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Photo: PTI

TRUMP AND HIS TRUMPET ENGULF 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.

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 desperately 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 benefitted from these funds? Who got 282 seats in Lok Sabha? The remaining amount started pouring in between US FY2020 and US FY2024," Khera said.

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.

WEATHER

AQI	158
MAX	26.6°C(+1.1)
MIN	12.3°C(+0.5)

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 A1436 during 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



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

and 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.

Punjab minister ran ghost department for 21 months

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

In a bizarre political development within 10 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 Dhaliwal 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 Dhaliwal 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 Dhaliwal 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 Dhaliwal

With this amendment, Dhaliwal 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. Dhaliwal had earlier been stripped of the Agriculture and Rural Development departments in May 2023 and was instead given Administrative Reforms Department.

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.

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.

'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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Matric and Inter exams: Surprise inspections at centres to curb malpractice

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

A team of senior officials, including ADM Law and Order Aniket Sachan, Dhalbhum SDO Shatabdi Majumdar, Ghatsila SDO Neel Chandra, Ghatsila LRDC Neet Nikhil Surin, Dhalbhum LRDC Gautam Kumar, along with all BDOs and COs, conducted surprise inspections at various JAC board examination centers to ensure smooth and malpractice-free conduct of the annual secondary and intermediate examinations.

The district administration has taken stringent measures to maintain law and order and to ensure the integrity of the examination process. Special directives have been issued to all static and patrolling magistrates as well as police personnel deployed at the centers to ensure a strict vigil against any form of malpractice. Any student caught engaging in unfair means will face stringent action as per examination rules.

The annual secondary (Matric) examination is being held in the first shift from 9:45 AM to 1:00 PM, while the Intermediate examination (Arts, Science, and

Commerce) is scheduled in the second shift from 2:00 PM to 5:15 PM. The examinations are being conducted across 71 centers in the district, with 26 centers in Ghatsila subdivision and 45 in Dhalbhum for the Matric examination. Similarly, for Intermediate exams, 12 centers are in Ghatsila and 23 in Dhalbhum, totaling 35 centers.

This year, 25,380 students are appearing for the 10th board exams, while 22,256 students are registered for the Intermediate exams, including 13,595 in the Arts stream, 4,697 in Science, and 3,964 in Commerce.



During the surprise inspections, senior officials scrutinized examination halls to check for any signs of malpractice. The inspection teams interacted with invigilators to ensure that they were adhering strictly to the examination guidelines laid down by JAC. Additionally, students were informed about the consequences of engaging in unfair means.

ADM Law and Order Aniket Sachan stated, "We are committed to maintaining the sanctity of the examination process. Any attempt to compromise the fairness of the exams will not be tolerated. Strict action will be taken against those found guilty of malpractice."

To maintain a secure environment at all examination centers, police personnel have been strategically deployed. The administration has also appointed static and patrolling magistrates to monitor the situation continuously. The coordination between district administration, education department officials, and law enforcement agencies has been exemplary, ensuring a conducive environment for students to perform without stress. Deputy Commissioner

Ananya Mittal has directed all officers to remain vigilant throughout the examination period and to carry out continuous monitoring to prevent any untoward incidents. He emphasized the importance of fair examinations in shaping the future of students and highlighted the administration's zero-tolerance policy towards malpractice.

The district administration's proactive approach and rigorous inspections have been well-received by parents and students alike, who appreciate the efforts being made to ensure a transparent and fair examination process.

Train services hit: 15 trains cancelled, one diverted

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

In a significant disruption to train services, South Eastern Railway has announced the cancellation of multiple trains due to operational constraints, impacting several major routes connecting New Delhi, Puri, Jammu Tawi, Tatanagar, Haldia, Hatia, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, and Anand Vihar. Passengers are advised to check schedules and make alternative travel arrangements as the cancellations are expected to affect a large number of commuters.



Cancelled on 22nd, 24th, and 26th February 2025, 18101 Tatanagar-Jammu Tawi Express - Cancelled on 26th and 28th February, and 2nd March 2025. 12444 Anand Vihar-Haldia Express - Cancelled on 25th February 2025. 12443 Haldia-Anand Vihar Express - Cancelled on 27th February 2025. 12874 Anand Vihar-Hatia Express - Cancelled on 25th and 26th February 2025. 12873 Hatia-Anand Vihar Express - Cancelled on 27th February 2025. 12816 Anand Vihar-

Puri Express - Cancelled on 26th and 27th February 2025. 12826 Anand Vihar-Ranchi Express - Cancelled on 26th February 2025. 12825 Ranchi-Anand Vihar Express - Cancelled on 27th February 2025. 12817 Hatia-Anand Vihar Express - Cancelled on 28th February 2025. 12282 New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Express - Cancelled on 27th February 2025. 12819 Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar Express - Cancelled on 26th February 2025. In addition to the can-

cellations, 18609 Ranchi-LTT Mumbai Express, scheduled for departure on 26th February 2025, will operate on a diverted route via Varanasi, Lucknow, Kanpur, VL Jhansi, Bina, and Itarsi. This diversion has been necessitated due to operational adjustments, and passengers on this route are advised to plan accordingly.

The sudden announcement of train cancellations has raised concerns among passengers, especially those who have pre-booked tickets for these dates.

South Eastern Railway has urged travelers to stay updated through official communication channels, including the Indian Railways website, inquiry counters, and authorized mobile applications. Passengers with reserved tickets on the cancelled trains will be eligible for refunds as per railway guidelines.

A spokesperson from South Eastern Railway stated, "The cancellations have been implemented due to

unavoidable operational constraints. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience caused to passengers and appreciate their understanding and cooperation. We are making every effort to ensure minimal disruption and to provide timely information to affected travelers."

The railway authorities have also increased vigilance and assistance at major stations to help passengers navigate alternative travel options. Static and patrolling personnel have been deployed to manage the crowd and ensure safety at the stations.

This large-scale disruption is expected to impact thousands of passengers traveling to and from major cities, including New Delhi, Puri, Jammu Tawi, Tatanagar, Haldia, Hatia, Ranchi, and Bhubaneswar. The South Eastern Railway is closely monitoring the situation and is prepared to make further adjustments as necessary to facilitate passenger movement.

PTR puts load on its regular rangers, stalling re employment of its retired ones

PNS : DALTONGANJ

Palamu tiger reserve, refusing re-employment of its retired rangers, went on to further load its existing rangers in PTR to have additional ranges here.

Sources said it's an intelligent move as re-employment of retired rangers here would have meant a kind of return of apathy. The state forest, environment and climate change department has made a 'fire fighting' measure to fill up the posts of rangers in the Palamu tiger reserve.

At its meeting held on February 19, the principal chief conservator of forest issued an office order empowering 8 rangers with additional charge of other ranges too in districts like Palamu, Ranchi, Dhanbad and Hazaribag.

The Palamu tiger reserve gets the lion share of the additional charge rangers. Out of the eight, three alone are in the Palamu tiger reserve.

Umesh Kumar Dubey fits the bill most high. He was originally ranger Garu east of the PTR. The February 19

office order of the principal chief minister of forest allotted him three more ranges. These three more ranges are Garu west, Mahuadandr and Betla.

Thus Dubey holds 4 ranges, 50 per cent of the 8 range PTR. Out of the 4 ranges that Dibey holds, three ranges fall in the South division and 1 in the North division. A range officer identified as Nand Kumar Mahto of Latehar forest division has been given additional charge of the Mahuadandr range of the PTR.

Another ranger Ajay Toppo until holding Chhipadohar west range will have additional charge of the Chhipadohar east.

The 8th range Kutku remains in the hands of a retired cum contractual ranger Ganesh Prasad. This newspaper has a copy of the office order of the principal chief conservator of forest.

Commenting on these placement of rangers, deputy director south division of PTR Kumar Ashish said "It's good our all the 8 ranges have RO (range officer)."

"It's fire time in the jungles. Villagers intrude into

the jungles now for Mahua fruits. Now these ROs are there to deal with the situation" added the PTR official.

The festival Holi is round the corner. Deer become very vulnerable in pre Holi, Holi and post Holi time. Villagers try to poach deer for feast. Here the PTR steps up its vigil for the safety of its wildlife, especially deer and wild boar.

Again asked if one ranger has 4 ranges under his command then how can he be doing justice to each of his 4 ranges to which Ashish said "Umesh Dubey has a long standing experience here in forest and wildlife management."

All eyes are on the posting of the chief conservator of forest and field director of the PTR. The post of the chief conservator of forest and field director fell vacant on February 1 following the superannuation of the then field director PTR Kumar Ashutosh on January 31.

Kumar Ashutosh has been a luckier chief conservator of forest and field director than any other officer of his rank here in the past two decades.

THREE-DAY 'RADIANT JHARKHAND' EXHIBITION CONCLUDES

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

The three-day 'Radiant Jharkhand' mega exhibition, organized for the first time by Visual Myths concluded on a high note on Saturday. The event attracted thousands of visitors and showcased a vision of a modern and developed India through its diverse stalls. Jamshedpur MP Bidyut Baran Mahto graced the closing ceremony as the chief guest, accompanied by special guest and social worker Amarpreet Singh Kale, along with Karim City College Principal Dr. Mohd. Riyaz, Alkabar Polytechnic's Dr. Warish Imam, and Kuldeep Sons Jewelers Director Sunil Verma as guests of honour.

In his closing address, MP Bidyut Baran Mahto emphasized the importance of such exhibitions in spreading awareness about various government departments and schemes. He praised the initiative taken by Visual Myths and acknowledged the participating organizations for their efforts in making the event a success. "This exhibition is a step towards realizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed India. It beautifully displayed a glimpse of modern India at various stalls. The youth were especially inspired to learn and progress by interacting with innovative displays," he stated.

The success of the event was credited to the hard work and dedication of the organizing team members. Special mentions were given to Jyotika Khurana, Vishal Malik, Vinod Kumar, Santosh Pawar, Amisha Saxena, Aditi Saxena, Anisha Yadav, Mohammad Afzal, Dutta Thore, and Kinjal Gandhi for their significant contributions in ensuring the smooth execution of the program. The closing ceremony began with a welcome address by Neetu Pal Gupta from Visual Myths, followed by a well-coordinated program hosted by Uday Chandravanshi.

Rush 10.0 - The Soul Edition Ignites Day 2 at IIM Ranchi

PNS : RANCHI

The Soul Edition at IIM Ranchi was an electrifying fusion of intellect, creativity, and sporting intensity. With every event, the festival gained momentum, delivering an unforgettable experience for participants and audiences alike.

