on their facades with wet colours on limestone plaster.

But then for everything you need money, people with deep pockets need to be interested in visiting it so that money pours into once the richest place on the planet in terms of per capita income. Ruiyas, Khetans, Khemkas Poddars—the big Marwari business families have their genesis in Ramgarh and it shows. It is writ large in the Havelis they lived; Frescos done in gold, Belgium glasses on the wall and silk smooth flooring done in limestone and seashells—all tell you what the town is all about.

For the VHAH Festival 2025, the guests came from across the world. They came to be part of this immersive experience, a rare treat. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister for Culture and Tourism spent a day to understand the town and what it would take to revive it. He promised government support to provide infrastructure, like airport link and train halt of fast trains at Ramgarh station

The festival has grown bigger in size, both in terms of numbers and scope and has been adding newer elements to it. This year's theme was love – *Shringar rasa*. One major highlight of VHAH FEST 2025 was a heartfelt tribute to the legendary filmmaker Guru Dutt on his 100th birth anniversary. This special commemoration also brought together film enthusiasts and scholars for screenings, discussions, and live performances celebrating his unparalleled contributions to Indian cinema. Among the notable events was an exploration of Guru Dutt's cinematic journey, led by Nasreen Munnai Kabir and Shruti Poddar. Additionally, Amrishi Mishra directed grand musical concert dedicated to Guru Dutt's timeless melodies. The Moonlight Mehfil on February 14 featured a live performance of classic Guru Dutt film songs, presented by Anuraag Poddar over an intimate dinner setting.

Adding to the festival's allure was the launch of “The Grand Archway” at MOHAR Haveli, an exclusive Museum Art Gallery. This inaugural exhibition presented rare oleographs by Raja Ravi Varma and M V Dhurandhar, offering a rare glimpse into the artistic heritage of India. The exhibition was inaugurated by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, alongside Prince Rama Varma, a descendant of Raja Ravi Varma, further enriching the festival's cultural offerings.

Evenings at VHAH FEST 2025 were dedicated to the evocative essence of *Shringar Rasa*, celebrating beauty, love, and romance through spellbinding music and dance performances. The classical performances by Geeta Chandran celebrated the theme of Sringara and took it to the next level.

A tap dance performance by Irish dancer Jason Donnelly was mesmerising and so was the performance by the Rajasthani Kalbelia dancers. Odissi maestro Vidushi Sujata Mohapatra's interpretation of Jayadeva's "Gita Govinda" on February 15 left the audience spell bound.

The divine love of Radha-Krishna was brought to life through a soulful jugalbandi by Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami and Padmashri Geeta Chandran, while Prince Rama Varma's musical concert, set against the backdrop of Raja Ravi Varma's paintings added another layer of artistic enchantment.

Beyond performances and exhibitions, VHAH FEST 2025 engaged the participants on hands-on learning through an array of workshops and healing experiences. As the sun set over the Shekhawati sand dunes and the echoes of music and laughter fill the air, Ramgarh is indeed showing the country how our cultural heritage can be preserved and restored. VHAH FEST is an effort to make Ramgarh Shekhawati shine on the world tourist map. India has a treasure trove we must preserve before it is lost forever.

