



the pioneer

Established 1865

INSIDE

MONEY 10
INDIA'S ECONOMY
PROJECTED TO GROW 6.6
PER CENT IN 2025: UN

BHUBANESWAR, SATURDAY JANUARY 11, 2025; PAGES 12 ₹4

www.dailypioneer.com

PUBLISHED FROM: DELHI | LUCKNOW | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | RANCHI | RAIPUR | CHANDIGARH | DEHRADUN | HYDERABAD | VIJAYWADA

INDIA'S FOREX RESERVES DROP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

India's forex reserves dropped by USD 5.693 billion to USD 634.585 billion in the week ended January 3, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall kitty had declined by USD 4.112 billion to USD 640.279 billion.

The reserves have been on a declining trend for the last few weeks, and the drop has been attributed to revaluation along with forex market interventions by RBI to help reduce volatility in the rupee. The forex reserves had increased to an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in end-September. For the week ended January 3, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by USD 6.441 billion to USD 545.48 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

MARKETS



Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. This comes in the backdrop of

increasing pressure on the rupee. The rupee declined 14 paise and touched the crucial 86.00-mark (provisional) for the first time against the US dollar on Friday as it failed to resist pressure from a stronger American currency and huge outflow of foreign funds. Surging crude oil prices overseas and negative sentiment in domestic equity markets also weighed down the Indian currency, forex traders said. Also, dollar strengthened on increased demand amid the anticipation of restrictive trade measures by the new US administration after Donald Trump takes over as president on January 20.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.88, hit the intra-day peak of 85.85 before settling at the lowest-ever level of 86.00 (provisional) against the greenback, 14 paise lower from its previous close.

SC orders status quo on Sambhal Mosque

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Ordering status quo, the Supreme Court on Friday asked the Uttar Pradesh authorities, the Archaeological Survey of India and others not to take steps over a "private well" near the Mughal-era Jama Masjid mosque in Sambhal. Considering a plea of the management committee of Shahi Jama Masjid, Sambhal, a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar issued notices to the Centre, the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Sambhal District Magistrate and other private individuals from the Hindu side led by Hari Shankar Jain. "Issue notice returnable on February 21. In the meanwhile, a status report to be filed by the respondents in two weeks. The respondents shall not give effect to any notice in relation to the well," the bench ordered. The mosque committee, in a fresh plea, said the Sambhal district administration, was conducting a purported drive to revive old temples and wells in the city with reports indicating at least 32 old unused temples were revived and 19 wells were identified for public use and prayers. "In the list of wells being sought to be revived by the district administration is also a water well situated in the precincts of the mosque itself," it said. The plea therefore sought a direction to the Sambhal district magistrate to ensure a status quo over the private well located near the mosque entrance besides any future action without the Supreme



Court's permission. While a covered half of the well was said to be inside the mosque, the other half protruded outside on a curved platform. Water from the well, situated at the junction of three narrow lanes leading to the main entrance of the mosque, was being used by the mosque, the plea said. It was argued that the survey led to violence and loss of lives, prompting the urgent intervention of the top court. Senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, representing the mosque management committee, referred to the well's historical significance and said, "We have been drawing water from the well since time immemorial." Ahmadi raised concerns over a notice referring to the site as "Hari Mandir" and plans for starting religious activities there. "No such activities will be permitted. Please file a status report," the CJ said. The bench said the status quo concerning the well must be maintained, and no such notices would be given effect to. Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, representing the Hindu party, said the well was outside the mosque's purview and used for worship

historically. Ahmadi said the well was partly within and partly outside the mosque premises, citing Google map imagery to buttress his claim. The mosque committee had challenged a November 19, 2024 order by the Sambhal senior division civil Judge allowing the appointment of an advocate commissioner to survey the mosque. The mosque committee said the plea for survey was allowed without hearing it on the same day it was filed. The top court, on November 29 last year, ordered a Sambhal trial court to halt proceedings in the case over the mosque and its survey at Chandausi while directing the UP Government to maintain peace and harmony in the violence-hit town. The bench had directed "peace and harmony must be maintained" and took note of the statement of additional solicitor general K M Nataraj, appearing for the state administration. It directed the proposed report of the advocate commissioner following the mosque survey to be kept in a sealed cover, till the appellate court including the Allahabad High Court heard the appeal of the mosque committee.



2024: hottest year, global temp above pre-industrial levels

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The year 2024 was the hottest year on record, and the first with a global average temperature 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, European climate agency Copernicus said on Friday. Every month from January to June 2024 was the warmest ever recorded for those months. From July to December, except for August, each month was the second warmest on record, behind 2023, it said. According to scientists at the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), 2024 was the hottest year since global temperature tracking began in 1850. The average global temperature was 15.1 degrees Celsius -- 0.72 degrees above the 1991-2020 average and 0.12 degrees higher than that in 2023, the previous record-holder.

WEATHER

AQI	397
MAX	17.6°C
MIN	6°C

Modi talks Godhra, US visa refusal in debutant podcast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his first-ever podcast, opened up about significant moments from his political journey, including his experiences during the 2002 Godhra riots and the United States' decision to deny him a visa in 2005. The podcast, hosted by Zerodha co-founder Nikhil Kamath, was released on Friday. Recalling the events surrounding the 2002 Godhra riots, Modi shared, "On February 24, 2002, I became an MLA for the first time, and on February

BALLOONS TO BEHOLD



Enthusiasts at the 10th Tamil Nadu International Balloon Festival, in Mamallapuram

PTI

Delhi to begin renovation of T2, to shift operations to T1

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi airport's Terminal 2 (T2) will remain closed for about six months for refurbishment works in the next financial year. Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has unveiled an ambitious plan to refurbish Terminal 2 or T2 of the Indra Gandhi International Airport which was built by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) four decades ago. During the renovation, T2 will temporarily close for four to six months, with operations being shifted to the newly expanded Terminal 1 to minimise disruption. Sources said the refurbishment work is set to commence in the 2025-26 financial year, with completion targeted by the second quarter. The upgrades are expected to be completed by the second quarter of Financial Year 2026.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has asked the operator of IGI airport to undertake a comprehensive overhaul of Terminal 2 (T2). The



financial year starts from April 1, 2025. According to DIAL, the closure will not significantly impact airport operations as Terminal 1 (T1) will accommodate the additional load of passengers. T2, which was constructed 40 years ago by the AAI, will undergo extensive renovations to improve the passenger experience and increase capacity for future growth. T1 and T2 currently serve domestic flights while Terminal 3 (T3) handles international flights. The decades-old terminal will undergo significant upgrades aimed at elevating the passenger experience and increasing the airport's capacity to meet future growth demands," said DIAL in a Press statement.

Delhi student held for bomb threats at 23 schools

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With fear looming over the national Capital since May last year due to a spate of bomb threats, the Delhi Police on Friday revealed that they have detained a Class 12 student for allegedly sending bomb threats to more than 23 schools in the city over the past few weeks as he did not want to write his exams. More than 15 educational institutions including Lady Shri Ram College across the national Capital received bomb threats, which later turned out to be hoaxes. Since May last year, more than 100 schools have been receiving bomb threats through mails. Police sources said the south district police apprehended the Class 12 student, a minor, Thursday evening in connection with the threats. According to police sources, the content of the mail received on Wednesday mentioned that since exams are going on in the schools, this will be the best time to strike and create maximum damage.

Odisha is going global: Majhi

Nodal Minister to help Pravasis' endeavours in Odisha

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, while addressing the valedictory session of the three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention here on Friday said, "With this event, Odisha is now, more open to the world than ever



going global." "With the blessings of Lord Shree Jagannath, Odisha Ashmita is at its new heights now," he said. President Droupadi Murmu was present on the occasion. Majhi appealed to the Indian diaspora to be the part and parcel of the overall progress and prosperity of the nation as well as of Odisha with their energetic involvement to steer the wheel of suc-

cess, being catalysts of newness and excellence. "I seek your involvement and cooperation in taking the Odia culture and heritage to the world. The Pravasis who want to engage with the State for projects, investment, etc., will be supported and facilitated. I am elated to announce that my government will appoint a Nodal Minister from the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture for this purpose."

cess, being catalysts of newness and excellence.

"I seek your involvement and cooperation in taking the Odia culture and heritage to the world. The Pravasis who want to engage with the State for projects, investment, etc., will be supported and facilitated. I am elated to announce that my government will appoint a Nodal Minister from the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture for this purpose."

In Bhadrak Rs 85K debited from HDFC A/C, then refunded

PNS ■ BHADRAK

A man of Bhadrak, who recently witnessed a mysterious deduction from his account with the HDFC Bank amounting to Rs 85,000, on Friday claimed that around Rs 80,000 has been deposited back in his account. Moreover, the money has been deposited via a cheque.

The development came soon after a TV news report in connection with the allegedly fraudulent transaction in the account of the victim identified as Padmalochan Sahani who has an account with HDFC's Chandbali branch. Sahani had earlier alleged that Rs 85,000 was debited from his account in three instalments without his knowl-

edge on December 26, 2024. The concerned bank officials had blamed Sahani for the incident. "The bank officials termed it to be my mistake by stating that I had given OTP or clicked on some link for which money was debited from the account," alleged Sahani. However, there is no clarity regarding who actually took away and deposited the money

back in Sahani's account. The victim suspects the involvement of some bank employees in such a fraud after the officials told him that it is now not important to know who took and who deposited the money. Meanwhile, no comments could be obtained from the concerned bank officials in connection with such allegations.

Indian diaspora integral to vision of developed nation

Says Prez Murmu at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas meet

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

President of India Droupadi Murmu addressed the valedictory session of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention and presented Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards at the Janata Maidan here on Friday. She said, "The Indian diaspora represents the best of our country. They have carried with them not just the knowledge and skills acquired in this sacred land but also the values and ethos that have been the foundation of our



civilisation for millennia. Whether in the fields of technology, medicine, arts or entrepreneurship, the Indian diaspora has made a mark that the world acknowledges and respects." The President was happy to note that the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has become more than just an event. She said that it is a platform where ideas converge, collabora-

tions are forged, and the bonds between India and its diaspora are strengthened. Murmu said, "Our nation today is marching towards Viksit Bharat - a developed India - by the year 2047. It is a National Mission that requires proactive and enthusiastic participation of every Indian, including those living abroad."

Referring to the India's time-

less philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the President said this vision is about creating an ecosystem that not only meets our needs but also contributes to global wellbeing. "We seek to be a nation that balances economic progress with social justice and environmental stewardship, ensuring a bright future for generations to come," she said.

Real life Bunty-Bubli Another car worth Rs 3 cr seized

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Commissionerate police on Friday seized another luxury vehicle belonging to high-profile fraudsters, Hansita Abhilipsa and Anil Kumar Mohanty, who were recently arrested for allegedly duping many rich businessmen.



The newly-found luxury car had been abandoned at a secret location after allegations of fraud by the accused came to light. It is alleged that Hansita and Anil have amassed assets worth over Rs 80 crore and necessary investigation by Income Tax officials are currently ongoing. Several crucial information regarding the involvement of some former ministers and

MLAs in the illegal activity of the couple have also come to the fore and it is being investigated by the concerned agencies. The involvement of some builders is also being alleged in the entire operation. Earlier, both the accused were quizzed by police after securing a day's remand. On Friday, both were sent to judicial custody after their production in court. The couple stands accused

of impersonating as relatives (daughter and son-in-law) of the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary PK Mishra to deceive individuals and amass a fortune. It is alleged that by portraying false associations with influential figures, Hansita convinced victims, primarily targeting rich businessmen in the mining and construction sectors. She also posed as the wife of several high-profile businessmen, bureaucrats and politicians as per the need of her plan to defraud her victims. Based on a complaint earlier lodged by a mine owner, the Commissionerate police arrested the duo.

Another JSpur farmer kills self over crop loss

Had taken Rs 3L loan
KAHNU NANDA
JAGAT Singhpur

A young farmer, Ashok Parida [38] of Tainra village under Raghunathpur block, committed suicide by hanging himself from ceiling of his bedroom on Thursday after he found his paddy crops damaged due to the recent unseasonal rains. Reports said that deceased

Parida had cultivated about 10 acres of paddy crop on his land and others under a sharing basis this Kharif season. He had taken about a Rs 3 lakh loan from the farmer's cooperative society, SHGs, and private money lenders for the purpose. But he was upset last week after seeing rains destroy crops. He was worried about how to repay his huge debts given the uncertainty over financial compensation from

the government due to crop loss. A family source informed that on Wednesday, Parida performed his daily work and isolated himself in his room. After some time, wife Mamina found that Parida was hanging from a ceiling fan in the room. Immediately, Parida was taken to Redhua Hospital for treatment but he was declared dead by a doctor. Raghunathpur police rushed

to the hospital after being alerted by the doctor. Police seized the body and sent for a postmortem after registering an UD case, informed IIC Raghunathpur police station. Meanwhile, it is the second incident of farmer suicide in Jagatsinghpur district over crop loss in recent rains. Earlier a farmer Krutibasa Swain [35] hailing from Tandikula Panchayat's Sarana village under Balikuda block had committed suicide.

Parikrama Project to undergo makeover

DPRs underway
PNS ■ PURI

The Puri Srimandir Parikrama Project is all set to undergo a modern transformation with new design plans being drawn up and detailed project reports (DPRs) under preparation, informed Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan. During a visit to Puri, he informed that the concerned departments in charge have been advised to accelerate the DPR process swiftly. Once completed, these DPRs reports would undergo exten-

sive discussions and consultations after establishment of a cultural advisory committee. This committee would comprise experts and scholars with their expertise in Jagannath culture, he said. Harichandan also informed that the Raghunandan Library would be located on the upper floor of the existing Interpretation Centre or Lecture Centre. He also revealed that the renovation work of the Srimandir's Ratna Bhandar is nearing completion, after which a detailed inventory of the valuables would be conducted.