The morning kicked off with a battle of wits and innovation as the final rounds of Big Bang Ad and Quintessence - The Case Competition took center stage. Big Bang Ad challenged teams to craft compelling advertisements, pushing the boundaries of creativity and persuasion. Simultaneously, Quintessence put aspiring business leaders to the test, demanding sharp analytical thinking and strategic problem-solving in real-world business scenarios. As the competition reached its peak, participants showcased brilliance, making the final rounds a true test-



ment to ingenuity and excellence.

As the afternoon unfolded, the sporting arena roared to life with the finals of Throwball Thunderstorm and Volleyball Vortex. Teams battled fiercely, displaying exceptional coordination, powerful serves, and game-changing strategies. Each match was a gripping display of resilience and sportsmanship, keeping spectators at the edge of their seats until

the final whistle. The intensity of the matches only fueled the festival's adrenaline rush, adding to the thrill of the day.

The energy surged into the evening with the Group Dance Competition, where teams set the stage ablaze with electrifying choreography and seamless synchronization. Their vibrant performances, brimming with passion and precision, left the audience spellbound.

As night fell, Rush 10.0

reached a breathtaking crescendo with soul-stirring musical performances by Nikhil D'Souza and Vaani Bhasin. Their mesmerizing melodies and heartfelt renditions cast a spell over the audience, weaving an atmosphere of pure enchantment. The air resonated with soaring vocals and soulful harmonies, as the crowd swayed, sang along, and reveled in the magic of the moment. Each note carried an undeniable energy, leaving the audience captivated and awash in emotion, making for an unforgettable finale to an extraordinary day.

With two action-packed days fueling the excitement, Rush 10.0 - The Soul Edition now gears up for a grand finale. The final day promises even more high-energy performances, thrilling competitions, and a celebration of unparalleled talent and spirit. Stay tuned as Rush 10.0 prepares for its spectacular climax!

333 cases resolved in Lok Adalat at Garhwa

NITYANAND DUBEY : GARHWA

The monthly Lok Adalat took place on Saturday. It resolved 333 cases and generated Rs 1,569,700.00.

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Garhwa, organised the event. It followed instructions from the Jharkhand State Legal Services Authority (JHALSA), Ranchi. Nalin Kumar, Principal District Judge and Chairman of DLSA Garhwa, oversaw the event. The "Monthly Lok Adalat-cum-Special Lok Adalat" dealt with NI Act and marriage issues. 40 resolved cases were about marriage. 16 related to the NI Act. 29 were minor criminal cases. 102 involved the electricity department. 146 were other types of cases.



Six groups, or benches, handled the cases. One bench was at the Nagar Untari Sub-Divisional Civil Court. The people in charge of the benches were: Kaushal Kishore Jha, Principal Judge of the Family Court; Shivnath Tripathi, District and Additional Sessions Judge-III; Kumar Vipul, Chief Judicial Magistrate; Veena Kumari, Civil Judge Senior Division-Judicial Magistrate; Sanjay Kumar Singh Ditiya, District and Additional

Sessions Judge-I; and Arvind Kachhap, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate. Each bench had a judge and a lawyer. The lawyers were: Praveend Kumar Sahu, Nityanand Dubey, Anita Ranjan, Sudhir Kumar Tiwari, Birendra Kumar Mishra, and Anoop Kumar Ojha from Nagar Untari.

Judges, lawyers, court workers, PIV Suryadev Choudhary, and people involved in the cases attended.

Bus driver suffers heart attack, passengers save him by giving CPR

PNS : GARHWA



A bus driver had a heart attack while driving. Passengers acted fast and saved him with CPR, in Garhwa.

The driver, Virendra Pandey, was driving from Garhwa to Ranchi. About 30 minutes after leaving, he collapsed. The bus was going about 80 km/h over the Tahale River bridge. There were around 50 to 60 people on the bus. They gave Pandey CPR right away, which revived him. He was then taken to Medininagar Hospital. The passengers continued their trip on another bus.

The bus left Ranka Mor in Garhwa at 9:10 am for Ranchi. The incident happened about 13 km from the station. As the bus crossed the Tahale River, Pandey felt chest pain. He man-

aged to drive across the bridge but then passed out, causing panic. Manish Tiwari, a passenger, said he called Dr Nishant Singh. Following the doctor's advice, passengers Rajiv Bhardwaj, Upendra Singh, and Santosh Kumar gave mouth-to-mouth and chest compressions.

Tiwari also called his brother, Amit Tiwari. Amit brought a car to take the driver to Narayan Super Speciality Hospital in Medininagar. Another driver then took the bus to Ranchi.

Dr Sachin at Narayan Super Speciality Hospital said Pandey had a heart attack. He confirmed that the passengers' quick CPR saved his life. Dr Nishant in Garhwa also thought it was a heart attack and told the passengers to do chest compressions.

District Cooperative Development Committee meeting held

PNS : LOHARDAGA

A meeting of the District Level Cooperative Development Committee was held in the Collectorate Auditorium on Saturday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Dr. Waghmare Prasad Krishna. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Waghmare Prasad Krishna received information about the cash book and audit of the financial year 2024-25 of the lamps located in the district from District Cooperative Officer Vijay Tirkey. The Deputy Commissioner directed the District Cooperative Officer to speed up the work of office and warehouse in the lamps of the panchayat. He said that CSC ID should be provided to all lamps, packs and trade boards. Deputy Development Commissioner Dilip Pratap Singh Shekhawat, Additional Collector Jitendra Munda and other officials were present in this meeting.



Special Lok Adalat organised for matrimonial disputes

VINOD PRASAD : LOHARDAGA



A special Lok Adalat was organized on Saturday under the guidance of District Legal Services Authority, Lohardaga under the guidance of Principal District and Sessions Judge cum Chairman Dalsa Rajkamal Mishra. During this time four benches were formed. The bench number was formed under the leadership of Chief Justice Kutumb Court Subhash for a matrimonial dispute case. Also, ADJ I for Bench Number Two Civil Appeal, Criminal Appeal, MACT Sessions, Electricity Act Sessions, Akhilesh Kumar Tiwari, Bench No. Three Municipal, Labor, Mutation, Certificate Case, Bank and all Judge II

Archana Kumari and Bench for other cases including banks. CJM KK for case four criminal compoundable cases, NI Act, Mahi Act, Forest Cessions etc. Formed under the leadership of Mishra.

Giving information about the data, Dalsa Secretary said that a total of 44 cases were executed in the event. Which includes 13 cases of Criminal Compoundable Offenses, 23 cases of NI Act, 6 cases of matrimonial disputes, one of the Forest and a Mahi Act case.

A total of Rs 43,16,525 was recovered. At the same time, he informed that on March 8, the first National Lok Adalat of the year will be organized in the behavior court premises.

Minister stresses on better marketing of State's Forest produce

PNS : RANCHI

The newly constructed Central Processing and Research Center building of Jharkhand State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Development and Marketing Union Limited located at Simaliya in Ranchi was inaugurated by Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperative Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey.

On this occasion, a one-day cooperative conference cum exhibition program was also organized. On this occasion, Tirkey said that 29 per cent of the land area of the state of Jharkhand is covered with forest. Forest produce is the livelihood of a large population of the tribal community. In simple words, this is the second largest means of rural livelihood after agriculture. Many types of medicinal plants including Kendu leaves, Mahua,



Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperative Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey during the inauguration of newly constructed Central Processing and Research Center building of Jharkhand State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Development and Marketing Union Limited located at Simaliya in Ranchi on Saturday. PNS

Chironji, Kusum, Karanja, Mango, Jackfruit are found in the forests of the state. Villagers are making their

duce in the mold of modernity.

The Minister said that the processing unit can prove to be helpful in this. Women groups can join the race of successful entrepreneurs by making forest produce a part of their employment and business. Till a few days ago, even the chirping of birds was not heard at this place in Simaliya village, but today the whole atmosphere has changed due to a small initiative. Until yesterday, the machine kept in the processing unit was covered with dust, today it has started working. This small effort will prove to be a milestone in the coming days. Villagers can package their forest produce and sell it in the market by paying a very nominal fee.

A large population in Jharkhand is dependent on forest produce and the objective of the state government is to promote forest produce

rapidly and provide a market for it. Forest produce plays a big role in the development and economic growth of farmers. With the right information about the schemes of the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperation, farmers can connect with advanced agriculture along with their traditional farming. For this, farmer brothers do not need to go anywhere, rather today the government is working to go to every village and the farmers' fields.

Tirkey said that today a processing unit has been established here for everything from tamarind to amla. The villagers associated with forest produce need to understand the importance of the processing unit and take advantage of it. The government is ready to provide every kind of help at every step.

Congress' sacrifice helped in formation of Jharkhand: Raju



State Congress in charge K Raju, JPCC President Keshav Mahto Kamlesh, MLA Pradeep Yadav along with party workers during a meeting in Ranchi on Saturday. PNS

PNS : RANCHI

Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee in-charge K. Raju, State Congress President Keshav Mahto Kamlesh, Congress Legislature Party leader Pradeep Yadav, Deputy Leader Rajesh Kachhap and many other senior leaders reached Chaibasa from Ranchi where a meeting of prominent Congressmen including District Presidents, Block Presidents, Mandal Presidents of East Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharsawan and West Singhbhum of Kolhan division was held under the leadership of JPCC president on Saturday. Raju interacted with the Congress officials present, he wanted to know from the party officials that there is a Congress coalition government in the state, he said that how much the party workers and the public have been able to connect with the schemes of the government.

He said that the idea behind the formation of Jharkhand state was of former Prime Minister Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, he first gave rights to the people of Jharkhand by forming Jharkhand Autonomous Council, even at the time of division of the state, 11 of our

MLAs resigned from the post of minister, it is the result of Congress' sacrifice and penance that a separate state of Jharkhand became possible. He said that we have only one MLA in Kolhan, the organization and the party have to be strengthened so that we can win more seats in the coming elections.

State Congress President Keshav Mahto Kamlesh welcomed the in-charge and said that just as the in-charge has given the message today by meeting with the block and division presidents, similarly the block president should take the party to the booths by meeting with the Panchayat President and Booth Presidents and form a strong committee up to the booth unit. Kamlesh said that today the people of BJP want to change the constitution of the country, want to snatch the rights of the people which the Constitution of India has given to the common people, the Congress party will protect the constitution, under a campaign we are continuously going among the people with this issue and the party is also getting full support from the public.

Congress Legislature Party leader Pradeep Yadav said that the Congress party has had a golden history in

the country since independence, today efforts are being made to erase and change that history, we have to save it. Today, to defeat these forces, we have to make alliances as per the need. In Jharkhand, we have to bring the party organization forward strongly.

Mainly former minister Banna Gupta, former Union Minister Subodhkant Sahay, former minister Bandhu Tirkey, Badal Patralekh, Devendra Nath Champa, Ashok Chaudhary, Rama Khalkho, Rakesh Tiwari, Anand Bihari Dubey, Chandrashekhar Das, Satish Paul Munjani, Riazul Ansari, Gajendra Singh, Shantanu Mishra, KK Shukla and hundreds of Congressmen were also present in the meeting.