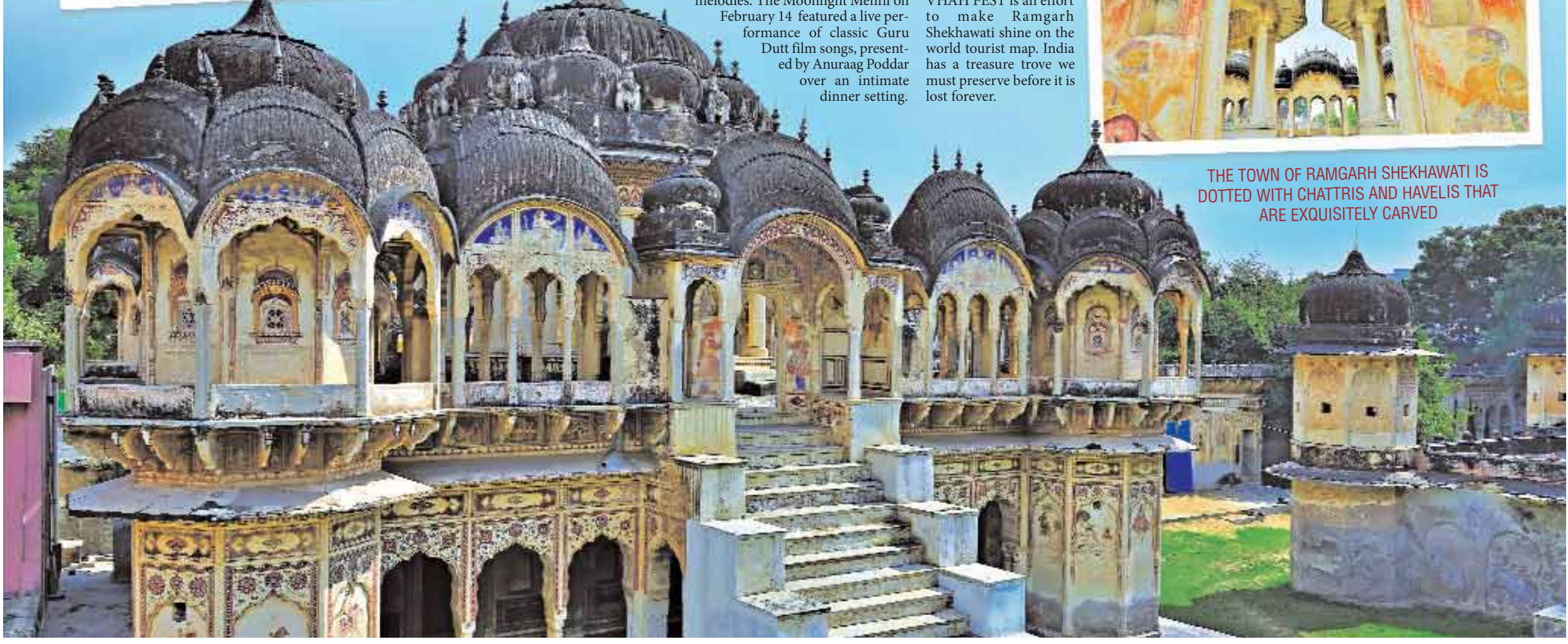


UNVEILING SHEKHAWATI

For those eager to explore the architectural wonders of Shekhawati, the festival offered a Heritage Walk, allowing visitors to discover the intricate frescoes, havelis, temples, and chhatris that define the region's historical landscape. festival provides an opportunity to witness and partake in the preservation of age-old crafts.



THE TOWN OF RAMGARH SHEKHAWATI IS DOTTED WITH CHATTRIS AND HAVELIS THAT ARE EXQUISITELY CARVED



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



YOUR WEEK AHEAD



MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

You are naturally innovative and have a knack for utilizing strategic approaches effectively, ensuring that tasks are executed precisely and promptly. This week, anticipate taking on significant responsibilities. Embrace the challenge and the control it brings, as your efforts are likely to result in tangible rewards. Financial opportunities are on the horizon; however, attention may be required to bring more harmony into your personal relationships. Expect developments in your professional life, possibly through new job offers or business expansions. While you may find that not everyone is supportive, key individuals will stand by you. Family dynamics could involve travel for a relative. With initiatives already underway, patience will be your ally as you await the fruits of your labor, and you'll find this period also strengthens friendships

Lucky number 12 | **Lucky colour** Burgundy
Lucky day Wednesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week kicks off with the promise of new journeys. You're encouraged to proceed with confidence and enthusiasm, as you're on the right path, though the journey ahead is substantial. When you finally arrive, expect a warm and royal welcome. Some of you may find yourselves in the spotlight, receiving praise and recognition that fuels your drive to excel. Your inner strength and determination are peaking, smoothing out the path ahead. However, towards the week's end, be mindful of overconfidence, which might cloud your creativity. It could be wise to distribute responsibilities effectively and reassess your life's objectives and ambitions. Remember, balance in all things ensures sustained success and well-being.