BBSR to have biggest Cognizant centre



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar S met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the Janata Maidan at the sidelines of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention on Friday. Both discussed on developing the Cognizant campus in Bhubaneswar as its biggest centre in India. The CM assured that the State Government would allot land within the city for development of the campus facility. Ravi Kumar expressed happiness over the growth of its centre in Bhubaneswar and was confident that it would grow even more rapidly in next five years. The CM sought cooperation of the Cognizant CEO for bringing in further investments in IT/ITeS sector into Odisha. The CEO said he would provide all support to the endeavours of the State Government for bringing in investments and growth in the IT sector.

Relief from cold after 2 days in State

Dense fog warning issued
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Regional Office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) here on Friday predicted a rise in temperatures by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius after a couple of days. However, the IMD issued heavy fog alert for Saturday in the districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Angul and Dhenkanal. The local police and transport authorities have been in-

structed to take the required precautions based on the Special Relief Commissioner's suggestions. The people have also been requested to exercise extra caution while travelling on such days when there is a lot of fog in the morning hour. As per the IMD's prediction, dry weather is expected to persist in most parts of the State on January 11. However, shallow to moderate fog may occur at those places during the period. Residents have been advised to remain vigilant and exercise caution, especially during periods of fog. While fog and mist are predicted in the morning, a clear sky is predicted later during the day.

During divorce proceedings

Either spouse can revoke consent unilaterally

Rules High Court
PNS ■ CUTTACK

In a landmark judgement, the Orissa High Court has established that in cases of divorce by mutual consent under the Hindu Marriage Act 1955, either spouse retains the right to revoke their consent unilaterally while legal proceedings are still pending. This significant decision

elaborates on Section 13(B) of the Act, providing clarity on its application. The case came into focus after an appeal was placed before the High Court challenging an earlier decision by the Family Court in Baleswar. The couple in question from the Baleswar region entered into marriage in February 2018. However, irreconcilable differences led them to file for divorce under

Section 13(B) of the Hindu Marriage Act, seeking mutual consent. Upon hearing the wife's appeal, the High Court overturned the Family Court's ruling, siding with her request for reconsideration. This decision draws guidance from the Supreme Court's directives and mandates a re-examination within six months by the Baleswar

Family Court, acknowledging the need for a comprehensive legal scrutiny. The judgement emphasised the procedural aspect, highlighting the ongoing nature of the case since 2020. The High Court's ruling underscores a critical interpretation of mutual consent in divorce proceedings, which could impact future cases across the country.

Khiraabdi 2nd runner-up at Jr Miss India

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Khiraabdi Patnaik, a young talent from Puri, has made her mark on a national platform by securing the second runner-up position in the Junior Miss India 2025 contest recently held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. At the tender age of 12, Khiraabdi's journey to the limelight began with an Instagram advertisement she encountered last July. Despite the challenges of competing against 200 aspiring contestants, her talent and determination shone through. Her performance captivated judges and audiences alike, pointing to a bright future in modelling. Khiraabdi expressed her desire to continue modelling, driven by a dream to bring her mother's



aspirations to fruition. "I want to keep modelling to fulfill my mother's dreams," she shared, reflecting her motivation and commitment. Notably, an Odisha girl, Trishna Ray, won Miss Teen Universe 2024 in South Africa's Kimberley defeating at least 10 finalists from various countries.

Extremely lower-quality paddy won't be procured

Says minister
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Food Supplies Minister Krishna Chandra Patra on Friday requested farmers of the State not to bring extremely lower-quality paddy to the mandis for procurement purposes. According to him, the government will provide Rs 3,100 per quintal of fair average quality (FAQ) paddy. He further said the farmers were misinformed that they would be provided Rs 3,100 per quintal of any quality of paddy. "Though the quality of the paddy has been affected due to the unseasonal torrential rain, the government will procure the produce. However, it will not be possible to procure the paddy if it is of extremely low quality as the government is providing compensation for the damaged paddy. The extremely lower quality of paddy will not be bought in



the market and the FCI will not also accept it. When the government is giving compensation for the damaged paddy, there is no question of procuring it in the mandis," said Patra.

The minister requested all the farmers to bring FAQ paddy to the mandis for procurement. He further informed that money is being transferred to the bank accounts of the

farmers after 12 hours of paddy procurement. Money for the procurement of 23 lakh metric tonnes of paddy have been disbursed to the bank accounts of the farmers across the State so far.

10 steps for annihilating caste system: FPI

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Indian democracy will be much better if the dirty caste system is totally annihilated, said Freethought Party of India general secretary B Ramchandra CST Voltaire. He said for political reasons no party will come forward to work for the annihilation of the caste system. Only ethical atheistic leaders believing in rationalistic humanism can annihilate it. He emphasised on 10 steps to be taken simultaneously to achieve the goal of establishing a casteless, egalitarian and free society. They are (1) Abolition of caste-indicating surnames like Rath, Mishra, Patnaik, Majhi, Pujari, Modi, Samal, Nayak etc should go; (2) Say no to sacred thread (Paita) and to sacred thread ceremony; (3) All young women must have the freedom to do their love marriage by simple exchange of garlands; (4) All young men and women should be given English medium education from LKG to PG level and the expenditure be borne by the State; (5) No educational institution should be named after any deity or any god or goddess; (6) No Saraswati Puja or Ganesh Puja be held in the campuses; (7) Caste-based reservation be done away with; (8) Indian Army should be 100% secular and casteless. No Regiment should be there in the name of any Caste or religious community; (9) All caste organisations such as Brahman Samaj, Alia Khandayat Samaj, Teli Samaj etc that are practising social boycott be disbanded and (10) No animal sacrifice be allowed in any temple or place of worship anywhere in India.

Sahadeb Nayak murder Sanitation workers demand CBI probe



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Sanitation workers held a demonstration outside the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) here on Friday demanding justice for their murdered union president Sahadeb Nayak by instituting a CBI enquiry into the death and providing financial compensation and employ-

ment for his family. In the protest held under the banner of Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the agitators demanded stringent action against the culprits involved in Nayak's murder and warned that they would stop their work and halt cleaning operations across the entire city wards till their demands are met.

"Though five persons have been arrested in connection with Nayak's murder so far, we are not satisfied with the investigation. He was an innocent person. He was standing behind us in all our problems. The administration has done nothing for his family members so far," said the agitators. "Apart from the arrested persons, some other persons

are also involved in the murder case. They should be arrested soon. So long as Nayak's family members are not provided proper assistance, we will not resume our work," said another protester. Notably, Nayak was hacked to death near the Rasulgarh flyover when he was returning on a scooter after dropping his daughter at her school.

'Minorities oppressed, unsafe in Odisha'



Demo held by 'Voice against Hate'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Members of 'Voice against Hate' led by its convener Manas Choudhury on Friday held a demonstration at Master Canteen

Square here alleging increasing attacks on minority communities. The agitators holding placards shouted various slogans and demanded justice for the victims of the minority community, who were allegedly subjected to attacks in Gajapati, Baleswar and Jajpur districts. The victims of the minority

community who were attacked were present during the demonstration. Choudhury said the minority communities are oppressed and unsafe in Odisha. They are afraid to venture out of their homes. The government is reluctant to provide security to them. It seems that a conspiracy has been hatched

to target them. In the land of Lord Jagannath, every religion or community is respected. The main mantra of Sanatan Dharma is "Basudheiva Kutumbakam". But some self-proclaimed custodians of Hindu religion are targeting the minorities. The role of the BJP government is suspicious, he said.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Naba Das' son detained by Chhattisgarh Police

■ Ahead of Kirmira block no-confidence vote
■ Detention raises political tensions
PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

Former Odisha Minister late Naba Das' son Bishal Das has been detained by the Saraipali police in Chhattisgarh's Mahasamund district since late Thursday night.

Bishal was detained along with some Samiti members and a village Sarpanch. The incident unfolded just before Friday's no-confidence vote against the Kirmira block Chairman.

In response, Bishal claims that the police actions are unjust. However, the specifics of the charges have not been disclosed yet.

As of now, the Saraipali police have not issued any formal statement detailing the reasons behind the detention



or the charges, if any, against Bishal and the others.

"We have been illegally detained. Our life is under threat. We request the Odisha Government and police DG to help us," said Bishal.

Latest reports said Bishal was released by the police.

The political situation in the region recently witnessed fresh tensions following a police search conducted at a hotel owned by the family of Naba Das in Sambalpur. Naba Das' daughter Dipali

In response, IG of Police for North Zone Himanshu Lal clarified that the search was part of an ongoing investigation into a missing person case. This, however, has not appeased the concerns raised by the Das family.

Bishal met IG Lal and demanded answers regarding the justification for a warrantless search.

Dipali said, "No-confidence vote against the Kirmira block Chairman was to be held at 10.30 am today. However, Jharsuguda police detained our people at the behest of the SP at around 1 am and handed over them to Chhattisgarh police. When my brother went there to know about their situation, he was also detained."

"It suggests that the BJP is scared. They know that they will be defeated in the no-confidence vote. That is why our people have been detained and democracy is being killed in the process," she said.

In Nayagarh 1 dies, 30 hurt as bus falls off bridge



Dense fog likely cause of mishap
PNS ■ NAYAGARH

At least one person died and 30 others were injured when a tourist bus on its way to the Kalijai Temple veered off a bridge near Khandisi square under Ranpur block in Nayagarh district late on Thursday night.

The vehicle was carrying more than 40 passengers from Gunthuni village in Khandapada block when the driver lost control of the vehicle due to dense fog and it veered off the bridge.

Locals rushed to the spot immediately and carried out

rescue operations. Emergency services swiftly transported the injured to hospitals in Ranpur and Chandpur. Those with severe injuries were later shifted to Bhubaneswar.

"We were on our way to Kalijai when the driver lost control of the bus due to dense fog and it fell off the bridge. Many passengers have been severely injured in the mishap," said an injured passenger.

"The driver could not know about the curved road due to the dense fog. As a result, he lost control of the vehicle and it fell off the bridge by hitting its side wall," said another injured passenger.

Transport office, driving unit in Phulbani

PNS ■ PHULBANI

A new Regional Transport Office and driving testing unit were inaugurated at Kandhamal by Minister for Commerce, Transport, Steel and Minerals Bibhuti Bhushan Jena.

Among others, Kandhamal district Collector Amrit Raturaj, RTO Shishir Kumar Sahu, MVI Prashant Kumar Dash, TI Shivani Majhi, Ravi Narayan Sahu, Kandhamal District BJP activists Ramesh Chandra Mohanty, Netra Manaseth, Amiya Dash, Mukti Kant Mohanty, Paresh

Mahapatra, Birendra Kumar Subudhi, MP representative and Municipal Council representative Jagannath Sahu, former MLA Manoj Pradhan and Tapan Padhi were present.

The Transport Minister said that this will not only provide all the facilities to the drivers, but also make the transport service more convenient for the public. Later, a demand letter was submitted by the residents of Phulbani to name the medical college to be built in Phulbani town after Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati.

Action Ispat extension: Villagers flag green concern

Project feared to cover fertile farmland, pollute IB river
RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

The residents of Hanshamura Katapali gram panchayat have raised strong objections to the proposed extension programme of M/s Action Ispat and Power Private Limited, citing severe environmental and agricultural concerns.

In a memorandum submitted to the Collector and District Magistrate on Tuesday, the villagers highlighted potential threats to their land, air, water, and the adjacent IB river.

The extension project, intended to be situated 7-8 km from the company's existing plant, is targeted at fertile agricultural land near the IB river. Villagers argue that the location is unsuitable, as it



threatens the area's ecosystem and their primary livelihoods, which rely on farming.

Residents also expressed dissatisfaction with the State Pollution Control Board's public grievance hearing process, claiming it was conducted away from the affected village. They fear that the extension would expose H Katapali to pollution from surrounding industrial facilities, creating a "pollution triangle" detrimental to health and the environment.

The villagers emphasized

that H Katapali has already lost significant land to infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and educational institutions. With shrinking land resources, they have resolved to protect their remaining land and natural resources.

Copies of the grievance were also sent to Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, State Pollution Control Board, and other authorities, urging them to reconsider the project for the sake of environmental preservation and public well-being.

Earlier this year, the NCLT approved its takeover by the Action Ispat and Power Private Limited which plans to expand the plant's capacity from 0.5 MTPA to 7.65 MTPA across 1,153.63 hectares. Despite this, locals fear the expansion will exacerbate environmental hazards and jeopardize their livelihoods.

The villagers remain firm in their opposition, stating, "We resolve to save our land, water, air, and environment with all our heart, mind, and soul."

HC Chief Justice visits Brahmapur



Reviews new Judicial Complex DPR
RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR

Orissa High Court Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh visited Ganjam on Thursday as part of his district tour.

During his visit to Brahmapur, he observed the ongoing construction of the new Judicial Complex. He reviewed the DPR (Detailed Project Report) for the new facility and held discussions with the District Judge, members of the Bar Association, staffs and senior officials about its progress.

The Chief Justice was joined by Ganjam's Protocol Judge Bibhuprasad Rautray during

his visit.

Upon reaching the district court premises, the Chief Justice was welcomed by District Judge Rupree Chowdhury, Bar Association President Nayan Chandra Mahapatra and others. They then toured the judicial complex site and discussed its plans with the judicial officials. The new complex will feature four floors and the construction work is progressing based on the approved DPR.