Chief spokesperson of the State Congress Committee Lal Kishore Nath Shadhev said that tomorrow, on 23 February 2025, the in-charge of the State Congress and the State President will participate in the meeting of the Chairman / Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Members of Boards, Corporations, Commissions at 10:30 am in the Parisad Auditorium, Kachhari Chowk, Ranchi, and will participate in the Congress Legislature Party meeting at 11:30 am.

RCHRC holds Bike Rally, Screening Camp for cancer awareness



PNS : RANCHI

Ranchi Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (RCHRC), set up by the Tata Cancer Care Foundation, organized a community engagement and awareness event, under the theme of 'Cancer Se Jeetna Sambhav Hai,' extending the momentum to reinforce the global call for action against cancer.

Cancer is rapidly emerging as one of the most significant health challenges across India, with reports by Indian Council of Medical Research-National Cancer Registry Programme estimating 14.6 lakh cases in 2022, and projections nearing 45 lakh cases in the next 5 to 6 years. As part of RCHRC's community-focused efforts, the event is aimed to promote cancer awareness and early detection.

The event commenced with a bike rally, where over 500 participants, including doctors, cancer patients, caregivers, and community members, covered an eight-kilometer distance from Morabadi Grounds to RCHRC, with halts at Ranchi College, Ram Mandir Chowk, Chandni Chowk and Kanke Chowk, holding banners and chanting slogans to champion the cause for cancer awareness and encouraging early detection. RCHRC also conducted a free screening

camp, led by experienced oncologists and healthcare providers, for blood pressure, diabetes, oral, breast and cervical cancer (for people above 30 years of age), motivating individuals to take charge of their health and seek timely medical attention.

At RCHRC, an Inter-College Spoken Word Competition was organized, featuring participants from, Birsa Agricultural University, Ranchi Women's College, BIT Mesra, St. Xavier's College, Bethel College of Nursing, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute and Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee University. Centered on the theme "Andhere se ujale tak: Cancer yoddhao ki aawaz," the competition provided a platform for students to creatively share the experiences of patients and caregivers to raise awareness and foster empathy among the audience.

Additionally, the event aimed to educate and inspire, through activities including a special cancer awareness talk delivered by Dr. Rajanigandha Tudu, Medical Oncologist, RCHRC, on prevention, treatment, and support systems, and a Nukkad Natak performed by local artists to emphasize early detection and preven-

tion. Gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest, Dr. Chandra Kishore Shahi, Director-in-Chief, Health Services, Government of Jharkhand said, "Cancer is not just a medical challenge—it is an emotional, social, and financial battle that affects entire families. Events like these play a crucial role in spreading awareness, encouraging early detection, and fostering a strong support system for patients and caregivers. Together, through education, advocacy, and compassion, we can make a difference and bring hope to those fighting this disease."

Reflecting on the proceedings of the day, Dr. (Colonel) Madan Mohan Pandey, Director of Medical Services, RCHRC, said, "Early detection and timely intervention are critical in improving cancer outcomes, and initiatives like this help bridge the gap between medical expertise and community awareness.

Through events like this that encourage screenings, education about various cancer types and their risk factors, we aim to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources to prioritize their well-being. Strengthening preventive care and outreach efforts is key to reducing the cancer burden in Jharkhand."

Two arrested in JAC Board paper leak case



PNS : RANCHI

Two people have been arrested from Koderma district in the JAC Class X Board paper leak case, while Garhwa and Jamshepur are also linked with the incident.

After the leak of the Matriculation exam question paper, raids are going on continuously across the State. Along with the special team of the district administration, cyber police and CID have also started investigation. Continuous action is being taken in Garhwa, Koderma, Giridih and Jamshepur. An FIR has been registered against 3 minors in Garhwa.

During police interrogation, all three minors said that they were associated with an online coaching center, which is operated from Udupi, Karnataka. The students told that their brother and sister had sent the Science question paper on WhatsApp. In this case, Bhawanathpur police have detained a coaching center operator Shahid Ansari and 7 students and interrogation is going on. At the same time, a student was caught with a copy (cheating material) in Jamshepur.

A youth from Meral block of Garhwa district has been caught on charges of leaking the question paper. However, investigation revealed that his address was fake. Apart from this, a case of question paper leak has also come to light in Gopinath Singh College, a center in the city.

The matter of leaking of Hindi and Science question papers during the Matriculation examination is a topic of discussion not only in Jharkhand but also in other states. A case of question paper leak has also come to light in People's Academy School located in Baradwari, Jamshepur. A student has been caught with a copy slip, in which the answers of the question paper were written.

A detailed investigation of paper leak is going on in Koderma, Garhwa and Giridih. JAC Chairman Natwa Hansda has written a letter to the DCs of these districts and asked them to take necessary action. The police are also investigating whether the question papers of the upcoming examinations have also been leaked. If something like this comes to light, the administration will take necessary steps regarding future examinations.

UNION MINISTER TERMS BUDGET ALL-INCLUSIVE FOR WOMEN, YOUTH, FARMERS



Union Minister Annapurna Devi during a press conference in Ranchi on Saturday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

PNS : RANCHI

Jharkhand BJP Mahila Morcha organised a discussion on the budget in Gandhinagar Conference Hall under the leadership of Mahila Morcha President Aarti Singh. The chief guest of this event was Annapurna Devi, Union Minister for Women and Child Development. Guests General Manager Rekha Pandey and Kavita Gupta, Senior Manager Tejvindra Singh Gandhinagar were present in this event. Hundreds of intellectuals, professors, doctors, teachers and people from the empowered class participated in this event. Everyone appreciated this event and expressed happiness. The chief guest said that this budget is an all-inclusive budget for women, youth, farmers and the poor. This budget is a support for promoting empowerment for women. For the first time, a government has thought about the middle class. Care has been taken for the nutrition, health and education of children. There is a provision for Atal Tinkering Lab. A record budget of Rs 70302 crore has been given to Jharkhand. Important provisions have been made for the farmers, Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana, insurance coverage has been given, new jobs will be created through skill development, investment and technology.

On this occasion, Chief Project Manager (Gati Shakti) Girish Kumar, ACMS Dr. Brajesh Sahu, Sr DPO Raja, DSC Pawan Kumar, PS to DRM, (Gazetted) cum ADSO Ashutosh Kumar Sinha, other officers of the division, Secretary of Sersa Ranchi Om Prakash Thakur and a large number of sports loving spectators were present in the hockey stadium.

affordable housing. Youth will be empowered under Make in India, Make for the World. Dharti Aba Yojana has been brought for scheduled tribes. Aarti Singh said that this budget is very commendable by giving priority to women and making provision to connect 5 lakh women with business. By increasing infrastructure based long term development, the work of laying a strong foundation of developed India has been done. The Indian economy is the fifth largest economy of the world, which was at the lowest position of fifth during the previous Congress government. This is the biggest achievement of Modi policy. Rekha Pandey said that this is a women friendly budget.

Annapurna Devi said that the Jharkhand government is cheating not only women but also children. Leaking the matriculation paper of children is an example of this. Corruption has entered all the institutions like JPSC, JAC and has become rampant. Government is playing with the future. It is involved in malpractice and is not taking any notice of it. The Abua government of Jharkhand is working only for the benefit of its family and has forgotten public interest. The security system of the state has completely collapsed and it has become involved in theft, robbery and corruption.

Tejvindra Singh said that the national budget is the budget of every household. Co-in-charge Neelam Chaudhary, Mahila Morcha General Secretary Seema Singh, Renu Tirkey Vice President Archana Singh, Treasurer Lovely Gupta, Media in-charge Kumud Jha, Soni, Sheetal Verma, Hansa Srivastava

Ranchi and other districts witness light to heavy rain

PNS : RANCHI

Weather has changed in many districts of Jharkhand. Due to western disturbance, Ranchi received heavy rains on Saturday. Earlier in the morning, Dhanbad also received light rains. Due to this, the minimum temperature has also dropped.

The Meteorological Department had predicted that on Saturday, there may be rain and hailstorm in the southern parts of the state like East and West Singhbhum, Simdega and Saraikela-Kharsawan. At the same time, there is a possibility of heavy rain in north-eastern districts like Deoghar, Dumka, Godda, Pakur, Jamtara, Sahibganj, Dhanbad and Giridih. A warning has been issued for strong winds blowing at a speed of 40 to 50 km per hour in these areas. In view of this, the Meteorological Department has issued an orange alert," the department added.

There is also a possibility of strong winds with thunderstorms in Palamu, Garhwa, Chatra, Koderma, Latehar and Lohardaga districts of northwestern Jharkhand. A yellow alert has been issued for these districts. It has been told that similar weather may remain on February 23 as well.

According to the Meteorological Center in Ranchi, there will be no major change in the minimum temperature in the state in the next five days. However, due to the rain of the last two days, a drop in the maximum temperature has been recorded.

The maximum temperature of Daltonganj fell by 0.8 degrees to 32.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday, which is the highest in the state. In view of this sudden change in the weather, scientists have appealed to the people to be cautious. It has been advised to avoid going under the open sky especially during strong winds and thunderstorms.



SSP suspends Pithoria police station In-Charge

PNS : RANCHI

SSP Chandan Kumar Sinha has suspended Pithoria police station in-charge Gautam Rai. The action has been taken due to indiscipline and negligence during duty.

The SSP was constantly receiving complaints about Pithoria police station. Taking the matter seriously, he reached Pithoria police station late last night. He was shocked to find no one in the police station during duty. Even the station diary of the police station was not being maintained properly.

Sinha found many other flaws in the police station, after which SHO Gautam Rai was suspended.

The SSP described Rai as extremely careless, indiscipline, irresponsible and an incompetent police officer. He also said that any police officer who does not perform his duties properly, is negligent in his work, will not be spared under any circumstances.



82nd AIMR Hockey Championship League Phase concludes

PNS : RANCHI

The league phase of the 82nd All India Men's Railway Hockey Championship 2024-25 was successfully organized by South Eastern Railway Sports Association, Ranchi at Sersa Astroturf Hockey Stadium, Hatia from 17 February 2025 to 22 February 2025 under the able leadership and guidance of Divisional Railway Manager cum President South Eastern Railway Sports Association, Ranchi, Jasmeet Singh Bindra.

On the last day of the league phase of the championship, three matches were played at the Astroturf Hockey Stadium in Hatia. The first match was played between Integral Coach Factory, Chennai and North Western Railway, Rajasthan, in which the team of Integral Coach Factory, Chennai won by a margin of 9-3 goals.