Lucky number 8 | **Lucky colour** Gold
Lucky day Sunday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, you may find yourself swept up in the romance of Valentine's Day, and it could mark the beginning of a significant relationship. This connection shows great promise and might develop into lasting love and happiness. Your fearless, bold nature will shine through, adding to the excitement and potential of this time. Additionally, some travel is anticipated this week, so it's wise to be cautious and keep an eye on your personal belongings. Your proactive and determined attitude will help you address any challenges that arise, and your innate kindness and compassion will drive you to support those around you. Your generous spirit doesn't go unnoticed, as you're often found assisting those in need. This period may also bring about a change in your living situation, suggesting a move could be on the horizon.

Lucky number 4 | **Lucky colour** Lavender
Lucky day Tuesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Currently, it seems you are on the cusp of a positive shift regarding your financial situation. Expect potential increases in wealth, possibly through unexpected channels like gifts or other forms of gain. This Valentine's Day could bring significant romantic gestures, potentially deepening commitments. However, some may experience lingering emotional challenges, with feelings of regret or anxiety leading to restless nights. Such stress can magnify perceived problems, heightening worry. Yet, as the week progresses, a surge in self-assurance regarding your capabilities will emerge, empowering you to achieve desired outcomes. It's an opportune moment to transform aspirations into concrete plans and take active steps toward realizing your ambitions. Embrace this phase as a chance to steer your life toward more fulfilling paths.

Lucky number 3 | **Lucky colour** Charcoal
Lucky day Monday



VRIGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week presents a blend of challenges and triumphs. Your focus is sharp, and you move forward with a clear vision, ready to face any obstacles with bravery and resilience. Your determination and willpower position you as a true leader, inspiring others with your courage. You naturally take charge, guiding with fairness and integrity, qualities that motivate those around you to seek your counsel. This period marks a significant phase where you might step into a leadership role or take on an important position that highlights your skills and communicative prowess. Your actions this week could very well set the course for a positive shift in your life's direction.

Lucky number 16 | **Lucky colour** Indigo
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week may start off feeling a bit challenging for you, with a sense of restlessness and disappointment due to your efforts seemingly not yielding the expected rewards. However, you're actually very close to a significant breakthrough. This phase can be seen as the final stretch you need to navigate before achieving your goals. Midweek brings a shift, as your aspirations and desires begin to materialize, bringing joy, success, and possibly even significant life events such as the celebration of new beginnings. This period of achievement is a time for relaxation and enjoying the fruits of your labor. As the week progresses, your confidence and bold use of your creative talents will lead to recognition and the successful attainment of your goals. Additionally, this could be a favorable time for forming meaningful connections, whether in friendship or romance.

Lucky number 17 | **Lucky colour** Mauve
Lucky day Saturday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

You possess a spirited and independent nature, which illuminates your vibrant emotions and boundless imagination. At your core lies a deep-seated romanticism. You approach the world with kindness and compassion, cherishing moments of quiet and peace. Your moods may shift, reflecting your dynamic inner life, and you are driven by a desire to apply your insight and knowledge ambitiously. Incorporating meditation and yoga into your daily routine enhances your spiritual freedom and empowerment. You are inclined to reject outdated perspectives, instead bringing fresh ideas and creative approaches to the forefront. As the week winds down, you revel in social gatherings and celebrations, finding joy and fulfillment in these shared experiences. You deeply value the joyful and celebratory moments spent with friends and family.

Lucky number 10 | **Lucky colour** Chocolate
Lucky day Saturday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week kicks off with a festive spirit, as many will find themselves surrounded by joyous events such as parties, weddings, and other significant celebrations that promise an unforgettable experience. Spending time with friends and loved ones might inspire profound reflections. Indulging in fine food, drinks, and the pleasures of life will be a theme, though it's wise to keep an eye on expenditures to maintain a balance between enjoyment and practicality. This is a time to recognize the internal strength and divinity that have perhaps gone unnoticed. Trusting in higher powers and your own capabilities can pave the way for these qualities to emerge more prominently in your life.