The Chief Justice also reviewed the plans for construction of additional judicial infrastructure. Other officials present included senior lawyers, court managers and police officers, including district Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida and Brahmapur SP Dr Saravana Vivek M.

BJP govt ignores staff crunch in BeMC too

New schemes add to mounting workload
RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR

The BJP government in Odisha is facing criticism for rebranding schemes introduced by the previous BJD government to bolster its public image. New schemes such as the Vishwakarma Yojana have intensified concerns over staff shortages and the increasing workload on existing employees within the Brahmapur Municipal Corporation (BeMC).

The BeMC, responsible for managing 42 wards, currently has only 10 community organisers. Among them, just three are permanent employees, six are contractual, and one is an outsourced consultant who has been serving for

eight years. The severe shortage has led to an excessive workload, with each community organiser overseeing multiple wards. Their responsibilities include implementing a range of welfare programmes such as the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Rajiv Awas Yojana, Harishchandra Yojana, Subhadra Yojana, Jaga Mission, NFTS, and the recently announced Vishwakarma Yojana.

The pressure on employees has been exacerbated by unrealistic deadlines, such as the identification and verification of thousands of Subhadra Yojana beneficiaries within just 10 days. Moreover, the Vishwakarma Yojana's rollout has left employees scrambling due to the lack of advance information or

preparation. Further, compounding the issue, three outsourced employees working under the NULM resigned after their contracts expired on September 30, leaving their roles unfilled. The existing community organisers have been burdened with additional responsibilities without any reinforcements.

Similarly, the Harishchandra Yojana, which provides financial assistance to families of deceased individuals, has shifted responsibilities from local corporators to community organisers. This move has added to the already significant workload of these employees, leading to mounting stress and anxiety.

Critics, including intellectuals and members of the general public, have raised concerns about the psychological toll on employees. Many argue

that the BJP government should urgently address the staffing crisis and ensure adequate support for overburdened employees.

The public has also expressed discontent over the BJP government's focus on rebranding existing schemes rather than investing in infrastructure and workforce support. They believe that effective governance not only involves implementing welfare initiatives but also prioritizing the well-being of the employees responsible for carrying out these programmes.

With staff morale deteriorating and workloads increasing, there is a growing demand for the government to take immediate action to fill vacancies and ease the strain on employees, ensuring the effective execution of its ambitious welfare programmes.

4 of Odisha die in Telangana road mishap

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As many as four persons of Odisha, including two women, were killed in a mishap on the Suryapet-Khammam road in Telangana on Friday.

The mishap occurred when a private bus they were travelling in collided with a stationary truck on the Suryapet-Khammam National Highway at Ilapuram in Chivema Mandal, Suryapet district.

The death toll is feared to rise further as several others

have sustained critical injuries in the mishap. All the deceased labourers are from Odisha. According to sources, the accident occurred when the bus was en route to Hyderabad from Odisha.

The driver of the bus was also killed in the mishap. Local authorities promptly initiated relief operations, with the injured being transported to nearby medical facilities. An investigation is underway to ascertain the cause of the mishap.

Prof Emeritus honour to 13 docs by OUHS



PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The Odisha University of Health Sciences (OUHS) conferred 13 professors with the most coveted and prestigious award of "Professor Emeritus" on January 7 in the OUHS campus in the presence of Deans and Directors of various medical colleges. Justice Dr P Choudhury was the chief guest and Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Manas Ranjan Sahu presided over the function.

The "Professor Emeritus" award is a prestigious and rare recognition for life-long interest in teaching and academic activities, research work, and patient care with excellence. The professors of various disciplines honored include Prof Dr

Sindhunandini Tripathy, Prof Dr Narayan Mishra, Prof Dr Minati Patra, Prof Dr Prasanna Dash, Prof Dr Rabinarayana Mallik, Prof Dr Prafulla Kumar Chinara, Prof Dr Purna Chandra Maharana, Prof Dr Purna Chandra Mohapatra, Prof Dr Sidharth Dash, Prof Dr Sribasta Kumar Mohapatra, and Prof Dr Sadhu Charana Panda.

Apart from these, two other distinguished professors, Prof Dr Narsing Charan Padhi and Prof Dr Krishna Charan Padhy was honored through video conference. Many of them are known at the national and international level and have led the academic forums as leaders in national level.

Science Outreach talk at IISER, B'pur

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

A two-day Science Outreach Seminar began on Friday at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Brahmapur.

Chief Development Officer, Zilla Parishad, Ganjam, Madhumita joined as chief guest in the inaugural session.

The initiative is dedicated to fostering a passion for science among secondary and higher secondary students, aligning the Government of India's "Viksit Bharat @2047" programme. The event envisions empowering every citizen to drive positive societal change and contribute to a more educated and developed

nation, said Director of the institute Prof AK Ganguli.

The institute has invited 330 school students and their teachers from classes 9 to 12, which include participants from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in and around Brahmapur. Notably, over 50% of the attendees are girls, many belonging to Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Scheduled Caste (SC) communities, he pointed out.

This seminar features eminent speakers from renowned institutions such as IIT Delhi, IISER Mohali, and IISc Bangalore. Students will engage in thought-provoking talks and interactive and lively sessions across various scientific disciplines, added Prof Ganguli.

In Rourkela Another minor girl raped; accused detained

PNS ■ ROURKELA

A minor girl was allegedly raped by three youths in the city. The miscreants forcibly took the girl while she was roaming near Bisra Chowk in Rourkela. They kept her in a room for three days and allegedly gang-raped her.

The victim somehow managed to run away from the spot and informed about the incident to her family members. Subsequently, the family members registered a complaint at Uditnagar police station.

Earlier in September, a minor girl was allegedly gang-raped and her sibling, who is also a minor, was sexually assaulted by some youths near Birsra Munda Chhak in Rourkela.

nor girl was allegedly abducted and gang raped by three youths in the city. The miscreants forcibly took the girl while she was roaming near Bisra Chowk in Rourkela. They kept her in a room for three days and allegedly gang-raped her.

The victim somehow managed to run away from the spot and informed about the incident to her family members. Subsequently, the family members registered a complaint at Uditnagar police station.

Earlier in September, a minor girl was allegedly gang-raped and her sibling, who is also a minor, was sexually assaulted by some youths near Birsra Munda Chhak in Rourkela.

Odia Nari Kalyan Samiti holds Pushpuni in Delhi

Over 2,000 join
PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The Delhi Odia Nari Kalyan Samiti hosted the second annual Pushpuni festival at Pandara Park near India Gate on Sunday, celebrating the vibrant agricultural tradition of western Odisha. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 2,000 Odia migrants and featured a variety of cultural performances and traditional delicacies.

The festival began with a ceremonial worship of Maa Samaleswari, followed by a day-long celebration filled with music, dance, and camaraderie. Renowned singer Ruku Suna



from Patnagarh headlined the event, captivating the audience with modern and folk melodies. Other artists, including Deepika Verma, Khirod Bariha, Purushottam Sagariya, and Sangha Nanda delivered soulful performances, while traditional dance groups enthralled the attendees.

Political figures such as Parvesh Saheb Singh Verma, BJP leader Priyanka Bhardwaj, and Sunil Yadav graced the occasion, commending the organisers for promoting Odisha's culture on a national platform. "It's heartwarming

to see Pushpuni celebrated like a family festival in Delhi," said Verma, promising future support to make the event even grander.

The event's success was attributed to the efforts of key committee members, including president Lily Nag, vice president Brundavati Suna, and secretary Anjali Nanda. The festival concluded with attendees dancing in groups, symbolizing unity and joy.

Pushpuni, an age-old celebration of Odisha's agricultural heritage, continues to foster cultural pride among the Odia diaspora in the capital.

Rajnath calls for enhanced cohesiveness of global community

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday here called for enhanced cohesiveness of the global community in view of the current security environment which, he said, is in a state of flux with multiple conflicts and challenges.

Addressing Ambassadors' Round-Table, organised as a prelude to Aero India 2025, he stressed on the need to overcome the present geopolitical tensions for ensuring mutual prosperity and global peace. This 15th edition of Aero India is scheduled to be held at the Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka from February 10 to 14.

"It is of paramount importance that the like-minded countries should strive together for collective actions for peace and prosperity. Without these, our future generations will not be able to take advantage of economic growth or technological innovations that we are experiencing in today's

era," the defence minister told the Ambassadors and High Commissioners of various countries attending the event. He pointed out that India is emerging as a leading voice for the Global South, and it advocates for a multi-aligned policy approach, which ensures that diverse views are considered in the collective pursuit of prosperity.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has articulated India's commitment to addressing global challenges through five guiding principles: Respect, Dialogue, Cooperation, Peace and Prosperity. In today's geopolitical landscape, fostering unity among like-minded nations is essential for ensuring mutual prosperity and peace, while addressing contemporary challenges. India has always championed shared prosperity and shared responsibility based on the fundamental principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, 'One Earth, One Family', which was also the theme for G-20 Summit in 2023," he added.



Rajnath Singh described Aero India, Asia's largest aeroshow, as one such event, where nations come together and form bonds beyond boundaries. Elaborating on the vision behind the biennial event, he stated that it has proven itself to be the meeting ground for the aerospace and defence sectors to showcase their products/technologies.

He defined it as a forum to forge strategic partnerships towards increasing opportunities for business, Transfer of Technology, joint development and co-production between various industries.

The defence minister emphasised that, today, India possesses one of the largest defence industrial ecosystems in Asia and the government is committed to further enhancing the capabilities. He added that the Indian aerospace and defence sector represents an attractive opportunity for foreign companies seeking to establish new ventures and partnerships.

He cited the significant milestone of setting-up of the man-

ufacturing facility of C-295 transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force through collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Airbus Defence & Space.

Rajnath Singh asserted that India has emerged as an attractive destination for investment, and Aero India 2025 presents an opportunity for friendly nations to jointly explore strengths and capabilities in the defence sector, addressing both strategic needs as well as tactical requirements.

He added that the event will facilitate industry captains, technology leaders, intellectuals and entrepreneurs with new avenues for collaboration in defence industrial enterprises. "Aero India 2025 will serve as a vital forum for exploring partnerships that will form the base for future challenges. Together, we can create pathways for growth that are inclusive and sustainable," he said.

The defence minister emphasised that air and space power have become pivotal elements in shaping strategies as such assets,

incorporated with Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning systems, provide an unprecedented advantage in battle-field scenarios. He described Aero Space Power as the new frontier of military dominance which acts as strategic deterrence.

During the Round-Table, Ambassadors and High Commissioners of various countries were briefed on the major events of Aero India 2025, and extended a personal invite from defence minister for their senior most leadership.

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, Secretary (Defence Production) Sanjeev Kumar and other senior officials of the Ministry of Defence as well as the Government of Karnataka attended the Round-Table.

No tree felling in Mumbai's Aarey without our nod: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the tree authority of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation not to allow any further tree felling in Mumbai's Aarey colony without its permission.

A bench comprising Justices Abhay S Oka and Aravind Kumar said the authority could process the applications and then seek orders from the court.

The order came after the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL) informed the bench there was no pending propos-

al to cut of more trees in the area.

The top court posted the hearing on March 5.

The apex court had directed the Maharashtra government to inform if there was any proposal to fell more trees in Aarey forest.

The court in 2023 permitted some forest-dwelling communities to move the Bombay High Court with their grievances over felling of trees in the forest for the metro rail project.

On April 17, 2023, the apex court came down heavily on Mumbai Metro for trying to "overreach" its order permitting the felling of only 84 trees in the



forest for a car shed project and directed it to pay Rs 10 lakh as penalty.

The court said it was improper on the part of the MMRCL to move the tree authority for felling of any trees in excess of 84.

The top court, however, permitted the company to remove 177 trees from Aarey forest, saying a stay on tree felling would bring the public project to a standstill which was not desirable.

The apex court in 2019 took suo motu cognisance of a letter petition addressed to the chief justice of India by law student Rishav Ranjan seeking a stay on the felling of trees in the

colony.

On November 29, 2022, the apex court permitted Mumbai Metro to raise its plea to fell 84 trees at Mumbai's Aarey Colony with the authority concerned.

The top court had directed MMRCL to strictly abide by its undertaking on no tree felling and warned of strict action in case of violation.

The apex court had restrained the authorities from felling any more trees after the solicitor general submitted on behalf of Maharashtra government no more trees would be cut.

The felling of trees in the colony was opposed by green activists and Aarey residents.

Project 'Veer Gatha 4.0' as part of R-Day celebrations garners incredible nationwide response

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The fourth edition of Project 'Veer Gatha 4.0', a joint initiative by Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education as part of Republic Day celebrations, has garnered an incredible nationwide response. This year, approximately 1.76 crore students from around 2.31 lakh schools participated in the competition, defence ministry said here on Friday.

One hundred (100) winners are selected at the national level. The winners are divided into four categories, with 25 winners from each: Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8), Secondary Stage (Grades 9-10) and Secondary Stage (Grades 11-12). The first 100 winners will witness the traditional parade at Kartavya Path as Special Guests.

Launched on September 05, 2024, Project Veer Gatha 4.0 presented a variety of thought-provoking topics for essay and paragraph writing. Students had the opportunity to write about their chosen role models, particularly focusing on Gallantry Award recipients.

They were also encouraged to explore the inspiring lives of freedom fighters such as Rani Laxmibai, the 1857 First War of Independence, and the significant role of Tribal Uprisings in India's Freedom Struggle.