In the second match, Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala defeated East Coast Railway, Bhubaneswar by 4-3 goals. Today's third and the final match of the league stage of the championship was played between host South Eastern Railway and Central Railway, Mumbai. Before the match, DRM Bindra introduced himself to the players of both the teams and wished them good luck for the match. In this exciting match, South



Eastern Railway emerged victorious by defeating Central Railway, Mumbai by a margin of 4-2 goals.

As a result of the completion of this league stage, the teams of South Eastern Railway, Central Railway, Mumbai, Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and North Central Railway, Prayagraj have qualified for the next stage of the championship.

After the last match of the league stage, the closing ceremony of the 82nd All India Men's Railway Hockey Championship 2024-25 (League Stage) was organized in the presence of DRM Jasmeet Singh Bindra. In the closing ceremony, the DRM congratulated the officers of the division and the team of Sersa, Ranchi for the

successful organization of the championship and announced the award for Sersa, Ranchi.

After this, the Tournament Director Shri Inderpal Singh and his team were felicitated by the Divisional Railway Manager for the successful conduct of the championship.

On this occasion, Chief Project Manager (Gati Shakti) Girish Kumar, ACMS Dr. Brajesh Sahu, Sr DPO Raja, DSC Pawan Kumar, PS to DRM, (Gazetted) cum ADSO Ashutosh Kumar Sinha, other officers of the division, Secretary of Sersa Ranchi Om Prakash Thakur and a large number of sports loving spectators were present in the hockey stadium.

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 (RBI) 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.

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 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 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.

Dialogue and diplomacy way forward: India on Russia-Ukraine



Randhir Jaiswal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
In the backdrop of the US-Russia talks held in Riyadh, India said on Friday that its position on the Ukraine-Russia conflict is "consistent" and New Delhi maintains that dialogue and diplomacy are the way forward. Top officials from Washington and Moscow met in the Saudi capital recently to discuss ways to bring an end to the prolonged conflict that began in February 2022. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked at his weekly briefing about India's position on the conflict amid the changing global political dynamics. "Our position on this particular issue is very clear. We have maintained consistently that we want both parties involved to resort to dialogue and diplomacy and take this process forward," Jaiswal said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, when he was addressing a press conference in Washington recently, yet again made it clear that this is not an era of war, and that there is no solution for any conflict on the battlefield, the MEA spokesperson said. "So, our position has been consistent that dialogue and diplomacy are the way forward," Jaiswal said, when asked if India has re-calibrated its position.

After his wide-ranging talks with US President Donald Trump in Washington, Modi had said India has not been neutral on the war and that it is on the side of peace. Modi also welcomed Trump's efforts to end the war in Ukraine. During the briefing, Jaiswal was also asked for the MEA's response on recent reports alleging sexual assault of a minor by a Kenyan student here. "We have requested the Kenyan government to waive diplomatic immunity of the person concerned, so that the investigation in the matter can go forward. We are pursuing this matter with the Kenyan government," he said. Jaiswal was also asked whether the GE F404 engine delivery issue was taken up during PM Modi's US visit. "The delayed delivery of GE engines was taken up during Prime Minister's visit. We remain engaged with the US side on all aspects relating to contracted defence articles, including their timely delivery. "The two sides have also agreed to conclude a new 10-year framework for the US-India major defence partnership in the 21st century. This was also reflected in the joint statement. So yes, to answer your question, this particular issue was discussed during the prime minister's visit."

Bank employee held in ₹ 4.97 crore cyber fraud case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GURUGRAM

Two people, including a business development manager of a private bank in Delhi, were arrested for cyber fraud worth Rs 4.97 crore under the pretext of investment in stock market, police said. The accused IndusInd bank employee facilitated bank accounts for cyber criminals, officials said. Police said a complaint was received on November 30, 2024, regarding fraud of approximately Rs 4.87 crore. A case was registered at the Cyber Crime East police station under relevant sections. During investigation a team arrested Avinash Sharma and Aditya Chaturvedi -- from Delhi on Thursday, police said.

Government to revise draft Advocates (Amendment) Bill

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid opposition to its various provisions from bar bodies, the government on Saturday said it will revise the draft Advocates (Amendment) Bill as it ended the public consultations on it that started earlier this month. The Department of Legal Affairs in the Union law ministry floated the draft bill on February 13 for public consultations. The government plans to amend the Advocates Act, 1961. The draft bill, which faced criticism, proposed sweeping changes in the definitions of a "legal practitioner" and a "law graduate". According to the draft Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2025, a law graduate is a person who has obtained a bachelor's degree after completing a course of three or five years or such other duration as prescribed by any centre of legal education or university established by law or a college affiliated to any



Lawyers stage a protest over the proposed Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in Jammu

university and recognised by the Bar Council of India. In a statement, the law ministry said the bill was put in the public domain, demonstrating the government's commitment to transparency and broader engagement with

stakeholders and the public. "However, considering the number of suggestions and concerns received, it has been decided to conclude the consultation process now," it said. Based on the feedback received, the draft bill, "as

revised", will be processed afresh for consultations with stakeholders, the ministry said. Several bar bodies had opposed certain provisions of the draft bill. The opposition Congress had also backed the protesting lawyers, saying the bill was

not only "poorly drafted", but it also failed to address pertinent issues facing the legal fraternity. The draft bill defines a legal practitioner as an advocate or a law graduate engaged in the practice of law before courts, tribunals or quasi-judicial forums or doing legal work in any private or public organisation, including but not limited to statutory and autonomous bodies, domestic and foreign law firms and corporate entities. As of now, a legal practitioner means an advocate or a "vakil" of any high court, a pleader, a "mukhtar" or revenue agent. While putting the draft bill in the public domain, the ministry had said these amendments aimed at aligning the legal profession and legal education with global best practices. The reforms will focus on improving legal education, equipping lawyers to meet the demands of a rapidly-changing world and raising professional standards, it had said.

Working on measures to restrict distress crop sale: Agriculture minister

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivrav Singh Chouhan on Saturday said the government is working on measures to ensure that farmers do not have to sell their produce, especially fruits and vegetables, at throwaway prices. Speaking after inaugurating the 'Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela' 2025 -- being held in the national capital from February 22-24 -- he emphasised the need to take new seeds varieties and farm technologies from labs to agriculture filed at the

earliest. Chouhan said the government is holding discussions with farmers directly as well as through their organisations to understand the problems and then making schemes to address the issues. "Jahan-Jahan takleefin dekh rahe hain, hum yojana bana rahe hain (wherever we are seeing problems, we are making schemes to address those)", the minister said, listing out steps taken by the government in the last few years to protect the interest of farmers.

Chouhan said the government has removed exports restrictions on rice and onions while raising import duties on edible oils. He said the Centre has taken steps to help tomato farmers in view of price crash and will take measures for red chilli farmers of Andhra Pradesh as well. "I want to assure our farming community, we will take all important decisions that are required for the welfare of farmers. Do not worry," he said, while asserting that the government is committed to this.

"There are some issues which are under consideration. Prices are low at farm gate level and consumers are paying high rates. Who takes the profit in middle? Profit margins should reduce. The difference between the farm gate price and consumer price for fruits and vegetables should come down," he said. The minister added, "We are working out (a way) to ensure that farmers do not have to sell their produce at throwaway prices." Lauding efforts of scientists at Indian Council of Agricultural Research

(ICAR) for its efforts in making India self-sufficient in foodgrains production, Chouhan said there is a need to take new seed varieties and technology to the field quickly so that farmers can benefit. "Availability of good varieties of seeds is important. Farmers require it. ICAR is developing them... We need to ensure these seeds reach farmers quickly," he said. The minister also asked the ICAR to handle 'Modern Agriculture Chaupal' programme where scientists will tell farmers about recent

technological breakthrough, besides solving their problems. The programme will be telecast across India. Chouhan said he does not sit in Krishi Bhawan in Delhi and rather go to fields to understand farmers' problems. He asked officers in his ministry and ICAR scientists to do the same. The minister reiterated that the government is focusing on increasing farm production through yield improvements, reducing cost of production and ensuring that farmers get the right price for their produce.

Six arrested in Manipur for extortion



Security personnel during search operations and area domination in the fringe and vulnerable areas of hill and valley districts of Manipur. More than 250 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence since May two years ago. PTI

PTI ■ IMPHAL
Six cadres of a banned outfit were arrested from Manipur's Imphal West district, and two members of a group were apprehended for allegedly being involved in extortion in Imphal East, police said on Saturday. Six members of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (Ibungo Ngangom) were apprehended from Koutruk Makha Leikai Church in Imphal West on Friday, a senior officer said. The police also arrested two members of G5 Organisation from Achanbigei Maning Leikai in Imphal East district for allegedly being involved in extortion from sand-laden

trucks in Sekmai, Iriblung, Koirengi and Patsoi areas. They were also allegedly involved in incidents of snatching keys from truck drivers in Sekmai area. They have been identified as Ningthoujam Yamba Singh (43) and Usham Netaji Singh (35), the officer added. Arms and ammunition were also surrendered in Churachandpur district on Saturday after joint efforts in public awareness by the local police, Assam Rifles and CRPF, another officer said. "This is the first step towards de-weaponising the society and creating a safe and secure atmosphere where regular activities can be boosted," Churachandpur SP Prakhar

Pandey said in a statement. The Manipur Police also said at least two firearms and ammunition were handed over to the administrations in Kakching and Kangpokpi districts. The surrender of arms and ammunition comes after Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla appealed to the people to surrender illegal arms and ammunition. Security forces also recovered at least 12 firearms from Kakching Wairi area and handed them over to the Kakching Police Station, another officer said. During an operation in Maojang village under the Moreh Police Station limits in Tengnoup district, Security forces recovered two impro-

vised explosive devices weighing 22 kg with detonators, one 7 kg IED, one bomb of 6 kg with detonators and one bomb of 4 kg. "The IEDs, suspected to be unstable, had to be destroyed at the spot by a bomb disposal team," police said, adding that an FIR has been registered in this connection. The Manipur Police along with central forces have been conducting search operations after ethnic violence broke out in the state in May 2023. More than 250 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kuki-Zo groups since May two years ago.

Odisha CM assures safety, respect of Nepali students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Saturday asserted that Nepalese students studying in Odisha are children of the state and they will continue to pursue their education with full respect and dignity, an official release said. Majhi made the assertion during a telephonic conversation with Nepal's Foreign Minister Dr Arzu Rana Deuba, the statement issued by the chief minister's office said. He assured Deuba that the state government will ensure strict action against those involved in the alleged suicide of a 20-year-old engineering student and subsequent attack on Nepalese pupils at Kalina Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT). "The state government is keeping a close watch on the developments (at KIIT) and all steps will be taken to restore hope and confidence of the students. The Nepal foreign minister thanked Majhi and expressed satisfaction over the steps taken by the state government," the release said.