Lucky number 6 | **Lucky colour** Ivory
Lucky day Friday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Take a moment to appreciate all the good in your life, cherishing each moment and person. You'll find yourself surrounded by celebrations such as parties and gatherings, offering a chance to step away from daily stresses and relish the joy of togetherness. Your emotions run deep and bring a unique richness to these experiences. As the week progresses, embrace a period of calm. Dedicate time to meditation and spiritual practices, which will strengthen your inner resolve. Toward the week's end, you might feel challenged by current circumstances. This could be a pivotal moment to consider significant changes in your lifestyle or work approach, especially if your old ways seem inadequate now. Embracing this shift could be crucial for your growth.

Lucky number 14 | **Lucky colour** Mustard
Lucky day Monday



CANCER June 21-July 22

At the beginning of the week, some might experience setbacks or emotional challenges in their romantic relationships. An unexpected event could lead to feelings of hurt as it might come from a close and trusted partner. This situation could temporarily cloud your judgment or affect your emotional clarity. However, as the week progresses, there's a shift towards healing and understanding. You might find yourself emerging stronger and more open-hearted than before, with a renewed capacity for love and connection. For those involved in professional pursuits, the week could bring opportunities to travel internationally for work. This journey not only promises career growth but could also spark a spiritual enlightenment, helping you overcome any significant challenges that have been blocking your path.

Lucky number 14 | **Lucky colour** Cream
Lucky day Wednesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, you may find yourself deeply in tune with your emotions, perhaps to a point where your sentiments heavily influence your thoughts and actions. Your imagination is likely to be particularly vivid, which could cause you to set aspirations that are challenging to reach. Some may experience a fluctuation in their natural rhythms, leading to moments of irritation, but this time also holds potential for profound connection with creative and spiritual activities. Be cautious of potential deceit or dishonesty around you, as the possibility of encountering duplicity is higher. You might wrestle with feelings of regret, wishing to undo past actions, which can weigh heavily on your mind, especially during the night. These thoughts might disturb your sleep, leaving you restless and wary of the quiet hours.

Lucky number 1 | **Lucky colour** Jade
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

You can expect a period of joy as recent challenges and rivalries are left behind, allowing you to celebrate your achievements. Your efforts are set to receive recognition, whether through grand gestures or more understated acknowledgments. This is a sign that you're moving in the right direction, though the journey ahead is still unfolding. Maintain your optimism and proceed with confidence. Financially, it's wise to manage your resources carefully and make mindful spending choices. This week might also bring new emotional beginnings, unexpectedly leading to joyful events like the addition of a new family member. While you might find yourself indulging or feeling youthful, remember the financial stability and contentment that come from wise decisions.

Lucky number 7 | **Lucky colour** Olive
Lucky day Sunday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331

THOUGHTFUL INSIGHTS



Dr. Tanu Jain

Dawn's Sacred Whispers: A Lesson in Devotion of Hanuman

Hanuman's service to Rama was marked by humility despite his immense power—he never sought personal glory, only the fulfilment of his duty

As the first light kissed the ancient stones of Haridwar, vapours rose from our mouths like silent prayers into the crisp January air. The Ganges flowed with a gentle murmur, carrying centuries of devotion past Har ki Pauri's weathered steps. In this pre-dawn stillness, my friend and I stood among hundreds of devotees.

The morning Aarti began with the soft tinkling of bells, swelling into a symphony that seemed to make the very air vibrate with divine energy. Around us, devotees raised their hands in unified prayer, their collective faith creating an invisible warmth that defied the winter chill. The brass diyas cast flickering shadows on faces transformed by devotion, each flame a beacon in the lingering darkness.

Through the corner of my eye, I saw my usually talkative friend transformed into a pillar of silence. His eyes, fixed on the ceremony, held a depth I had never seen before. Even when our shoulders touched in the swaying crowd, he remained immersed in a connection that transcended physical awareness. Before us, the sacred waters carried their own ceremony—brave souls descending into the freezing embrace of Mother Ganga, their gasps turning into smiles of blessed contentment as the icy water touched their skin.