This diverse array of topics not only enhanced the quality of the entries, but also deepened participants' understanding of India's historical and cultural legacy.

The project involved schools conducting activities at the local level, nationwide interaction programmes by Gallantry awardees (both offline and online), and the submission of top entries via MyGov portal.

The school-level activities concluded on October 31, 2024. Following evaluations at the State and District levels, nearly 4,029 entries were submitted



for national-level evaluation, where top 100 entries were selected as SUPER-100 winners.

These winners will be felicitated jointly by the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education in New Delhi. Each winner will receive a cash prize of Rs 10,000.

In addition to the 100 national-level winners, eight winners at the State/UT level (two from each category) and four winners at the district level (one from each category) will be selected and honoured by State/UT/District authorities.

Project Veer Gatha was launched in 2021 as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate India's 75th year of Independence. The project aims to raise awareness of Gallantry awardees' acts of bravery and the life stories of these heroes.

The initiative helps instill patriotism and civic values in students. The journey of Project Veer Gatha from Edition 1 to Edition 4 has been inspiring, expanding the reach of the competition across the length and breadth of the country.

In the first two editions of Project Veer Gatha, 25 winners were selected at the national level, with around eight lakh students participating in the first edition and 19 lakh in the second edition.

The third edition marked a significant milestone, with the selection of 100 national winners for the first time and an increased participation of 1.36 crore students. The momentum continued to grow in Veer Gatha 4.0, reinforcing the widespread impact of this initiative.

Shah to chair regional conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Saturday here will chair a regional conference on "Drug Trafficking and National Security".

The conference, organized by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), aims to address the growing concern of drug trafficking and its impact on national security, with a special focus on eight states and Union Territories of northern India, home ministry said here on Friday.

During the event, Shah will launch the Drug Disposal Fortnight, inaugurate the new office complex of the NCB's Bhopal zonal unit and extension of the MANAS-2 helpline to all 36 states and Union Territories.

The conference will focus on the sharing of real-time information from the National Narcotics Helpline 'MANAS' portal with the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of States and Union Territories, evaluating the progress of States in combating drug trafficking, and assessing the effectiveness of the Narcotics Coordination



Mechanism (NCORD). It will also address strengthening and enhancing the functionality of State Forensic Science Laboratories (SFSs), utilizing the NIDAAN database to bolster efforts against drug trafficking, implementing provisions of the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT-NDPS) Act, establishing special NDPS courts for the speedy trial of drug-related cases, and fostering a Whole-of-Government approach to ensure comprehensive collaboration among all agencies to combat drug trafficking and abuse effectively.

During the drug disposal fort-

night starting from January 11-25, a total of 44,792 kilograms of seized narcotics, whose international market value is Rs 2,411 crore, will be disposed of.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government of India has adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy against drug trafficking. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is implementing a three-pronged strategy to achieve a drug-free India by 2047.

This includes strengthening institutional frameworks, enhancing coordination among narcotics agencies, and launching a massive public awareness campaign.

DG NCC inaugurates 'Idea and Innovation Competition' for cadets

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Director General National Cadet Corps (DG NCC) Lt General Gurbirpal Singh here on Friday inaugurated 'Idea and Innovation Competition', to provide cadets with tools and guidance to develop solutions to real-world challenges.

This unique initiative which was taken up for the first time in NCC Republic Day Camp (RDC) provided cadets with the tools and guidance to think critically and develop solutions to real-world challenges, defence ministry said.

Before the competition, the NCC organised a series of workshops and contests pan India under the aegis of all 17 NCC State Directorates, with the aim to inspire and meet the aspirations of cadets.

The initiative yielded remarkable results, with cadets generating an impressive 256 innovative ideas and solutions. Out of these, 56 top innovations were shortlisted and showcased during the Republic Day Camp 2025. The innovations highlighted



the cadets' ability to think outside the box, demonstrated creativity, teamwork, and a commitment to nation-building.

The Idea and Innovation competition resonated deeply with the cadets, emphasised entrepreneurship, problem-solving, and the spirit of innovation in the cadets. These initiatives not only underlined the NCC's dedication to nurture future leaders but also boost the potential of young minds in addressing pressing societal challenges.

The aim of the initiative was to align NCC training with contemporary aspects and give exposure & opportunities to cadets towards 'Yuva Setu' and prepare them for 'Viksit Bharat'.

Former UP Police DG appointed president of IPF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Former Uttar Pradesh Police director general O P Singh has been appointed the new president of the Indian Police Foundation (IPF), an independent think tank on policing subjects.

A message shared by outgoing President N Ramachandran with other members of the organisation said Singh's skills and "team building" abilities apart from "remarkable contributions and visionary leadership make him the ideal choice to further the vision and mission of the Foundation."

According to the message, Singh was "unanimously" elected as the IPF president and CEO during a meeting of the executive council held here on Friday.

The 1983-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer retired from service in January 2020. Apart from heading the Uttar Pradesh Police, he served as the director general of two central forces -- the Central Industrial Security Force and the National Disaster Response Force.

India marks significant milestone in journey towards achieving climate goals with launch of Bharat Climate Forum

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India marked a significant milestone in its journey toward achieving climate goals and economic self-reliance with the launch of the Bharat Climate Forum on Friday. A national platform dedicated to unifying stakeholders from policy, industry, finance, and research to accelerate cleantech manufacturing in India, the Bharat Climate Forum aims to drive sustainable economic growth and innovation.

Hosted by the Centre for Indigenous Economic Understanding (CIEU) and Dalberg Advisors, the Bharat Climate Forum is supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), NITI Aayog, and International Solar Alliance (ISA).

Addressing the launch, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Atmanirbhar Bharat embodies India's drive for eco-



economic sovereignty and technological leadership through innovation and collaboration. "Our 4G-5G telecom stack showcases this spirit which the cleantech sector can imbibe, with public-private partnerships enabling world-class, competitive solutions. I think the Bharat Climate Forum organizers for highlighting India's commitment to cleantech innovation for a sustain-

able future," he said in a statement.

The forum comes at a time when India is pursuing ambitious climate targets, including achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 and scaling up non-fossil fuel capacity to 500 GW by 2030. Despite progress in renewables, challenges such as reliance on imports for solar and wind infrastructure persist. Ashwani Mahajan, National

Co-Convener of Swadeshi Jagran Manch and Member-Secretary of the Bharat Climate Forum, emphasized the need for a comprehensive manufacturing policy to address these challenges.

The forum also spotlighted the economic opportunities in cleantech. By 2030, Dalberg estimates suggest that cleantech manufacturing could create a domestic market worth \$120-150 billion annually and generate export opportunities of \$40-45 billion while generating 50 million new jobs by 2070.

Jagjeet Singh Sareen, Partner, Global Climate Practice at Dalberg Advisors and Member-Secretary of the Bharat Climate Forum mentioned, achieving the 1.5-degree target requires urgent acceleration in our efforts.

The inaugural event witnessed the launch of Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal an initiative to strength-

en India's clean tech value chains—spanning solar, wind, hydrogen, and battery storage. The Forum launch was also addressed by several distinguished attendees including Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa who provided insights into delivering cost-competitive clean tech solutions.

Bharat Climate Forum 2025 is an influential platform that brings together key stakeholders from the government, industry, and global community to accelerate India's clean energy transition. CIEU is committed to fostering comprehensive research, facilitating dialogues, and curating innovative ideas that address the needs of diverse communities. Dalberg Advisors is a strategic advisory firm that combines the best private sector strategy skills and rigorous analytical capabilities with deep knowledge and networks across emerging and frontier markets.

New FIR against Karti Chidambaram

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

CBI has registered a fresh case against Congress MP Karti Chidambaram, accusing accepting bribes for lifting the ban on liquor manufacturer Diageo and FDI clearance for Sequoia Capital and routing bribe money through Vasan Eye Care and his own firm Advantage Capital. As per the CBI FIR, Karti got around Rs.87 crore on these deals by misusing father and former Finance Minister P Chidambaram's office.

Apart from Karti, other accused are Chidambaram family's Chartered Accountant S Bhaskaraman, Vasan Eye Care promoter (late) Dwarakanathan, bribe givers liquor company Diageo Scotland and venture capital firm Sequoia Capital and Karti controlled firms Advantage Strategic Consulting, Vasan Eye Care, which is now defunct.

CBI FIR charges Karti and his firm Advantage for accepting



bribe of 15,000 Dollars for lifting ban on liquor company Diageo Scotland which supplies famous brand Johnnie Walker Whiskey. CBI FIR says more than 86 crore was routed by Karti controlled firms Vasan Eye Care and Advantage Strategic Consulting in providing Foreign Direct Investment clearance for Mauritius based venture capital firm Sequoia Capital's proposals from Finance Ministry then headed by P Chidambaram. Detailing the money trail, CBI FIR says these

transactions happened between 2008 to 2010.

Karti is currently facing three CBI cases - Aircel Maxis deal, INX Media bribery and Chinese Visa case. This is his fourth case, facing corruption, misusing his father former Finance Minister P Chidambaram. He is also facing Enforcement Directorate's case in Aircel Maxis and INX Media bribery case. In Aircel Maxis deal and INX Media bribery case, Karti is a Co-Accused with his father P Chidambaram.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw unveils upgraded Amrit Bharat trains with 12 key enhancements

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
CHENNAI

The Ministry of Railways has added 12 major improvements on the Amrit Bharat Version 2.0 trains and 50 such trains will be manufactured at ICF over the next two years, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Friday. Vaishnaw, who inspected the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) along with its General Manager U Subba Rao, said the state government should place service to people above politics and the Centre and his Ministry is committed to take measures for the welfare of the people.

"Very happy to see the Amrit Bharat Version 2.0 (being manufactured here). As you can recall, the Amrit Bharat Version 1.0 was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi last January 2024 and based on the experience in the last one year, many improvements have been made in the Amrit Bharat Version 2.0," Vaishnaw told reporters at the ICF here. Sharing some of



the salient features that have been improved in the Amrit Bharat trains, he said, "12 major improvements have been done in the entire train. Semi-automatic couplers, modular toilets, chair pillars and partitions, emergency talk back feature, emergency brake system, continuous lighting system like Vande Bharat trains, seats and berths with

new ergonomic design have been improved." He said the entire pantry car in the Amrit Bharat Version 2.0 trains have been built using a new design. Targeted at low income and low middle income families, he said, "50 such Amrit Bharat Version 2.0 trains would be manufactured in the coming two years (at the Integral Coach Factory). This

will provide a very affordable service and very high quality of travelling experience to people travelling long distances." Responding to a query about the apprehension raised by the Commissioner of Railway Safety on the construction of the historic Pamban bridge in Rameswaram, he said the designing of the bridge was done based on the Research

Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO). "When you do the RDSO standard, such a standard of designs is done for bridges which are constructed in large numbers. This is a unique bridge. Pamban Bridge is once in a lifetime that you design and construct a bridge of this type," he said. He cleared the air that the Commissioner of Railways Safety was explained that this is not a standard bridge and uniquely designed bridge and the services of the best international experts have been taken for designing. "The CRS has understood and they have now given the clearance on the bridge design. Panel report has also come," he said. The minister said the Railways has installed the KAVACH (a facility to help prevent train accidents) in 10,000 locomotives and 15,000 km of track side fittings are also being done. "Telecom towers are also being installed. Cameras are being installed on the front of the locomotives.

Trinidad, Tobago President Christine Carla Kangaloo wins Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award by President Murmu



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
BHUBANESWAR

Trinidad & Tobago President Christine Carla Kangaloo and 26 others were conferred the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award by President Droupadi Murmu on the last day of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention here. Murmu congratulated all the awardees and appreciated them for working for the society in different fields. She said that their success

stories are not just a matter of pride for India, but they also inspire millions across the world to strive for excellence. Murmu said Kangaloo's outstanding contributions in leading her nation, with a special focus on women and the Indian diaspora, have set a high benchmark on the world stage. The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians. The awardees represent the excellence achieved by the Indian diaspora in various fields.

The Trinidad & Tobago President got the award in the public affairs category. Other awardees included Ajay Rane (Australia, community service), Marialena Joan Fernandes (Austria, education), Swami Sanyuktanand (Fiji, community service), Saraswati Vidya Niketan (Guyana, community service), Lekh Raj Juneja (Japan, science and technology), Prem Kumar (Kyrgyz Republic, medical science) and Soukthavy Chowdhury (Laos, business).

BSF foils cattle smuggling attempt on India-Bangladesh border, recovers 10 bulls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
KOLKATA

BSF jawans were attacked by Bangladeshi cattle smugglers on the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district on Thursday night, a statement from the paramilitary force said. In a retaliatory action carried out in self-defence, the jawans successfully foiled the smuggling attempt and recovered 10 bulls, it added. The incident took place at Khatadah border outpost (BOP), where BSF personnel saw smugglers approaching



the border fence from the Indian side with cattle. Simultaneously, smugglers from the Bangladesh side crossed the international border into India.

When the BSF jawans challenged them to stop, the smugglers ignored the warning and advanced aggressively, wielding sharp-edged spears while attempting to cut the border fence. In response to the threat, a BSF jawan fired a blank round as a warning. "Taking advantage of the darkness and uneven terrain, the smugglers fled back to Bangladesh. A subsequent search of the area led to the recovery of 8 bulls of Haryana origin and three sharp-edged spears left behind by the attackers," the statement by BSF South Bengal Frontier

said. Previous incidents of similar smuggling attempts and assaults have been reported at Pipli BOP (Kolkata sector) and BOPs HC Pur and Nawada (Malda sector), where BSF jawans were forced to defend themselves using stun grenades and other weapons, the statement added. A BSF spokesperson said despite frequent flag meetings with the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to raise concerns about these attacks, no concrete action has been taken by Bangladeshi authorities.