Odisha CM Mohan Charan during a meeting with Nepal Embassy officials in Bhubaneswar. Nepal Embassy officials have been camping in the Odisha capital for the last five days. PTI

Majhi met Nepal Embassy officials Sanjeev Das Sharma and Naveen Raj Adhikari at his chamber at Lok Seva Bhawan and informed them that 10 people have been arrested in connection with the incident of attack on the Nepalese students. "Strict action will be taken against all those involved in the incident. All arrangements have been made by the government to restore the academic atmosphere on KIIT campus," Majhi told the embassy officials. According to the CMO, the

Nepalese officials said that the state government has taken prompt steps in this incident. Due to this, the students coming from Nepal and their guardians have felt reassured. For this, they thanked the Odisha government, especially the chief minister, on behalf of the Nepalese government, the release said. The two embassy officials have been camping in the Odisha capital for the last five days following instructions of Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli.

60 crore took holy dip at Maha Kumbh, claims UP government

PTI ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday said an unprecedented 60 Crore devotees at the Maha Kumbh Mela have taken a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam. The Kumbh Mela which started on January 13 will continue till February 26 on the occasion of Maha Shivratri. Over half of India's 110 Crore Sanatan followers have bathed in the holy confluence, and this number is expected to surpass 65 Crore by the final 'amrit snan' on February 26, an official statement said. This Maha Kumbh has seen the largest participation in any religious, cultural, or social event, it said. According to the World Population Review, Pew Research, India's population is approximately 143 Crore (1.43 Billion), with 110 Crore (1.10 Billion) followers of Sanatan Dharma, the statement said.

TMC alleges BJP, EC colluding to inflate voter lists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

Trinamool Congress on Saturday accused a section of Election Commission (EC) officials of conspiring with the BJP to add names of outsiders to the voter list in various Assembly segments of West Bengal. TMC state general secretary Kunal Ghosh told reporters that a section of EC officials are incorporating names without proper physical verification, particularly in the border areas of the state. He said stopping infiltration is the responsibility of the Border Security Force (BSF), and any reports of unauthorised outsiders being added to the voter list should be handled by the Centre, as it controls the BSF and "remote controls" the EC, which has



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee during a press conference after the presentation of the state Budget 2025-26. PTI

apparently relaxed the verification process. Ghosh, who was referring to reports about alleged rise in the number of electors in the voter list in Champahati area under Baruipur assembly of South 24 Parganas district, said,

"If that is the situation, the credit goes to the local administration and police for tracking the unauthorised voters and not the EC, which had allowed inclusion of the names without proper physical verification."

"Instead of pointing fingers at the state and ruling party, the BJP and those raising hue and cry over the issue should take up the issue of checking infiltration with the Centre," he added. He reminded that West Bengal chief minister and TMC supreme Mamata Banerjee had recently cautioned against the attempts by BJP in collusion with EC to induct bogus names in the electoral list to change the vote ratio in favour of the saffron party, as they had repeatedly failed to secure power in assembly polls. BJP Rajya Sabha MP and spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said, "TMC's gameplan to include ghost voters has been exposed as the ruling party leaders have been involved in providing fake Aadhaar and voter ID cards to win elections."

Puri hints at reduced fuel prices, inflation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VIJAYAWADA

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep S Puri has said with more oil coming up in the global market including from the USA, energy prices are likely to come down which would help tame inflation. Addressing a Press conference, exuding confidence that India has established contacts with the new US administration led by President Donald Trump, Puri said the Indo-American relationship on the energy front will deepen. According to him India imports oil from as many as 40 countries, including Argentina and since there is enough oil in the world, even oil producing nations which are implementing cutbacks will be compelled to reconsider their decisions. He also said de-dollarisation of oil purchases was never the objective, emphasising that "most transactions are in dollars and always have been". "Inside the United States, he (Trump) said, 'Drill, baby, drill,' which is a signal to drill more

and extract more oil. He has been on record stating that he wants to bring international oil prices down," said the Oil Minister. "So, I think the global energy situation will improve. More energy will enter the market, and hopefully, that will help bring prices down. When energy is available in sufficient quantities at lower prices, it also helps in managing inflation," he further said. He clarified that India's primary objective is to procure sufficient oil "at lower prices" to help control inflation. "De-dollarisation is not an objective at all. Most of these (oil) transactions are in dollars and always have been. We had one transaction in rupees, but I think it was a very small one. Transactions in rupees are a good thing, but it takes two to tango," Puri told reporters. According to the Union Minister, India is already purchasing energy worth up to \$20 Billion from the US, emphasising that Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently had a very successful round of discussions with US President Donald

Trump. Observing that there has never been a shortage of energy in the global market, the former diplomat highlighted that more oil is entering global markets than ever before, especially from the Western Hemisphere. "Brazil used to produce 3 Million barrels of crude per day. They (Brazil) have now started producing an additional 140,000 to 150,000 barrels per day. More oil is coming, much of it from Guyana, Suriname, and Canada. The United States is the world's largest producer of crude, at 13 Million barrels per day. I think they are going to produce 1.6 Million barrels more," he said. Likewise, he said Venezuelan oil will also flow into global markets as 'the situation' between the US and the Latin American country is easing. President Trump, not only during his first tenure in office but also in the run-up to his second election, has been very clear that he wants to bring more energy into the global market, said Puri. Responding to questions about the fuel costs, he said India is the only country where petrol prices have decreased in the past three

years, citing excise tax cuts by the Centre in November 2021 and May 2022. "And BJP-ruled states reduced their VAT. Now, when it comes to benefits, governments don't benefit. First of all, governments don't import oil. It is private sector players or oil marketing companies (OMCs) that import oil. And what does the government do with the revenue it collects? It provides 80 crore people with three meals of dry rations a day," he said. According to Puri, petrol prices rose across several countries between February 2022 and February 2025-by approximately 48 per cent in Pakistan, 14.7 per cent in Bangladesh, 37 per cent in Sri Lanka, 16.2 per cent in Nepal, 14.2 per cent in the USA, 4.8 per cent in Italy, 4.2 per cent in Spain, 2 per cent in Germany, 4.2 per cent in France, while in India, they declined by 0.7 per cent. Highlighting that petrol prices have decreased both relatively and absolutely, Puri added that diesel prices in India rose at the lowest rate-1.15 per cent-during that period, while they increased across various other countries.

Six trapped in Telangana roof collapse

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ HYDERABAD

At least six workers were feared trapped when a section of a roof collapsed in the under construction stretch of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) in Nagarkurnool district of Telangana on Saturday. A 19-member team from state owned coal mining firm, Singareni Collieries Company Ltd., has left for Srisailem Left Bank Canal in Nagarkurnool district on Saturday to join rescue operations to extract workers who are feared trapped when a portion of a roof collapsed in the under construction stretch of the SLBC. According to a top official of the company, SCCL has the expertise in rescuing people in such incidents and also has necessary equipment. The

rescue team from the company is headed by a general manager level officer. "SCCL has the necessary expertise to handle critical situations such as roof collapses. And also we have necessary equipment imported from Australia, USA and Poland. The machinery and rock cutters are so advanced that they can cut huge rocks and boulders within minutes," said. The construction company's team has gone inside for assessment and it is verifying, they said. Six to eight workers are feared trapped as per information given by the company engaged in the work, a senior police official said. "The roof collapsed when some workers had gone inside as part of the work at 12-13 kms inside the tunnel," the official said. Irrigation Minister N Uttam

Kumar Reddy and senior officials are overseeing relief operations. The incident happened in the ongoing construction of SLBC tunnel work on the inlet side from Srisailem, official sources said. As per information there was an influx of water when the work was being carried out, they said. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy directed the district Collector, Superintendent of Police and other officials to reach the place of accident to carry out relief measures, it said. Expressing concern over the accident, Union Coal Minister G Kishan Reddy enquired about the reasons for the collapse and asked officials to bring out those feared trapped to safety. He also told the officials to provide treatment to the injured (if any), a release from his office said.

CAG flags mismanagement of afforestation funds in Uttarakhand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has cited many loopholes in the management of compensatory afforestation funds in the forest divisions of Uttarakhand, including their diversion to inadmissible activities and delayed submission of annual plan of operations to the Centre leading to cost escalations in various cases. The CAG's latest audit report on Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) laid recently in Uttarakhand Assembly during its ongoing budget session said ₹ 13.86 Crore was diverted at the

divisional level to inadmissible activities like state scheme Harela, tiger safari work, renovation of existing buildings, expenses on personage visits, court cases, purchases of I-phones, laptops, fridges, coolers and stationery. The state authority did not control the diversion or inadmissible expenditure from the State Compensatory Afforestation Fund, it said. The audit report on the functioning of CAMPA covers a period of 2019-2022. According to CAMPA rules, commensurate compensatory afforestation is mandatory in case of allocation of forest land for non-forest activities like infrastructural or industrial development. It points out that in 52 cases 188.62

hectares of forest land was diverted to user agencies for non-forest purposes where in-principle approvals were granted but permission to start work was not granted by the competent authority. However, the user agencies started the road construction in the forest areas without permission, it said, adding that the forest divisions did not take any cognisance of the unauthorised use of forest land and booked these as cases of forest offence. According to CAMPA guidelines of 2009, after receipt of money, the state CAMPA shall accomplish the afforestation for which money is deposited in the Compensatory Afforestation Fund within a year or two growing seasons.

However, scrutiny of records in divisions revealed that in 37 cases, compensatory afforestation work was executed after more than eight years of getting final clearance. This resulted in a cost escalation of ₹ 11.54 Crore in raising compensatory afforestation, the report said. The implementation of compensatory afforestation activities suffered due to delayed submission of the annual plan of operations to the government of India for approval and defective planning, the audit report said. There were instances of dysfunctional bottom-up planning and adoption of ad hoc or arbitrary approaches for the inclusion of irregular items in the Annual Plan of Operation

(APO). The release of funds was unrealistic and not commensurate with the approved APO. The state authority failed to ensure equitable and need-based funding of activities in all the implementing agencies. There was inefficiency in funds release, not adopting of accounting procedure as per Compensatory Afforestation Fund rules, and not discharging of interest liability, the CAG report said. The CAG has recommended that the state authority must exercise internal control and institute proper budgetary control checks for robust financial management so that misutilisation or diversion of CAMPA funds can be prevented.