As we walked away from the Aarti, the familiar verses of the Hanuman Chalisa floated through the air from a

nearby temple. The moment took me back to a profound lecture delivered at the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) by Director General Surendra Nath Tripathi. A retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the 1985 Odisha cadre.

During his lecture, Shri Tripathi had eloquently drawn parallels between Hanuman's qualities and the attributes of an ideal public servant. His deep reverence for Hanuman was evident—not just as a deity but as a timeless embodiment of dedication, wisdom, and service.

I nudged my friend's elbow, but he remained lost in contemplation. Finally, he broke his silence, his voice tinged with reverence. "Hanuman's power was not in his physical strength but in his absolute devotion to Rama. His service was his power."

The words hung in the crisp morning air as we settled on the riverbank, watching pilgrims change into dry clothes after their sacred dip. Their movements created ripples in the water that caught the growing daylight. It reminded me of Shri Tripathi's insights—how Hanuman's unwavering focus, his ability to listen deeply, and his strategic acumen were qualities that modern leaders must embody.

Hanuman exemplifies deep listening through his complete devotion to understanding Ram's mission. He doesn't just hear instructions but comprehends the deeper purpose, demonstrating active engagement and complete understanding.



Like Hanuman, who carried an entire mountain when he could not identify a single herb, today's public servants must often find creative solutions to complex problems. As Hanuman leaped across the ocean in search of Sita, undeterred by challenges, so must those in governance navigate obstacles with resilience and agility. Shri Tripathi had emphasised that a true leader, much like Hanuman, must build bridges—connecting communities, fostering inclusivity, and ensuring that no one is left unheard.

Hanuman's service to Rama was marked by humility despite his immense power—he never sought personal glory, only the fulfillment of his duty. Shri Tripathi had spoken about how governance, at its core, is not about authority but about selfless service. A public servant, he stressed, must wield power with humility, ensuring that policies and initiatives are executed with integrity and a deep sense of responsibility.

In his service to Rama, Hanuman exemplified inspirational leadership, his very presence uplifting those around him. He encouraged and motivated, reminding his fellow warriors of their strength. A true public servant, Shri Tripathi had noted, must similarly lead by example, inspiring change through action rather than mere words.

Yet Hanuman was not just a warrior—he was a strategist, an innovator. His creativity shone when he set Lanka ablaze with his burning tail, turning adversity into an advantage. In governance, as Shri Tripathi highlighted, problem-solving requires a similar inventive spirit, where obstacles are met with ingenuity rather than hesitation.

His emotional intelligence was just as remarkable—when he met Sita in Ashok Vatika, he comforted her, offering hope and reassurance. Understanding emotions, building trust, and resolving conflicts are just as crucial in governance today as they were in his time. Shri Tripathi's keen analytical thinking and his ability to balance empathy with strategy have been central to his leadership across ministries and institutions.

Through every mission, Hanuman remained grounded in humility. Despite his immense strength and intelligence, he never wavered from his core purpose—serving Rama. This, Shri Tripathi had pointed out, is the hallmark of true leadership: to serve without expectation of reward, to

work tirelessly for the greater good, and to uphold integrity in every action.

This morning in Haridwar had revealed a profound truth—that true service, whether to the divine or to society, stems from the same source: unwavering dedication. Just as Hanuman's devotion to Rama transformed him from a powerful being into an immortal symbol of selfless service, public servants have the opportunity to transform their official duties into acts of sacred service to society.

Their power lies not in their position but in their dedication to service, their willingness to work tirelessly for the greater good, and their ability to remain humble despite their authority.

The morning's experience had deepened our understanding of both divine and public service. As we left Har ki Pauri, the sound of the Ganges followed us—a constant reminder that like her eternal flows.

As we walked away from the riverbank, the golden morning light reflected off the waters, casting a shimmering path ahead. Just as Hanuman once leaped across the ocean to fulfill his duty, each step taken in service—whether in governance, society, or personal life—creates ripples that extend far beyond what the eye can see.

—The author's views are personal. The author is a civil servant at the Ministry of Defence and a spiritual speaker

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