Assam coal mine tragedy: 'Sardar' of trapped miners arrested as rescue efforts continue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
GUWAHATI

The 'sardar' of workers of the coal mine in Assam's Dima Hasao district, where eight miners remained trapped, was arrested, even as a dewatering exercise continued in the quarry to facilitate the resumption of rescue operations, police said on Friday. The fate of the trapped miners appeared to be grim with personnel involved in the rescue operations racing against time to bring them out of the ill-fated quarry, while the body of one labourer,

hailing from Nepal, has been recovered from there, an official said. "The 'sardar' (head) of the miners, who had fled the quarry site soon after the incident on January 6, was arrested on Thursday night from a place after an extensive search operation. This is the second arrest in connection with the case," said a senior officer who did not divulge the place of arrest. The arrested person has been identified as Hanan Laskar, and Punish Nunisa, the leaseholder of the quarry, was held on the second day of the incident in connection with

the case, the official said. The labourers were on Monday trapped inside the 3-Kilo Coal Quarry in Umranago area, around 250 km from Guwahati, after a sudden gush of water flooded the site. A case was registered in connection with the incident at the mine which appears to be 'illegal', Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said. Nine labourers were trapped inside the mine after a sudden gush of water flooded the quarry, and the body of one labourer has been recovered so far.

AAP's Sanjay Singh assures Goa court he will refrain from defaming CM's wife

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
PANAJI

Sam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has assured Goa court that he will refrain from making any defamatory statements against CM Dr. Pramod Sawant's wife Sulakshana Sawant. Sanjay Singh's lawyer submitted in Bicholim Judicial Magistrate of First Class (JMFC) court that his client will refrain from commenting against CM Dr. Pramod Sawant's wife Sulakshana Sawant. The court in Goa had issued a notice to Sanjay Singh in a Rs 100-crore defamation case filed against him by Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant's wife for allegedly naming her in the cash-for-jobs scam. The court had sought Singh's reply by January 10, 2025. Next hearing on the matter is kept on 24th January 2025. Pramod Sawant's wife Sulakshana Sawant had filed a case in the court of Civil Judge Senior Division, Bicholim, North Goa. Sulakshana Sawant, in her complaint, had requested the court to direct Sanjay Singh to publish an apology clarifying that the said defamatory video/article and interview are false, not based on facts, and tender an unconditional apology. The complainant had also urged the court to restrain Sanjay Singh from making any public statements maligning her by injunction on social media or other platforms.

Farmer leader Dallewal challenges Punjab BJP: meet Modi instead of Akal Takht Jathedar to end fast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab BJP has appealed to the Akal Takht but should approach Prime Minister Narendra Modi if they want him to end his hunger strike, farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal said on Friday as his fast-unto-death entered day 46. In a three-minute video message released on Friday, the 70-year-old farmer leader asserted he will end his fast only after the Centre accepts farmers' demands which include a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price for crops. A BJP delegation, comprising Sukhminder Pal Singh Grewal and Sarchand Singh, appealed to Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh on Thursday to intervene to end the indefinite fast of the farmer leader. The delegation expressed concern over Dallewal's deteriorating health.



In his video message Dallewal said, "We have got information that the leaders of the Punjab unit of BJP appealed to the Akal Takht to intervene in order to end Dallewal's fast-unto-death. (They appealed to the Akal Takht that) a direction be given so that he should end his fast. I respect the Akal Takht." "But the Punjab BJP should approach (PM) Modi ji, the vice president (Jagdeep Dhankhar), Agriculture Minister (Shivraj Singh Chouhan), (Home Minister) Amit Shah ji. Instead of meeting them, they are

approaching the Akal Takht Jathedar," he said. Farmer leaders camped at the Punjab-Haryana border also burnt effigies of the central government on Friday. Dallewal, who is the convener of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political), has been on the indefinite hunger strike at the Khanauri border point between Punjab and Haryana since November 26 last year over farmers' various demands including seeking a legal guarantee on the minimum support price (MSP) for crops.

Gurugram police busts international scam: two airtel employees arrested for aiding Indonesian and Chinese fraudsters

PARVESH SHARMA ■
GURUGRAM

A cybercrime team of Gurugram police has arrested two Airtel company employees who had provided virtual numbers to Indonesian and Chinese fraudsters to cheat people through WhatsApp/Telegram in the name of part-time job/investment. As per the instructions of Priyanshu Diwan, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Cyber Crime, Gurugram, the police team of Cyber East, Gurugram and the joint team of Indian Cyber Coordination Center (I4C), MHA, Govt of India, took action based on technical analysis and nabbed the suspects on Thursday. The accused have been identified as Neeraj Walia, a



resident of District Baghpat (Uttar Pradesh), and Hemant Sharma. The accused were arrested as per rules in the case under sections 318(4), 319, 61(2) BNS at Police Station Cyber Crime East, Gurugram. According to the police, the complainant filed a complaint that he received a call from a landline number in Gurugram in which he was offered a part-time job.

In which the complainant/victim had to post reviews of different hotels. On completing the task, Rs 200 were transferred to the victim's bank account. After that, the victim was added to the Telegram group by the accused. After that, while giving him the task, small amounts were transferred to his account 2-3 times. Later on, money was transferred from him in the name of investing for these tasks. After that, more money was demanded to withdraw this money. During police interrogation, it was found that Neeraj works as a site verifier in Airtel company and Hemant is his team leader. "The accused had issued the landline number/DID number used in the crime in the name of Ekamdarsh

Services Pvt Ltd. Despite the above company not being present on the mentioned site, the accused violated TRAI rules and issued a landline number in the name of the above company," Diwan said. Using the above number, the companions of the accused cheated people in the name of task-based investment. The accused also disclosed that, in connivance with the operational manager of Ekamdarsh Services Pvt Ltd, a company registered at a fake address, had provided many more numbers to an Indonesian person apart from the above landline number/DID number. "In connection with the matter further investigation is underway. The accused have been taken on police remand for intensive interrogation," he added.

Prayagraj transforms into mega tent city for Maha Kumbh 2025

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
PRAYAGRAJ

The Maha Kumbh 2025 has transformed the sandy banks of Prayagraj's Sangam into a spectacular tent city, a temporary settlement capable of accommodating more than 20 lakh devotees at a time. With over one lakh tents ranging from basic to luxurious, this extraordinary project represents a harmonious blend of engineering, tradition, and spiritual fervor. The scale of this undertaking is staggering. Approximately 68 lakh wooden poles have been used, their combined length exceeding 20,000 kilometers-greater than the distance from Prayagraj to Washington, D.C. Additionally, 100 kilometers of fabric and 250 tonnes of CGI sheets were used for roofing. Over 3,000 workers have been laboring in three shifts for months, meticulously converting these raw materials into a vast, functional city. Each tent is crafted with care, employing durable fabrics like cotton and terrycot,



often lined with polythene to ensure protection against rain. A project of this magnitude owes its success largely to the expertise of Lalluji and Sons, a company with a 104-year legacy of managing Kumbh preparations. Known as the "Vishwakarma of Kumbh," the company has constructed 75% of the tent city. According to Deepanshu

Agarwal, Managing Partner of Lalluji and Sons, preparations began 18 months ago, encompassing tasks such as crafting new tents, repairing old structures, and executing extensive logistical planning. Despite challenges, including delays caused by prolonged monsoons, the team has worked tirelessly to meet the deadlines.

For many workers, the Kumbh is not just an event but a lifelong calling. Rambachan, a 60-year-old veteran, reminisced about the days when wages were ₹10 per day. "Now we earn ₹500 daily, but the joy of contributing to something this significant is priceless," he said. Younger workers like Kuldeep echoed his sentiments, describing the pride they feel in their work. The tent city is a marvel not only in its scale but also in its offerings. While some tents cater to Kalpwasis, who live in simplicity and gather around bonfires for prayers, others provide modern luxuries. Premium accommodations include marble flooring, Wi-Fi, electric blankets, and even televisions, blending comfort with tradition. Pilgrims like Raghunath, a 68-year-old from Rajasthan, and Sushila, a 50-year-old from Varanasi, expressed awe at the modern amenities, describing the experience as unparalleled. Spanning 3,200 hectares-800 hectares more than in 2019-the Maha Kumbh 2025 tent

city is twice the scale of its predecessor. With temporary police stations, administrative offices, and facilities for millions, it stands as a testament to human ingenuity, devotion, and the enduring spirit of one of the world's largest spiritual gatherings. CM inaugurates 'Kumbhvani' Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Prasar Bharati's FM channel 'Kumbhvani' at the Circuit House on Friday, during the second day of his Prayagraj tour. Expressing his best wishes for the success of the channel, CM Yogi stated his confidence that 'Kumbhvani' will not only reach new heights of popularity but also extend the spirit of Mahakumbh to remote villages where many people, despite their desire, cannot physically attend the event. He emphasized that the channel would serve as a vital medium to deliver all relevant information about Mahakumbh to these distant communities. Highlighting the importance

of live broadcasting, CM Yogi said, "Such efforts would enable those in far-flung areas to experience and understand the grandeur of Mahakumbh." He said this would allow them to share the pride of this grand celebration of Sanatan Dharma with future generations. He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and Prasar Bharati for their efforts in launching Kumbhvani. "It is a remarkable moment, and Prasar Bharati has beautifully captured its essence through Kumbhvani," he said. The Kumbhvani FM channel will not only broadcast live coverage of the daily events but will also share religious references and stories related to the Mahakumbh in remote villages, making the spiritual essence of the event accessible to all. Kumbhvani on 103.5 MHz Prasar Bharati has launched the OTT-based Kumbhvani FM channel to disseminate comprehensive information

about the Maha Kumbh. Broadcasting at a frequency of 103.5 MHz, the channel will be on air from January 10 to February 26, operating daily from 5:55 AM to 10:05 PM. Kala Kumbh serves as an authentic document of Kumbh's developmental journey In another development Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the Kala Kumbh in Sector 7. After opening the UP State Pavilion, CM Yogi visited the Kala Kumbh, a unique camp created by the Uttar Pradesh Culture Department, located right across from the pavilion. Chief Minister Yogi proceeded to the exhibition hall, where he admired the distinctive artworks, temple replicas, and thematic exhibitions. Praising the initiative, he described Kala Kumbh as an authentic documentation of the Kumbh's developmental journey. On this occasion, Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture, Mukesh Meshram, presented

the Chief Minister with a memento. Spanning approximately 5 acres within the fairgrounds, the Kala Kumbh features an exhibition gallery and a stage for cultural performances. The gallery displays photographs, replicas, and exhibits tracing the journey of Bhatkhande Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, monuments of Uttar Pradesh, protected heritage sites, manuscripts, and artefacts. A key highlight of the Kala Kumbh is the section dedicated to the historical perspective of Mahakumbh. This eighth segment of the exhibition delves into administrative insights from all Kumbh events held in Prayagraj between 1866 and 1954, presented through government letters, records, and official documents. This section includes reports, correspondences, administrative orders, and other records, offering a comprehensive view of Kumbh over the last 150 years.



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

Transforming defence

The 'Year of Transformation' can give necessary momentum for defence manufacturing and innovation

India's defence landscape is set to undergo a transformative shift in 2025, as the Ministry of Defence (MoD) embarks on an ambitious overhaul aimed at modernising procurement processes, expanding indigenous manufacturing capabilities and boosting research and development (R&D). The year has been declared as the 'Year of Transformation,' with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other top officials outlining a vision to address long-standing challenges while positioning the country for greater self-reliance and competitiveness in defence. One of the key focus areas for the government is to revamp the Defence Acquisition Procedures (DAP). These procedures, which have been criticised for their complexity and inefficiency, are set to be replaced with a more streamlined, lighter, and faster version. The aim is to cut down delays in procurement timelines and eliminate bureaucratic hurdles that have long impeded defence modernisation. The new framework will not only make the system more efficient but will also create a level playing field for both established players and newcomers in the defence sector. In addition to reforming procurement, the government has placed a strong emphasis on boosting indigenous manufacturing and R&D.



While India is the world's fifth-largest manufacturing economy, its defence manufacturing capacity remains relatively small in comparison to its overall economic standing. To address this gap, the government plans to allocate more resources to defence R&D, with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) targeting an increase in R&D spending from 5 per cent to 15 per cent of the defence budget in the coming years. One area that has garnered particular attention is the development of aero engines. India has faced challenges in developing these critical technologies domestically, and the government has signaled that joint ventures with foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) will be essential for progress. With significant investments required—potentially as high as Rs 50,000 crore—the government is determined to make the necessary commitments to build the infrastructure and expertise required for successful co-development of aero engines and related technologies. Another significant initiative is the creation of a more competitive defence industry ecosystem. Currently, India's defence sector is largely dominated by Public Sector Undertakings. The government aims to level the playing field by encouraging the participation of startups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises through policy changes. Despite these ambitious plans, India's defence ecosystem still faces several challenges. One of the most significant hurdles is the relatively small manufacturing base in sectors like aerospace, where India's ability to scale production and develop cutting-edge technologies has been limited. Besides, archaic policies, delays in preparing Requests for Proposals and overly complicated procedures have often led to extended timelines. This must change if defence sector is to become competitive and innovative.

attention is the development of aero engines. India has faced challenges in developing these critical technologies domestically, and the government has signaled that joint ventures with foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) will be essential for progress. With significant investments required—potentially as high as Rs 50,000 crore—the government is determined to make the necessary commitments to build the infrastructure and expertise required for successful co-development of aero engines and related technologies. Another significant initiative is the creation of a more competitive defence industry ecosystem. Currently, India's defence sector is largely dominated by Public Sector Undertakings. The government aims to level the playing field by encouraging the participation of startups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises through policy changes. Despite these ambitious plans, India's defence ecosystem still faces several challenges. One of the most significant hurdles is the relatively small manufacturing base in sectors like aerospace, where India's ability to scale production and develop cutting-edge technologies has been limited. Besides, archaic policies, delays in preparing Requests for Proposals and overly complicated procedures have often led to extended timelines. This must change if defence sector is to become competitive and innovative.