HP BJP MLA alleges step-motherly treatment from state

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BILASPUR

Sitting BJP MLA from Jhanduta assembly in Himachal Pradesh J R Katwal on Saturday alleged that the ongoing works in the constituencies of opposition legislators in the Bilaspur district were being stalled and obstructed, leading to resentment among the people. There are 40 Congress and 28 BJP MLAs in the 68-member Himachal Pradesh Assembly. Addressing various meetings in his Jhanduta constituency on Friday evening and Saturday, he alleged that the Congress government in the state is giving step-motherly treatment to the constituencies of the BJP MLAs. "Forget about making provi-

sions in the budget for new development works in their areas, even the ongoing works are being obstructed," Katwal, a former IAS officer who has served the state in various capacities, said. He said roads play an important role in the development of any area. In a hilly state like Himachal, the importance of roads increases even more, he added. Katwal said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the other hand has pledged to make India a developed nation. This pledge can be fulfilled only when all the villages are connected by roads. In view of this, the PM has turned the focus of the budget and the direction of development towards villages, he said.

With this, along with strengthening the network of roads in rural areas, people are also getting all the necessary basic facilities, he added. Kaltwal said in the BJP, any worker can reach any post with ability and hard work, and Rekha Gupta, the newly appointed chief minister of Delhi, is a recent example. On the contrary, he said, nepotism is dominant in many other opposition parties, including the Congress. This is why the people of the country are rejecting them and joining the BJP, the MLA said. He assured the people of the Jhanduta assembly constituency that besides solving all their problems, no stone will be left unturned in providing all the necessary facilities in the area.

Fresh talks between farmers Centre held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

A fresh round of talks between protesting farmers and the Centre will be held here on Saturday evening centred around the legal guarantee of minimum support price on crops, among other demands. The meeting between the central team and farmer leaders will take place at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Public Administration in Chandigarh at 6 pm. In the last meeting held on February 14, Union minister Pralhad Joshi had said that Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan would lead the central team for the February 22 meeting with the protesting farmers. Farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher on Saturday said a delegation of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha will take part in the meeting with a



Farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher, center, with protesting farmers ahead of a meeting with the Centre. PTI

positive mind. Farmers expect from the government to resolve their issues at the earliest, he said. Farmers had earlier asked for the next meeting to be held in Delhi but the government scheduled it in Chandigarh. "Today the sixth round of talks with the Centre will take place. We have informa-

tion that the Union Agriculture Minister and other ministers will be part of the meeting. The KMM and SKM (Non-Political) delegation will take part in the meeting," said Pandher. Farmers leaders said that the 28-member delegation of the farmers would put forth their side

strongly in the meeting. They said that the protests for various demands, including a legal guarantee on MSP, has been going on for the past one year. In a February 19 letter to Jagjit Singh Dallewal and Sarwan Singh Pandher, Agriculture Ministry Joint Secretary Purna Chandra Kishan said, "This is in continuation of the previous meeting with the leaders of SKM (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) which was held on February 14 in Chandigarh." "In this sequence, a meeting with the ministers of the Government of India and the Government of Punjab regarding the demands of farmers' unions has been organised on February 22 at Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Public Administration in Chandigarh. You are cordially invited to the meeting..." the letter in Hindi stated. Both sides said the February 14 meeting went cordially. Dallewal, who is on an indefinite fast over

the farmers' demands, also took part in last week's meeting. The discussion came after a year-long protest by farmers, centred mainly around the demand for a legal guarantee of MSP on farm produce. After the meeting, Joshi had said the next meeting will be held with Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan leading the central team. Joshi had said he would also be part of that meeting. Prior to the February 14 meeting, four rounds of meetings took place between central ministers and the protesting farmers in February 2024 but the talks remained inconclusive. Farmers, under the banner of the SKM (Non-Political) and the KMM, have been camping at the Shambhu and the Khanuri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 last year after security forces did not allow them to march to Delhi to press for their various demands.

Hamas frees 6 more hostages

PTI ■ 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.

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, Cohens

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 Mujahedeen 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

PTI ■ 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 as well as 18 children between the ages of 15 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.

Preparations underway for Trump-Putin summit

PTI ■ 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 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.

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 sec-

tor banks will accept the accuracy 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.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP FIRM CONTINENTAL OVERSEAS SERVICES
(Regn. No. 1362 of 2022)

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the partnership heretofore between the undersigned Harleen Kaur Lamba and Armandeep Singh Lamba under the name and style of Continental Overseas Services, carrying on the partnership business at Flat No. 1011-A/6, 10th Floor, Devika Tower, Nehru Place, New Delhi 110019, is dissolved by mutual consent as from the 25.01.2025 (Date of Dissolution).

Armandeep Singh Lamba Harleen Kaur Lamba
Partnership Partnership
Continental Overseas Services Continental Overseas Services

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shiv Kumari, W/o No.6942218P Hav Kamalesh Gola, R/o- Vill- Tajpur Majha, Teh- Zamania, Dist- Ghazipur, U.P.- 223240, have changed my name from Shiv Kumari to Shiv Kumari Devi, vide affidavit dated 22/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1562)C I, JC-709016Y Nb/Sub Maneesh M, Serving at- Base Hospital, Delhi Cantt- 110010, declare that in my service records, my father's name is wrongly recorded as Mohanan. His correct name is Mohanan E, vide affidavit dated 22/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1563)C I, JC-709016Y Nb/Sub Maneesh M, Serving at- Base Hospital, Delhi Cantt- 110010, declare that in my service records, my mother's name is wrongly recorded as Mallika. Her correct name is Mallika K, vide affidavit dated 22/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1564)C I, Munia Devi, Mother of JC-392977H Nb/Sub Harendra Kumar Singh, R/o- Madhurampur, Akrohi Gola, Rohtas, Akrohi Bazar, Bihar-821301, have changed my name from Munia Devi to Munnia Devi with my correct DOB as 01/01/1964, vide affidavit dated 22/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1565)C I, M Sujitha W/o- No.14664931Y Nk K Mathan Kumar, V/PO- Kamayagoundanpatti, Teh- Uthama Palayam, Dist- Theni, Tamilnadu- 625521, have changed my name from M Sujitha to Sujitha, vide affidavit No.KL037746228202425E dated 20/02/2025 before 1st Class Magistrate, Thiruvananthapuram.

PD(1566)C I, Sunita Rani D/o Krishan Lal R/O C-157 Pushpanjali enclave Pitam Pura, Delhi -110034, have changed my name Sunita Kumari to Sunita Rani for all purposes.

मास्ट्रीव प्रम्वन संस्थान, रांची
Indian Institute of Management, Ranchi

DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES ADMISSION 2025

IIIM Ranchi invites applications for admission in Ph.D. (with financial support) in the following areas: Economics, Business Analytics, Liberal Arts & Sciences, Marketing, Organisation Behaviour & Human Resource, Operations Management, Strategy & Entrepreneurship, Legal Studies & Responsible Business.

Interested candidates, application process and other details, please visit: <https://imranchi.ac.in/> Reservation as per the UCI rules. Only online applications will be accepted.

* Last date of receiving completed online application form: March 23, 2025.

CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office: Aggarwal Corporate Tower, Plot No. 23, 5th Floor, Govind Lal Sikka Marg, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008

POSSESSION NOTICE (Appendix IV) Rule 8(1)

Whereas the Authorized officer of CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (Clix), a Housing Finance Bank Company under the National Housing Bank Act, having its registered office Aggarwal Corporate Tower, Plot No. 23, 5th Floor, Govind Lal Sikka Marg, Rajendra Place, New Delhi- 110008, under the provisions of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act) (hereinafter referred to as "Act") and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrower and co-borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower 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 sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on as per under mentioned Date. The borrower 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 the charge of "CLIX" and interest charges thereon. The attention of the Borrower is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured asset.

Name & Address of Borrower/Co-Borrower: 1. Amit Kumar Chaurasia S/O Sant Lal Chaurasia, 2. Anita Chaurasia W/O Amit Kumar Chaurasia, Both At - A-356, Budh Nagar, Jy. Colony, Indrapuri (A.R.) Central Delhi-110012, Sr. No. 1 Also At - Ugf-3 A-133 Rail Vihar Loni, Ghaziabad-201014, 3. Friend: Ice Cream & Kulfis, 2-42 1st Floor, Loha Nand Naraina, New Delhi-110028

Demand Notice Dated: 19.11.2024, Date of Possession: 20.02.2025
Amount of Demand Notice: Rs. 8,34,002.93/- as on 13.11.2024

Details of Property: A Residential Plot No. A-133 And Kharsa No. 348 In Flat No. Ugf-3 Back Side Lig Without Roof Rail Vihar Sadullabad, Tehsil Loni District Ghaziabad. Area 83.61 Sq. Mt. On Which The Said Flat Is Constructed: East: Plot No. A-134, West: Road 30 Ft, North: Plot No A-132, South: Road is 30 Feet Wide

Date: 20.02.2025, Place: Delhi Authorised Officer, CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Registered Office: Aggarwal Corporate Tower, Plot No. 23, 5th Floor, Govind Lal Sikka Marg, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE "APPENDIX-IV-A" [SEE PROVISION TO RULE 8(6)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Clix Housing Finance Limited (CLIX) (Secured Creditors), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Clix Housing Finance Limited (CLIX), Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 23.02.2025, for recovery of amount as mentioned below, due to the Secured Creditors from following Borrower(s), Guarantor(s) and Corporate Guarantor(s). The reserve price and earnest money to be deposited is mentioned below respectively