PICTALK



Devotees carry 'kalash' during 'Hindu Rashtra Seva Mela' at Goregaon

The trust factor in human interaction



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

The temperament and conviction of individuals play a pivotal role in shaping trust, whether in personal relationships or organisational dynamics

There is a general feeling that if something is committed on paper, with other things being equal, it is reliable evidence that it will be carried out. If it is on a legal document, the credibility quotient is still higher, and if there are clauses that recognise the punitive element of violation, the feeling of reliability further goes on. This, like many truths, goes a certain distance.

This cannot be the place to explore the veracity of such belief, but there is an occasion to look at certain other aspects of reliability, especially the temperament of the people involved. Some people take their words seriously, and others casually. This attitude permeates their entire behaviour, and in certain matters, it becomes even more evident that they take their words seriously. Other types of people are quite figuratively the opposite, and they take their own words so lightly that when they utter them, they are not sure what conviction they carry. Between these two extremes, the larger part of the population rests with varying degrees of reliability and different levels of conviction.

This simple truth makes the entire range of human conviction open to many shades of possibilities and makes dealing with each other either at a direct level or at a group level, an extremely dubious proposition wherein liability is concerned. This even affects official interaction as indeed it does personal interaction. It is therefore necessary in a group culture to inculcate the correct values of interpersonal dynamics. People cannot be 'taught' to be reliable. This is because the fundamental principles of values, like eternal values, remain the same. Every domain of human life talks about what is right, what is beautiful, and what is essential to keep groups sustainable and harmoniously together. In such circumstances where it is recognised that observing pristine standards



may be difficult, many people practice silence. They simply do not talk about values at all. This may or may not work because silence and lack of communication would allow each one to create his norm and use his interpretation. What matters most then is how the leader of the group behaves as an exemplar and what other members of the group see as the essence of acceptable behaviour. Positive or negative recognition then follows. For this, the informal and formal leaders of the group must agree on certain examples and set an example collectively. It is difficult, especially when there is no clear reference point and no way of verifying what rules the roost. If the group has a powerful man, his behaviour is noticed and others try to imitate him. If the powerful man acquires power by formal position, it is one story. If, however, he acquires power through organising cliques and factions and through manipulations, there are always dangers of somebody calling the bluff or indeed power slipping out of his



IF THE POWERFUL MAN ACQUIRES POWER BY FORMAL POSITION, IT IS ONE STORY. IF, HOWEVER, HE ACQUIRES POWER THROUGH ORGANIZING CLIQUES AND FACTIONS AND THROUGH MANIPULATIONS, THERE ARE ALWAYS DANGERS OF SOMEBODY CALLING THE BLUFF

hand. All this is not conducive to organisational stability or, for that matter, even clarity. It makes the job of a new entrant particularly complex. The complexity would be enhanced if the new entrant could not navigate his way intelligently with perspicacity and shrewdness. If the group has a large number of turnovers, then the complexity is further compounded. Under the circumstances, it's perhaps best to recognise that, like all truths, simplicity is the best approach. Being truthful, simple, and straightforward is the foundation of sound behaviour, stable relationships, and the achievement of goals constructively and dependably. Like all foundations of a sound civil society, positive thinking, straightforward action, and dependable follow-up is the way to go forward. It is the human mind that creates complications. Legality and other elements that try to substitute the basic character of dependability, without the right ambience, will remain halfway houses. It can lead to

quibbling, litigation, and, at times, disappointment. However, stability will remain a matter of character, and that is where civil societies need to pitch. Whether this is in a formal organisation or an informal civil setup, it would hardly make a difference. Truth remains the truth and for the best way, it is important to follow it up relentlessly with simplicity and dignity. Like many tales, this too has a tailpiece. There is a Sanskrit dictum, "Satyam bruyat, priyam apriyam". A free translation of this shall be "Speak the truth, speak the pleasant; do not speak the truth which is unpleasant". There can be many views on this, and each will have its assumptions and derivations. If assumptions vary, as do the derivations, conclusions would be also varied. That is the nature of truth: multifaceted, each appearing right in its way. One has to navigate one's way. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TWO TIER SYSTEM IN TEST CRICKET

Madam — There are talks between Australia, England, and India and the International Cricket Council's (ICC) new chair, Jay Shah to split Test (cricket) playing nations into two tier, with Australia, England and India in one tier and the rest in a different tier. The concept has gained impetus post the BGT series, where the attendance and TV viewership touched new records. If agreed upon by the ICC council, this will come into effect post-2027 after the present commitments are met by these nations. The objective is that these three nations will play against each other twice in three years as against the present four-year schedule. While the idea may have sprung up from the revenue point of view, ICC must focus on its unwritten objective of improving the quality and skill level of the weaker member nations and making all the members play competitive cricket. The choice of three nations—India, Australia, and England—also in the upper tier, is arbitrary if it is on the basis of the quality of cricket displayed. If it is so, India has not displayed quality cricket, both in the home series against the Kiwis and down under in the BGT series recently. Also, the Windies have stunned the Aussies in Gabba in a pink ball test in 2024. The recent entrants to the test-playing nations, like Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan have also displayed talents and enthusiasm. Hence such an idea of an arbitrary split must be shunned. If the ICC is serious about splitting, it must be based on the performance in a given time period, say between 2025-28, on the number of points scored by each nation on the number of test wins/losses and can consider having two or three divisions amongst the twelve member countries. Having done that on the basis of points scored, one can consider promotion or demotion of the first and last two, respectively, which will also instill a sense of competitiveness and thereby sustain interest in the test cricket.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

A policy shift for Afghanistan



In a major and surprising development, India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on Wednesday. Though its relations with Afghanistan had nosedived after the Taliban seized power in the mountainous, landlocked republic in 2021, New Delhi, in a smart move, kept providing humanitarian and economic assistance to Afghanistan. The Taliban also requested the Indian delegation to reopen its diplomatic mission in Afghanistan. Now, Misri's meeting marks a major shift in New

Delhi's policy towards the Taliban. This meeting has taken place at a time when Afghanistan is witnessing heightened tensions with Pakistan concerning the Durand Line—the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan—as well as regarding the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP). By condemning Pakistan's airstrikes in Afghanistan, New Delhi has played a well-calculated diplomatic move. Besides the Pakistan factor, Iran's Chabahar Port is also going to play a major role in India-Taliban relations as Kabul is looking to leverage its ties with India by using the Chabahar Port. Thus, both the Taliban and New Delhi have realised that bilateral ties are mutually beneficial for both countries. By playing a vital role in restoring peace, stability, and development in Afghanistan, New Delhi can secure geopolitical leverage over Pakistan at the crossroads of South and Central Asia.

Manoj Parashar | Ghaziabad

HONOURING INDIAN DIASPORA

Madam—The city of Odisha turned out to be the venue for the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas this year. In order to honour the immense contribution of the Indian diaspora, it is particularly required to appreciate the exceptional contribution of Indians overseas. For many decades, millions of Indians have paid visits to foreign countries to grab vibrant opportunities in different spectrums of life. Indians made exceptional contributions to the economic success of the different nations, assisting India to create its own niche soft power on the basis of its people settled overseas. Indians are globally renowned for contributing the world's highest remittance back to India with 129 billion USD in 2024. The spirit of the Indian diaspora is ever vibrant and zealous, and this celebration at Odisha's Bhubaneswar for appreciating Pravasi Bhartiya is a welcoming initiative. Let's take a moment to thank & appreciate the Indian diaspora, who are continuously extending the legacy of India all around the world.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

MAHAKUMBH MELA IN PRAYAGRAJ

Madam — The Great Mahakumbh Mela 2025, set to take place in Prayagraj, which is held only once in a period of 144 years, which is beginning from January 13 to February 26, is much more than a religious gathering—it is a profound celebration of spirituality, culture, and cosmic alignment. This ancient festival, rooted in the Sanatan tradition, is believed to influence not only human affairs but also cosmic and terrestrial energies. The event is centred on the holy confluence of three rivers—the Ganga, Yamuna and the Saraswati. The Mahakumbh exemplifies India's rich cultural diversity, drawing millions of devotees, ascetics, and pilgrims from all walks of life. Through practices like ritual bathing, chanting, meditation, and spiritual discourses, it becomes a unifying force, blending traditions and beliefs into a harmonious whole.

Anushka Bohra | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Breaking barriers: The rise of women investors in India's equity markets

Among the most notable trends in the equity market is the surge in women investors, whose participation has grown 6.8 times since 2015

The Indian equity market has radically transformed over the past two decades. The advent of smartphones, digital trading platforms, and increased financial literacy has ushered in a new era of investors — young, financially aware, and open to taking calculated risks. Recent data from the National Stock Exchange (NSE) reveals that women now constitute over 22 per cent of equity market investors in India, a 6.8X growth since 2015. This surge in female participation is particularly noteworthy given the tepid adoption of demat trading in its early days. It could be attributed to women enjoying greater financial independence, a growing interest in equities, and a disciplined approach to sustainable wealth creation. The rise in women's financial awareness has also been a critical driver of this growth. A study by CRISIL and DBS found that 47 per cent of women now make independent financial decisions. This newfound autonomy is reflected in the increasing number of women investing



in mutual funds. According to AMFI data, women's share in industry AUM rose to nearly 21 per cent by the end of December 2023, against 15.2 per cent in March 2017. Importantly, this trend is not limited to major cities; women in smaller towns show equal enthusiasm for capital market investments. However, the same CRISIL and DBS study revealed that women still allocate 51 per cent of their investable assets to fixed deposits and savings bank accounts, 16 per cent to gold, 15 per cent to mutual funds, 10 per cent to real estate, and just 7 per cent of their investable corpus—being the least preferred option. Given the proven potential for substantial market returns, women's risk-averse attitude towards equities is particularly perplexing.

Over the past five years, benchmark indices have delivered over 100 per cent returns. For instance, based on a daily rolling return analysis, the Nifty 50 Total Returns Index has shown positive returns of approximately 93 per cent over three years. These double-digit returns from long-term equity investments have far outpaced the single-digit interest rates offered by traditional savings accounts and fixed deposits. However, women tend to be cautious when it comes to equities. The potential impact of increased women's participation in equity markets is substantial. A BCG study found that women contribute \$5 trillion annually to the global wealth pool. Encouraging more significant equity investment among women and prudent risk management practices is crucial for building a stronger financial future for individuals and the nation. Regulators are already implementing measures to create a safe and transparent market environment for women investors. For instance, initiatives like the Women's

Investor Awareness Programme actively educate and empower women by simplifying stock market concepts and encouraging them to take control of their financial futures. Simultaneously, the industry complements these efforts by developing accessible and informative content in regional languages and diverse formats, such as podcasts and video tutorials, to make complex financial concepts easier to understand. Women themselves must actively participate in the stock market by engaging in discussions, seeking knowledge, and taking the initiative to invest. Starting with a systematic investment plan is a smart approach to building wealth over time. Additionally, consulting financial experts can help women navigate the market with confidence. It is time for women to seize this opportunity, take control, invest wisely, and contribute to rebuilding a more equitable and financially robust India.

(The writer is Director & Chief Business Officer at m.Stock by Mirae Asset Capital Markets; views are personal)



ARUN CHAUDHARY



FIRST COLUMN

HOMESCHOOLING: AN OPTION WORTH EXPLORING

While it comes with challenges, its benefits make it an increasingly compelling choice



SAKSHI SETHI

Childhood is a short season, and homeschooling gives a child more time to truly enjoy it. In recent years, homeschooling has seen a significant rise in popularity as parents increasingly opt to educate their children at home rather than through traditional schooling systems. This shift reflects a combination of concerns about conventional education and the desire for more tailored learning experiences. One of the primary reasons parents choose homeschooling is the ability to customise education to suit their child's unique needs.

There is no denying that curriculum is a valuable tool but at the same time a terrible master. Traditional classrooms often struggle to accommodate different learning paces and styles, whereas homeschooling allows parents to tailor lessons, fostering deeper understanding and engagement. Many parents cite dissatisfaction with public or private school systems as a motivator for homeschooling. Issues such as overcrowded classrooms, underfunding, and lack of individual attention can negatively impact the quality of education. Additionally, concerns over bullying, peer pressure, and exposure to harmful influences prompt parents to seek alternatives.

Homeschooling allows families to integrate their cultural, ethical, or religious values into the curriculum. Parents can teach their children in alignment with their personal beliefs, creating an educational experience that reflects their family's principles. Unlike traditional schooling, homeschooling offers flexibility in schedules and teaching methods. Families incor-



porate travel, extracurricular activities, or non-traditional subjects into their routine, enhancing the learning experience. This adaptability appeals to families seeking a more balanced lifestyle.

Unlike traditional schooling, homeschooling offers flexibility in schedules and teaching methods. Families can incorporate travel, extracurricular activities, or non-traditional subjects into their routine, enhancing the learning experience. This adaptability appeals to families seeking a more balanced lifestyle. While homeschooling offers many benefits, it is not without its challenges. Parents often need to dedicate significant time and effort to planning and teaching. Additionally, concerns about socialisation can arise, as homeschooled children may have fewer opportunities for peer interaction. However, many families address this by participating in extracurricular activities, and community events. Homeschooling is not a new phenomenon.

In olden times, education often took place at home, with parents or private tutors guiding the learning of their child. The rise of formalised schooling in the 19th and 20th centuries shifted education to institutions, but homeschooling remained a choice for families who sought alternatives. Modern homeschooling driven by educational reformers and parents seeking greater control over their children's education began gaining traction in the 1970s and 1980s. Today, it continues to evolve, integrating technology and innovative teaching practices. Technology undoubtedly has played a pivotal role in making homeschooling more accessible and effective. It has also enabled collaboration and connection among homeschooling communities. Online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and educational applications such as Scholastic Kids, Udemy, Duolingo, Funbrain and many more provide parents with resources to create comprehensive curricula. The shift to homeschooling reflects a broader desire among parents to take control of their children's education and provide a more personalised, values-driven learning environment. While homeschooling comes with its challenges, the benefits of flexibility, individualised attention and alignment with family priorities make homeschooling an increasingly appealing choice for families worldwide. *(The writer is an educator; views are personal)*

Junta faces collapse amid escalating defeats



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Losses across key regions, coupled with mass defections and severe military setbacks, suggest a crumbling grip of Military on power in Myanmar



By all indications, 2025 is going to be, militarily, a dismal year for Myanmar's ruling junta. It is clearly losing its war against the opposition National Unity Government (NUG) and its armed wing, the People's Defence Force (PDF), ethnic armed organisations (EROs), and the Three Brotherhood Alliance (Henceforth the Alliance). Comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), active in the Kokang Special Region of northern Shan State, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), also active in the Shan State and the Arakan Army (AA), based in the Rakhine State in the country's western part, the alliance has been acting in close cooperation with the PDF and other ethnic armies.

Crystal-gazing is a hazardous business. Nevertheless, a fling at it is warranted by the unfolding events in that star-crossed country. A report under the headline, 'Junta's Writ Only Runs in One-third of Myanmar: NUG,' (datelined January 6, 2025), in the news website The Irrawaddy, cited the NUG as stating that the military regime controlled only 107 of the country's 330 townships. The PDF and EROs fully or partly controlled 144 townships or 44 per cent of the country. The website, which enjoys a high-measure of credibility, carried an article by Maung Kavi (datelined January 8, 2025) under the headline, 'Myanmar Junta Boss warns resistance as Regime Loses Ground Nationwide,' saying that the NUG had further claimed that nearly 1,500 of the junta's soldiers and police personnel had defected to the civil disobedience movement and 480 of them had taken up 'revolutionary duties.' The report titled 'Junta's Writ Only Runs in One-third of Myanmar: NUG,' further states that 315 officers were killed and 127 injured in course of the last year. In the same period, 53 senior officers ranging in rank from colonel to major general, were either killed, injured, or taken prisoner. Among the rank and file, 14,093 soldiers and border guard policemen were killed and 7,363 injured. Anti-regime groups seized 741 junta



THE ODDS ARE NOW RAPIDLY STACKING UP AGAINST THE JUNTA. NO DOUBT, THE LATTER HAS TANKS AND OTHER ARMoured VEHICLES, ARTILLERY AND AIR FORCE. TANKS AND ARMoured VEHICLES ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO DEPLOY IN THE AREAS DOMINATED BY THE ETHNIC FORCES

positions. They were mostly captured by ethnic armies, but 162 were taken by PDF and People's Defence Teams in Sagaing, Magwe, Mandalay, Bago and Tanintharyi regions.

The military lost in 2024 some 140 battalions and two regional commands - North eastern Command in northern Shan State and Western Command in Rakhine-plus one regional operations command, five military operations commands, six operational bases, two airbases, 17 border guard police bases, as well as many infantry and light infantry battalions, and artillery, logistics, signal, and military engineering units.

While one should not take the NUG's claims at face value reports from the ground indicate that the Sit-Tat (as the junta's army is called) has suffered severe body blows during the last year. The Three Brotherhood Alliance has gained significant ground since launching its offensive, code-named Operation 1027, on October 27, 2023. The AA had established control over almost the entire Rakhine State by April, 2024. In a major development, the MNDAA claimed on July 31, 2024, that it had captured Sit-Tat's military base in Lashio, a city in Shan State close to the border with China, and its airport. This was a major loss for the junta.

As Vivek Shankar has pointed out in a piece in The New York Times datelined August 5, 2024, the 'city of Lashio and its airport lie on a crucial trade corridor to Yunnan Province in China, which is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a high-speed rail link and other infrastructure projects on both sides of the border.'

Besides gains in the north, the anti-junta forces had captured four towns in northern Mandalay.

According to a report by Andrew Nachevson published in Al Jazeera dated September 23, 2024, their capture had placed them within striking distance of the city of Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest urban centre, with a population of nearly two million.

On October 8, 2024, the Sit-Tat suffered a serious reverse with the fall of the township of Pinlebu to the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), an important part of the coalition of forces fighting the junta, and its allies. Located on the border of the Sagaing Region and Kachin State, its capture opened up to the opposition forces the routes leading to the Kawlin township and the surrounding areas.

Besides its geo-strategic significance, the township's fall is important for what it revealed of the Sit-Tat's state. A report by Saw Lin, published in the news website, The Irrawaddy, on October 14, 2024, cites the NUG as claiming that the junta's troops, numbering 800, were defeated despite 670 airstrikes and the dropping of over 5,000 bombs, that around 70 junta soldiers were killed, 275 were missing, 225 were wounded, 48 surrendered and 102 captured during the fighting. Around 400 firearms and other military equipment were seized.

In keeping with the trend, the Junta had ceded three townships and the Western Command headquarters in Rakhine State in December, 2024, as the ethnic Arakan Army gained control over 14 of the 17 townships in the westernmost state. On January 1, 2025, the Sit-Tat retreated from a heavily-fortified police station in Sagaing Region's Budalin Township after a yearlong siege by regional resistance forces, making it easier for the latter to operate in the region.

According to Maung Kavi's report

cited earlier, the junta, which has been losing towns and bases to EROs in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin and Karen states, has not been able to launch any military operation to retake the northern Shan State, almost the whole of which it had lost in 2024. The Sit-Tat is in a bad way.

Its morale is low. There is internal discord. Several three-stars generals have been removed. Many younger officers are unhappy as they recognise that almost the entire country is against them. According to a piece by Ye Myo Hein (datelined May 4, 2023) featured by the United States Institute of Peace, it was found the Sit-Tat, whose 'head-count,' showed a 'strength of a total 300,000-400,000 before the coup,' showed that it currently 'had a strength of about 150,000 personnel.'

Roughly 70,000 are combat soldiers. At least 21,000 service members have been lost through casualties, desertion and defection since the coup. At this troop level, the Sit-Tat is barely able to sustain itself as a fighting force, much less a government. The odds are now rapidly stacking up against the Junta. No doubt, the latter has tanks and other armoured vehicles, artillery and air force. Tanks and armoured vehicles are very difficult to deploy in the areas dominated by the ethnic forces. With densely forested mountainous terrains, deep gorges and steep climbs, these are ideal for staging ambushes. Moreover, air-strikes and artillery do not win wars, even when backed by heavily armed and trained infantry. Otherwise, the United States would have swept to a victory in Vietnam.

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

Real-time travel assistance: Transforming the Indian travel experience

From the integration of cutting-edge technology to the emergence of unique destinations, the way we explore has been redefined

The travel industry in India has undergone a significant transformation in the past decade. The advent of technology, the emergence of unique destinations, and travellers' shifting preferences have reshaped the way we experience travel. While convenience and connectivity have expanded exponentially, so have the challenges that come with travelling through this vast and diverse country.

In such a scenario, the idea of real-time travel assistance is much more than a luxury, gradually becoming a necessity. India is a land of incredible diversity, which often presents challenges for travellers, both domestic and international. With 28 states and countless languages, customs, and tradi-

tions, exploring India can be as overwhelming as it is enriching. A misplaced document, a language barrier, or a medical emergency in an unfamiliar city can turn a dream vacation or a crucial business trip into an overwhelming ordeal. This is where the concept of real-time assistance steps in, bridging the gap between exploration and ease.

The Need for Immediate Support: Travelers today demand solutions that are immediate, efficient, and humanised. The expectations from travel experiences are no longer confined to curated itineraries and luxury stays. Safety, comfort, and resolution to unexpected issues are just as critical to creating memorable journeys. Whether it's assis-



HARISH KHATRI

tance in locating a nearby pharmacy late at night, navigating bureaucratic hurdles in a foreign environment, or finding reliable medical aid during emergencies, travellers increasingly rely on services that ensure a smooth journey. Real-time assistance goes beyond static travel guides or pre-recorded helplines. It operates as a different system where timely, empathetic, and

accurate support becomes a part of the travel experience. It is this proactive approach that helps mitigate common traveller challenges and allows for a seamless journey, irrespective of the destination.

Empathy in Travel Assistance: A game-changer at its core, real-time travel assistance is about offering humanised solutions. Travellers often find themselves in vulnerable situations where a touch of empathy can go a long way. Imagine being stuck at a remote train station with no one to guide you to your next stop or dealing with a sudden health scare in a busy urban centre where you don't know the language.

These are moments when an empathetic, knowledgeable professional on the other end



of a call or chat can provide not just solutions, but also reassurance. It is this empathy paired with technology that is revolutionising travel assistance in India. Real-time support services aim to address the emotional and logistical needs of travellers in equal measure. **Utilising Technology to Enable Seamless Experiences:** The amalgamation of technology and travel assistance has unlocked possibilities previously deemed unattainable. Advanced algorithms, live

tracking, and geo-location services now enable assistance providers like India Assist to respond with precision and speed. Right from helping a traveller recover a lost wallet, guiding them to the best transport options, or facilitating emergency care, technology serves as the backbone of real-time assistance.

Moreover, AI-powered systems can predict and preempt potential challenges, ensuring that travellers are equipped with solutions even before they face a problem. Combined with human expertise, such systems provide an unprecedented level of service that adapts to the ever-changing needs of travellers. **A Vision for the Future of Indian Travel**

As India continues to grow as

a preferred travel destination for global tourists and a thriving market for domestic explorers, the need for reliable, real-time support systems will only increase. From first-time solo travellers to seasoned professionals on the move, everyone stands to benefit from a travel arena where assistance is no longer a reactive measure but an integral part of the journey.

The impact of such assistance goes beyond individual convenience. It enhances the overall travel ecosystem, fostering trust and confidence among travellers. When individuals feel supported, they are more likely to venture into less-explored destinations, bolstering local economies and creating new tourism opportunities. Real-time assistance also

aligns with India's vision of creating a more inclusive and welcoming travel environment. Addressing the unique needs of every traveller, be it accessibility, safety, or cultural understanding — opens the doors to a more diverse and enriching travel experience. As we move forward, the travel industry must imbibe the ethos of real-time assistance, not as an add-on service but as a core pillar of the travel experience. After all, the most unforgettable journeys are not just about the destinations we visit — they are about the challenges we overcome and the moments of human connection that transform challenges into memories.

(The writer is founder and MD of India Assist; views are personal)

Over 10,000 structures lost in LA blaze

PTI ■ LOS ANGELES

The two biggest wildfires ravaging the Los Angeles area this week burned at least 10,000 homes, buildings and other structures...

announced the Eaton Fire near Pasadena that started Tuesday night has burned more than 5,000 structures...

synagogue, seven schools, two libraries, boutiques, bars, restaurants, banks and groceries were lost. So too were the Will Rogers' Western Ranch House and Topanga Ranch Motel...



(Above) President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris lead a briefing regarding the federal response to the spread of wildfires in the Los Angeles area...



(Right) An emergency vehicle drives through a neighborhood devastated by the Eaton Fire in Altadena, Calif. AP/PTI

Imran warns of plan to impose 10-year dictatorship in Pak

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan has said that economic progress can never happen as long as the current "fascist system" is in place...

Pakistan, of which two years have already passed. Judges or police officers who become a party to oppression are rewarded with promotions here...

The PTI supremo reminded that many of his party men who took part in the November 26 protest in Islamabad are still missing. "These individuals disappeared from D-Chowk in Islamabad, not from some remote tribal area..."

Biden admin succeeds in temporarily blocking plea deal for accused 9/11 mastermind

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Biden administration succeeded Thursday in temporarily blocking a guilty plea by accused 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed...



Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

The federal appeals panel agreed Thursday evening to a temporary stay. It stressed that the stay would hold only as long as it took to more fully consider arguments in the government's request...