Name of Borrower, Co-Borrower/ Guarantor(s) with address/es	Reserve Price (RP) & EMD Amount (10% of the Reserve Price & Incremental Amount)	Recovery Amount as per Demand Notice	Date & Time of On-Site Inspection of Property	Date & Time for Submission of Bid Application Form and EMD	Date & Time of E-Auction with unlimited extensions of 5 Minutes each
1. MOHD NASIR S/O BUNDI KHAN, 2. MRS. ISRAT JAHAN W/O MOHD NASIR, BOTH RESIDING AT - HOUSE NO.457 GALI NO.9, SHAHEED BHAGAT COLONY NORTH DELHI, DELHI-110094, ALSO AT - D-298, GALI NO.7, MUKUNDI NAGAR 30 FT ROAD, KARAWAL NAGAR NEW DELHI-110094, ALSO AT - A-4, GROUND FLOOR-2, LIG FRONT SIDE RAIL VIHAR, LONI, GHAZIABAD UTTAR PRADESH, ALSO AT - HOUSE NO.22 KHARSA NO. 60C/F NEAR SARKAR SCHOOL, NEW SABHAPUR, SABHAPUR, DELHI-110094 LOAN NO. - AC2019011136167 (Along with future interest and charges accruing after 28.03.2024 till the total realization of the loan amount)	9,28,650/- 92,865/- 10,000/-	Rs. 9,81,465.97/- as on 28.03.2023	10-03-2025 to 11-03-2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	11-03-2025 Till 12.00 PM	12.03.2025 10 Am to 12 Pm
Description & Owner(s) of Properties - ALL THOSE PIECE AND PARCEL OF ONE KITA RESIDENTIAL PLOT NO. A-4 KHARSA NO. 211 IN FLAT NO. GF 2 GROUND FLOOR (LIG) WITHOUT ROOF RIGHT AREA 315 SQUARE FEET I.E. 29.26 SQUARE METERS SITUATED IN RAIL VIHAR HARDASTI VILLAGE SADULLABAD PARGANA AND TEHSIL LONI DISTRICT GHAZIABAD (COMPLETE DETAILS OF WHOSE CONSTRUCTION IS ATTACHED MAP) THE ABOVE FLAT IS SITUATED AT A DISTANCE OF MORE THAN 200 METERS FROM THE MAIN ROAD, THE SAID FLAT HAS ONE BEDROOM, ONE DRAWING ROOM, ONE KITCHEN AND BATHROOM, AND THE LIVING ROOM IS COMMON.	8,26,500/- 82,650/- 10,000/-	Rs. 8,59,767.3/- as on 15-Apr-2024	10-03-2025 to 11-03-2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	11-03-2025 Till 12.00 PM	12.03.2025 10 Am to 12 Pm
Description & Owner(s) of Properties - ALL THOSE PIECE AND PARCEL OF ONE KITA RESIDENTIAL FLAT NO. FF-2 (FIRST FLOOR) REAR SIDE, LIG PLOT NO. B-138. RESIDENTIAL COLONY RAIL VIHAR VILLAGE SADULLABAD PARGANA AND TEHSIL LONI DISTRICT GHAZIABAD. ALSO AT: H 14C, SHARMA COLONY, PHASE-2 BUDH VIHAR, SULTANPURI, C-BLOCK NORTH DELHI, DELHI-110086 LOAN NO. - AC201904877678 (Along with future interest and charges accruing after 15.04.2024 till the total realization of the loan amount)	8,26,500/- 82,650/- 10,000/-	Rs. 8,59,767.3/- as on 15-Apr-2024	10-03-2025 to 11-03-2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	11-03-2025 Till 12.00 PM	12.03.2025 10 Am to 12 Pm

EMD amount shall be remitted through NEFT/RTGS/Funds Transfer in favour of "Clix Housing Finance Limited", Account No. 341905000653_ICICIBANK_IFSC-ICIC0003419

The balance 25% of final purchase price minus EMD amount shall be deposited by the successful bidder, latest by the next working day by way of RTGS / NEFT in the E-Auction account of Clix. The balance 75% of the final purchase price shall be deposited by way of RTGS / NEFT within 30 days from the date of auction in the same E-Auction account as above. The refund of EMD to the unsuccessful bidders shall be made only in the account number mentioned by such bidder in the Bid form within 5 working days. **Terms and Conditions: - E-Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS" AND "AS IS WHAT IS" AND "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis and will be conducted "Online".** The auction will be conducted through Clix's approved service provider (C1 India Pvt. Ltd. at the web portal www.bankauctions.com. Bid Documents, Declaration, General Terms and Conditions of online auction sale are available in www.bankauctions.com. To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer, there is no encumbrance on the properties. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims/rights / dues/ affecting the properties, prior to submitting their bid, in this regard, the a-auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or any representation of Clix. For any details with respect to any help, procedure and on-line training in respect of the auction process please contact Mr. Ayush Gupta, (M) 9999916811, (A) 9999916811, (E) delhi@clixindia.com. For any details regarding the property please contact +91-7291981124 / 25 / 26. It may be noted that in case of any discrepancy/inconsistency between auctions notices published in English and in Hindi then the contents of the notice published in English shall prevail. The Authorized Officer / Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims / rights/ dues. The sale shall be subject to rules/ conditions prescribed under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002.

Date: 23.02.2025, Place: Ghaziabad

Authorized Officer, Clix Housing Finance Ltd.

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.

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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.

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 virus 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 merbecovirus 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 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 bio-lab in Wuhan which faced allegations linking the COVID-19 causing the global pandemic has never engaged in "gain-of-function studies" on coronavirus amid accusations that USAID has funded the study of the infectious disease.

ECL Eastern Coalfields Limited
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
Sanctorin, P.O. Dishaigarh, Dist. Paschim Bardhaman, Pin. 713333 (WB.)

Notice From Pension Dept., ECL, Hq. Revised PPO

All member pensioners of CMPFO please note, to ensure hassle-free payment of pension to your spouse, CMPFO is issuing revised (Joint) PPO. Please submit the application form to the concerned colliery office as soon as possible to expedite the process for issuance of Revised PPO.

For application format and other details please visit www.easterncoal.nic.in

VISIT US AT www.easterncoal.nic.in

NOTICE

The last page of the Perpetual Sub-lease deed dated 15/05/1980 regarding Plot No. G-46 Preet Vihar Delhi with Sub Registrar's stamp and signature has been lost. The report of the same has been lodged at the Crime Branch police station on 20/02/2025 vide L R No. : 2604992/2025 finder contact 094151 07509

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large Mrs. Soni had acquired Built-up Property bearing Plot No. 27, Area 58.1/2 sq. yds., Kharsa No. 5/22, situated at in the area of Village Hastal Delhi, in the abadi colony known as Shiv Vihar, Vikas Enclave, Hastal, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi vide G.P.A along with AT&S & Will Dt. 11.01.2024 executed by Mrs. Kela Devi alias Kela and Now Mrs. Soni is the undisputed owner of the said property.

OR

Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate) H.No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024

Notice Inviting Tender for Refurbishment of Fire Fighting System

Tender No. 252 /KC/GHS/2024-25
The Khatkar CGHS Ltd. (also known as Arjun Apartment), Plot No.8C, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi invites bids by tender system from experienced Bidders for Refurbishment of fire fighting system at The Khatkar CGHS Ltd., Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi. Interested firms fulfilling the Pre-qualification criteria as mentioned in the tender document may submit their bid in sealed envelope.

The tender document can be collected from society office after paying Rs.100/- (Rupees One Hundred only) cash. In case of any query, may contact Manager, Phone No.989929037 / office 011-4250251.

Start of tender Sale date: 23-02-2025 from 11:00AM onwards.

Last Date of Submission of Tender: 01.03.2025 up to 05:00PM.

Bid opening date: 02.03.2025 at 11:30AM.

Note: The Khatkar CGHS Ltd. reserves the right to reject any / all bids without assigning any reason whatsoever.

-sd-
Place - New Delhi The Khatkar CGHS Ltd.
Date: 22/02/2025 (Manager)

Trump fires chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

PTI ■ 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.

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 spirited 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.

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 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 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 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 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 backup players do consistently well in all formats," he added. Umar, who is Babar's cousin,



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

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.

Aldrich Potgieter powers to four-shot lead in Mexico Open

PTI ■ VALLARTA
Aldrich Potgieter showed his ability to shoot low in the Mexico Open, powering and putting his way to a 10-under 61 that gave the big-hitting South African a four-shot lead going into the weekend at Vidanta Vallarta. Potgieter chipped in for par after a tee shot into the water on the 10th hole. He failed to birdie two of the shorter par fives on the back nine. He still had an outside chance at another sub-60 round, having shot 59 on the Korn Ferry Tour a year ago. Those hopes ended with a tee shot into the bunker on the par-5 18th hole, and an approach that came up short into a bunker. The ball stayed near the lip, making it difficult for him to get the 20-yard bunker shot close. He two-putted from 25 feet for par. "But it was OK," he said of the par. "I knew I made a lot of extra birdies throughout the day where that wasn't going to hurt me." Potgieter tied the course record and was at 16-under 126, four shots ahead of Stephan Jaeger (64) and Brian Campbell, who birdied his last hole for a second straight 65. It was superb display for Potgieter,



File Photo

who won the 2022 British Amateur at age 17 and last year became the youngest player (19) to win on the Korn Ferry Tour. "I love the golf course. It definitely suits my game, I think, in a lot of aspects," Potgieter said. "If I can keep putting well, I think it should be pretty good." His power and ball-striking stand out. His putter is what led to the 61, with Potgieter holing seven putts from the 10-foot range or

longer. That doesn't include the 10th, where his tee shot found the green and chipped in from 20 feet for par. He reached the 661-yard 12th hole in two by hitting driver off the fairway to just over 20 feet. "I've been practicing, doing a drill on the driving range with teeing it really low and hitting it really good with the driver that way," Potgieter said. "I was telling my caddie, Let's just do the same

thing.' It was a perfect number, so yeah, hit the perfect shot." Seven of his drives went 325 yards or longer. Jaeger had another bogey on one of the five par 5s, this time by hitting wedge over the green at number 12, and still managed a 64 to stay in the mix. He had six birdies on his last 10 holes. "It's one of those golf courses I feel like if you hit it nicely and you give yourself a lot of chances, the greens are so good it's nice to make some putts," he said. Aaron Rai of England, the highest-ranked player in the field at No. 29, had a 64 and was five shots behind. Antoine Rozner came to his final hole needing birdie to move the cut line and knock out 12 players. Rozner had to make a 10-foot par to avoid missing the cut himself. Two Masters-bound amateurs were among the 77 players who made the cut at three-under 138. Latin America Amateur champion Justin Hastings of the Cayman Islands birdied three of his last four holes for a 67 and was at 136. US Amateur champion Jose Luis Ballester shot another 69 and was at 138. Also making the cut was Blades Brown, the 17-year-old who turned pro this year.

I only eat one meal a day: Shami

PTI ■ DUBAI
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



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

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.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Ace 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 Dhyan 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 Pratap 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 Dhillion (women's skeet). Ahead of the team's departure, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) will organise a training camp at the Karni Singh 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.

Ahlawat makes cut with birdie-birdie finish in Kenya

PTI ■ NAIROBI
Veer Ahlawat'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. Ahlawat 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 Ahlawat 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. Ahlawat, 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. Ahlawat, 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.

कार्यालय उपायुक्त-सह-जिला दण्डाधिकारी, राँची।
(जिला नीलम पत्र शाखा)
प्रेस विज्ञापि
सभी बैंक/जीवन बीमा निगम/सभी वित्तीय आस्तियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण एवं वित्त पोषित संस्थाओं को सूचित किया जाता है कि **Authorized Officer, Bank of India.**
Ranchi Recovery Br. Ranchi ने देनदार 1. M/S A.S. Venture, Partners:- 1. Mrs. Avilasha Kumari, 2. Mrs. Sarita Singh, R/o 1st Floor, Srishti Block Side Office Near Cambrian School Rani Bagan, Bariatu, Ranchi-834009 के विरुद्ध धारित भूमि (Fly Ash Brick Plant-QGH 25 i) Fly Ash Brick Making Machine. ii) Automatic Feeding System, iii) Feeding Hopper, iv) Buffer Stock Feeding System, v) Wet Mix Conveyor vi) Pan Mixer 1000 kg) का दखल लेने हेतु SARFAESI Act-2002 के नियम-14 (i) एवं (ii) के अंतर्गत आवेदन किये हैं।
किसी भी संस्था/व्यक्ति को कोई आपत्ति हो तो स्वयं या अपने अधिवक्ता के माध्यम से इस विज्ञापि के प्रकाशन की तिथि से 10 दिनों के अंदर अपना आपत्ति दायर करें। निर्धारित तिथि के बाद दायर आपत्ति आवेदन-पत्र पर कोई सुनवाई नहीं होगी एवं आवेदनकर्ता बैंक/संस्था को निर्धारित तिथि को दखल दिला दिया जायगा।
उपायुक्त-सह- जिला दण्डाधिकारी, राँची।

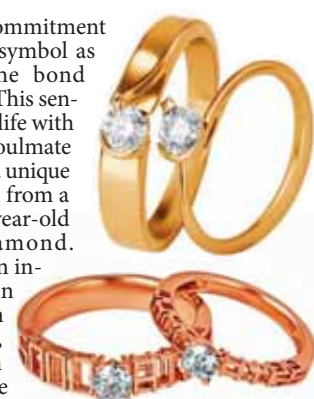
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उपायुक्त-सह- जिला दण्डाधिकारी, राँची।



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's '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 significance that makes them stand apart. One thing was certain. Some things in life never fade and love is one of them. These rings are a reflection of bonds that are rare, strong and meant to last a lifetime.



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.

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



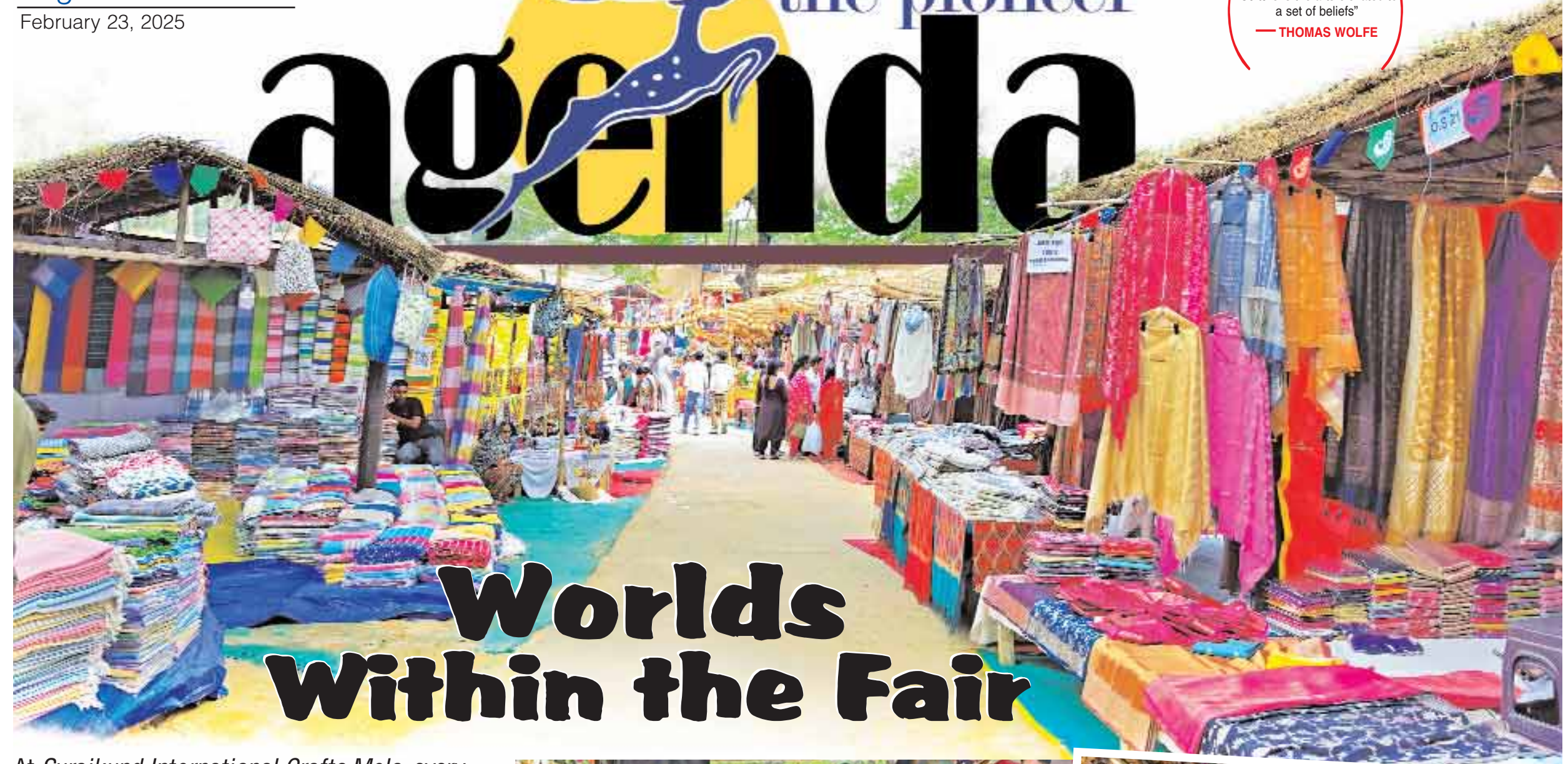
Surface Season 2
IMDB Rating - 6.4/10
OTT - Apple TV+
Cast - Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Oliver Jackson, Ari Graynor



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

"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.



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."



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



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

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."



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.



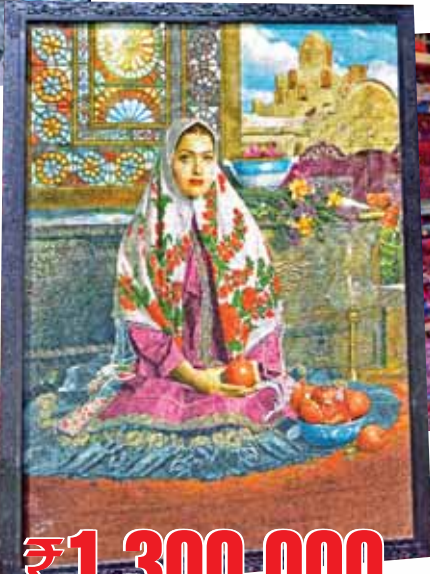
A CULTURAL MELTING POT

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, Matyashala. 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!



₹1,300,000

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.



"ONE CANNOT THINK WELL, LOVE WELL, SLEEP WELL, IF ONE HAS NOT DINED WELL" — VIRGINIA WOOLF

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 bartan 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 gulkand. 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 - choley 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 ambiance 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



CROWNE PLAZA MAYUR VIHAR



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



CROWNE PLAZA OKHLA

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 6 were available for the guests. Every mouthful reveals a tale, from the rich and creamy *Paneer Changezi Paratha* from the Paranthi 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.



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 convenor 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 Munni Kabir and Shruti Poddar. Additionally, Amrish 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 *Shringara* 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.

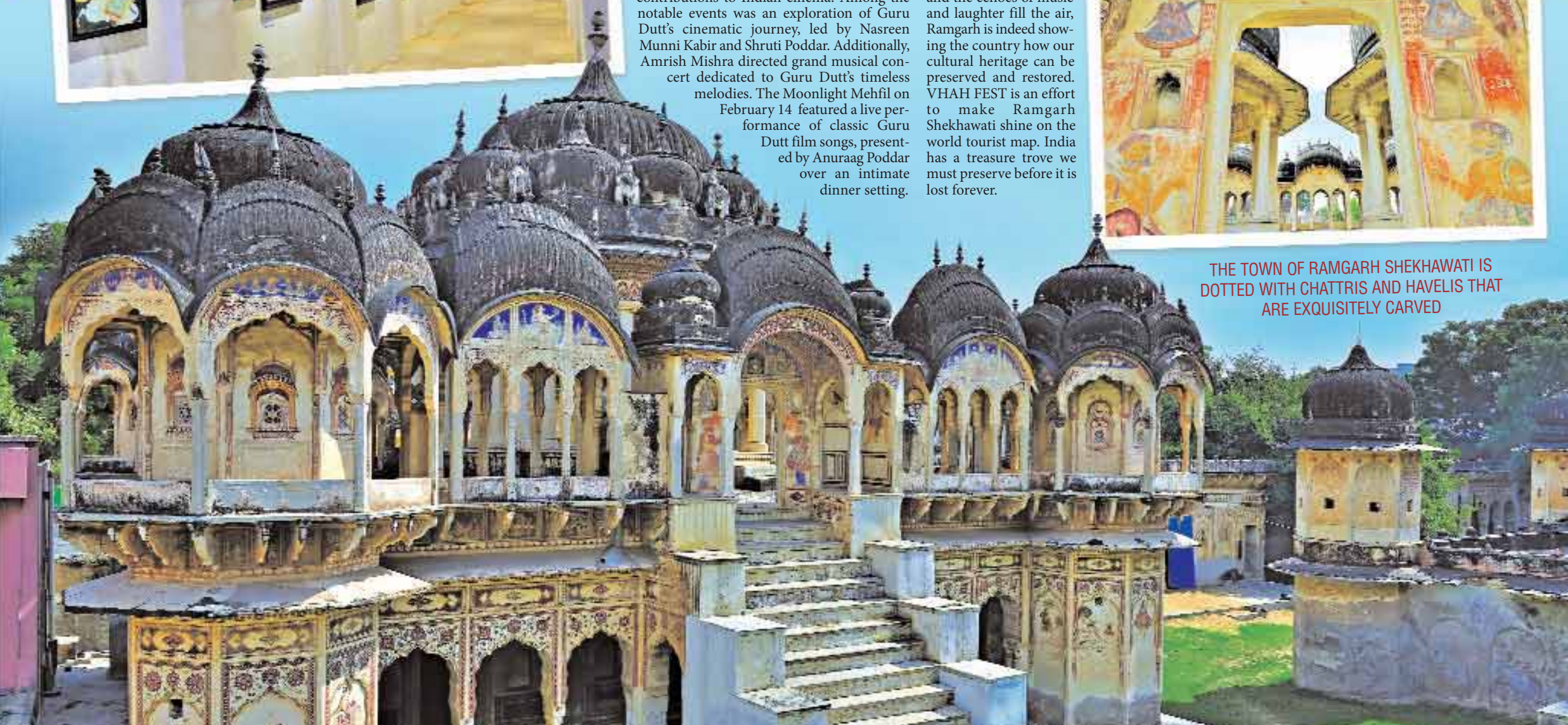
PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

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





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



VIRGO 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

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THOUGHTFUL INSIGHTS



Dr. Tanu Jain

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

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 fulfil 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