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAINA GUPTA W/o Dwarika Prasad Gupta R/o RZ-179, Gali No.4 Dabri Vaishali Dabri South West Delhi-110045 have changed my name to RITU GUPTA for all future purposes.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement systems

देमती वदन्त बहुपुत्रा उत्तराखण्ड विद्यालय शिक्षा विद्यालय नू संकेत संघ उत्तर, बरेली, उत्तराखण्ड, देहरादून, 248497 उत्तराखण्ड, भारत

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-NOTICE INVITING TENDER For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (RSO), Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites E-Tender

I, Mansaram Betal, Father of No.3200947F Hav Chanchal Kumar Betal, R/o- Vill-Ramnagar PO- Ramnagar Mobarakpur, PS- Arambagh, Dist- Hooghly, W.B.- 712616, have changed my name from Mansaram Betal to Manasharam Betal, vide affidavit dated 10/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058

Indian Overseas Bank Wazieabad Branch (Shyam Chowk, Near Girls, Govt. High School, Wazirabad, Gurgaon, Haryana 122003)

PUBLIC NOTICE (In case there is no will) Plot / Property No-APARTMENT No. CM633A, 33RD FLOOR, BLOCK 6A, THE CAMELLIAS, DLF 5, GURUGRAM, HARYANA, ALONG WITH CAR PARKING NOS.633A-PB1-1, 633A-PB1-2, 633A-PB1-3, 633A-PB1-4 AND 633A-PB1-5

Earlier, my name was BEERMATI TYAGI (बीरमति त्र्यागी) and BRAHMAVATI (ब्रह्मवती) and now I have changed my name to BARMAWATTI. In the future, I want to be recognized and identified by this name. BARMAWATTI, Wife of Late Shri Prempral Tyagi, Resident of A-545, Ganeshpuri, Near Shiv Shalimar Garden, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad..

DISCUSSION OF THE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of the BUILT UP ENTIRE FIRST FLOOR, UP TO THE EXTENT OF CEILING LEVEL, HAVING ITS PLINTH COVERED AREA, 41.80 SQ. METERS, i.e. 50 sq.yds. COMPRISING OF TWO BED ROOMS, ONE DRAWING ROOM DINING ROOM, ONE KITCHEN AND TOILET/BATHROOM, WITH COMMON RIGHTS TO USE STAIRCASE, PASSAGE, ENTRANCE AND ROOF/TERRACE OF TOP FLOOR, BUILT ON PART OF PROPERTY BEARING NO.C-104, OUT OF KHASRA NO.811, SITUATED AT ABADI OF C-BLOCK, GALI NO.8, KUMAON SQUARE, WEST VINOD NAGAR, IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE MANDAWALI FAZAL PUR, ILLAQA SHAHDARA, DELHI-110092. Falling Under the Registration of Sub-Registrar-VIIIA, Preet Vihar, Delhi.

DISCUSSION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. 1203, 12th Floor, Block D- 6, Aloha, situated at AEZ inspirations, Sector 57 Gurgaon (Haryana), 122003, within the registration sub-district Gurgaon and District Gurgaon

PUBLIC NOTICE A notice of intended marriage has been received from Mr. Abhik Deb S/o Mr. Biswajit Deb R/o B1 -2/3, Avsar Vihar, Road No-5 (Extn.), Kailjnagar, Sonari, Jamshedpur-831011 Present Address D-39, Sector-52 Noida, Gautambuddha Nagar and Ms. Asmita Gopal D/o Mr. Somnath Nandy R/o 13/2 Sri Gopal Mullick Lane, Muchipara, Kolkata, West Bengal-700012 Present Address 1905, Tower-10, Lotus Panache, Sector-104, Market Sector-110, Noida in the office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may file objections to it on any day upto 26-01-2025 in the office of the undersigned.

I, Smt Arti Betal, Mother of No.3200947F Hav Chanchal Kumar Betal, R/o- Vill-Ramnagar PO- Ramnagar Mobarakpur, PS- Arambagh, Dist- Hooghly, W.B.- 712616, have changed my name from Smt Arti Betal to Arati Betal, vide affidavit dated 10/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

DISCUSSION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. 1203, 12th Floor, Block D- 6, Aloha, situated at AEZ inspirations, Sector 57 Gurgaon (Haryana), 122003, within the registration sub-district Gurgaon and District Gurgaon

PUBLIC NOTICE AND POOJA TYAGI who are purchasing the Apartment No.D-0833n 8th Floor, Tower-D, having super area measuring 166.93 Sq. Mtrs. (1796.17 sq. ft.), project known as "RAHEJA VEDAS" situated in the scheme named "Rajeha's Vedanta" Vedas & Vedanta Floors, situated at Sector-108, Tehsil Kadpur, District-Surgram, Haryana, from Mr. Devendra Goswami and Mr. Armit Bhatti, initially the subject property was purchased by WG CDR Rajan Jaisinghani & Mona Jaisinghani from M/s Rajeja Developers Limited vide Conveyance Deed dated 18.11.2019 (bearing document no.9472), further WG CDR Rajan Jaisinghani expired on 14.12.2022 leaving behind his surviving members as (1) Mona Jaisinghani (Wife), Ashish Jaisinghani (son) both R/o 1001, Yawane, Nahar Armit Shakti, Andheri East, Mumbai, Maharashtra-400072, (3) Adin Jaisinghani (Son) R/o 10 Narpal Niwas, Airforce Road, Jodhpur-342011, Rajasthan), further Ashish Jaisinghani and Adin Jaisinghani had issued Consent Letter (Nos-2) dated 18.11.2023 (read with Will dated 25.05.2022) to their mother Mona Jaisinghani, finally Mona Jaisinghani sold the subject property to Mr. Devendra Goswami and Mr. Armit Bhatti, vide Sale Deed dated 01.08.2024, bearing document no.5788, now ANJU TYAGI and POOJA TYAGI intend to purchase the same and mortgage against the financial assistance from IDBI Bank Limited. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person having any type of claim/right/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc. (Lumen Legal LLP Plot No.136, (Basement) Uday Park, New Delhi-110049, Contact # 011-40046316

I, Raj Kumari, W/o Satinder Singh, R/o- RZ- 46 J, Street No. 2, Main Sagar Pur, Delhi - 110046, declare that Abhishek Singh is my son, in his educational Certificate, my name is erroneously written as Shashi Singh, whereas my correct name is Raj Kumari, both names pertain to one and same person, i.e. myself.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

DISCUSSION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. 1203, 12th Floor, Block D- 6, Aloha, situated at AEZ inspirations, Sector 57 Gurgaon (Haryana), 122003, within the registration sub-district Gurgaon and District Gurgaon

DISCUSSION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. 1203, 12th Floor, Block D- 6, Aloha, situated at AEZ inspirations, Sector 57 Gurgaon (Haryana), 122003, within the registration sub-district Gurgaon and District Gurgaon

Canada's Indian-origin MP Chandra Arya says he'll run for prime ministership

PTI ■ OTTAWA

Canada's Indian-origin MP Chandra Arya has announced that he is running to be the next Prime Minister, hours before his Liberal Party announced that their next leader will be chosen on March 9.

The development comes days after Justin Trudeau announced to step down but said he will continue to be the prime minister till the next leader is chosen. Arya, the MP from Nepean, Ottawa, who was born in Karnataka, made the announcement on X Thursday morning ahead of the Liberal Party's meeting later in the evening.

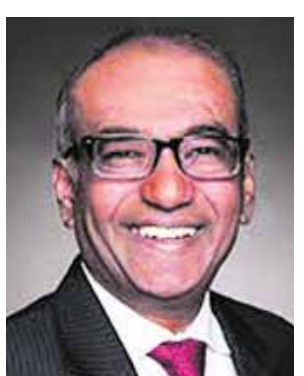
"I am running to be the next Prime Minister of Canada to lead a small, more efficient government to rebuild our nation and secure prosperity for future generations," he said in the post on X and added a long statement with it.

significant structural problems that haven't been seen for generations, Arya said, adding that solving them will require tough choices. "For the sake of our children and grandchildren, we must make bold decisions that are absolutely necessary."

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) highlighted that Arya wants to lead a small, more efficient government "with a cabinet selected on merit and not on (diversity, equity and inclusion) quotas."

Arya was first elected to the House of Commons in 2015. His multi-page announcement includes a list of policy proposals, including increasing the retirement age by two years in 2040, introducing a citizenship-based tax system and recognising Palestine as a state, it added.

"It's time for Canada to take full control of its destiny," he wrote in the statement and promised to make the country "a sover-



Chandra Arya, MP from Nepean, Ottawa.

Thursday evening to discuss and outline the initial rules of the up-coming leadership race, the party statement added. After the party's announcement, another CBC report said that former central banker Mark Carney has also said he's interested and added that former finance minister Chrystia Freeland, former B.C. premier Christy Clark and House Leader Karina Gould are said to be gathering supporters, too.

Prior to Thursday's meeting, along with Arya, former Montreal MP Frank Baylis both said they will be running, it said.

The CBC report also pointed out how the new leader chosen on March 9 will have a tight timeline as the Gov Gen Mary Simon has prorogued Parliament until March 24. The main three opposition parties have vowed a 'No Confidence' vote after Parliament resumes, other media reports said.

Kremlin welcomes possibility of Trump-Putin meeting

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Kremlin has welcomed US President-elect Donald Trump's readiness to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin, a senior Moscow official said on Friday.

Russia attaches no conditions to the possibility of face-to-face talks, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a conference call.

Trump said on Thursday that a meeting is being set up. He indicated that efforts to end the almost three-year war between Russia and Ukraine

were behind the overtures for talks. "We have to get that war over with," Trump said when referring to his possible meeting with Putin.

Trump, who has criticised US aid for Ukraine's war effort, has called Putin "pretty smart" for invading Ukraine and has praised Russia's military record in historical conflicts. Putin has been accused of war crimes by the International Criminal Court. Ukrainian officials are alarmed at the possibility that the US, its single biggest donor, could reduce or stop providing aid. Without Western support, its fight against Russia's inva-

sion could be doomed. The outgoing Biden administration is providing Ukraine with as much military support as it can, including approving a new USD 500 million package of weapons, with the aim of putting Ukraine in the strongest position possible for any future negotiations to end the war. "We are aware that the (Biden) administration will try to leave as difficult legacy in bilateral

relations as possible for Trump and his team," Peskov said. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that in any peace negotiation his country would need assurances about its future protection from Russia, its much bigger neighbour, which has invaded Ukraine twice since the turn of the century. Europe alone cannot provide that guarantee, he said late Thursday.

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot

Ph: 01639-256232-256236

ADVT. No. BFU-25/01

Vacancies

Online applications are invited w.e.f. 13-01-2025 to 03-02-2025 from eligible candidates through university website i.e. www.bfuhhs.ggsmch.org for recruitment to the posts of Divisional Accountant-01, Accountant-03, Cashier-02, Senior Assistant (Accounts)-01 on regular basis at University office and constituent colleges/ institutions of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot.

For details/ updates/ eligibility/ no. of Posts/ terms & conditions visit website www.bfuhhs.ggsmch.org.

Sd/- Registrar

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot

Ph: 01639-256232-256236

ADVT. No. BFU-25/02

VACANCIES

Online applications are invited w.e.f. 13.01.2025 to 03.02.2025 from eligible candidates through University website i.e. www.bfuhhs.ggsmch.org for the recruitment to the posts of Associate Professor-Radiodiagnosis-01, Assistant Professor-11 (Forensic Medicine-03, SPM-02, Radiodiagnosis-03, Anaesthesiology-01, General Surgery-02) and Statistician (SPM)-01 on regular basis at constituent Colleges/Institutions of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot (Guru Gobind Singh Medical College & Hospital, Faridkot).

For Application form, fee, specialty wise detail of posts, Category wise distribution and other terms & conditions, visit University website: www.bfuhhs.ggsmch.org

Sd/- REGISTRAR

NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

PALIKA KENDRA: NEW DELHI

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Application are invited from retired Vice Principal/Principal/ Dy. Director (Academic/Educational) and Deputy Education Officer from Central Govt./State Govt./Municipal Bodies/NDMC/ Kendriya Vidyalaya for overall coordination of the academic activities of NDMC and Navvyug Schools of Education Department in NDMC for the academic session 2025-2026. For detail of educational qualification, age limit, terms & conditions and other information, log on to NDMC website www.ndmc.gov.in

Applications complete in all respect in the prescribed format available on the NDMC website may be submitted to the Deputy Director (Education), Room No. 1009, 10th Floor, Palika Kendra, Sansad Marg, New Delhi in person or through e-mail jd.education@ndmc.gov.in latest by 20.01.2025.

Applications received after closing date i.e. 20.01.2025 will not be considered.

Sd/- Director (Education)

CORRIGENDUM NO. 1

FOR TENDER NO. N_11_HQ_IDS_2024-25 DATED: 09-01-2025

Tender Notice No. N_11_HQ_2024-25. Name of work: Provision of Elephant Intrusion Detection System for detection of elephant movements with tracking and Level crossing alerts to increase Safety and capacity enhancement over N.F. Railway in Rangly Division. Date & Time of closing of Tender: 15:00 hrs. on 24-01-2025. For details of the corrigendum please visit www.ireps.gov.in

General Manager (S&T), Maligaon

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Manisha Rana is the owner as well as Proprietor of M/s Chetaki Spices Industries is in process to avail the working capital from HDFC Bank against her DDA Built-up Flat Bearing No. 195, on Third Floor, area measuring 42.10 sq. mtrs. UG Category, in Pocket 5 Sector B-2, situated in the layout plan of Narela Residential Scheme, Narela, Delhi - 110040 purchased from Vijay Kumar, vide Sale deed dated 14/12/2018 (doc. No. 6325) whereas Vijay Kumar acquired the said property by virtue of Relinquishment Deed dated 11/12/2018 Doc No. 6227.

All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise whatsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 07 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First Floor, Mahaxumi Metro Tower
Sec-4, Vaishali, Gb., U.P. Mob. 9810093351

CONSTRUCTION OF SPURS FOR RIVER TRAINING AND OTHER PROTECTION WORK

E-Tender Notice No. SCL/ENG/08 of 2025 Dated: 08-01-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Brief Description of Item: Construction of Spurs for River Training and other protection work in river Dhaleswari at Br. No. 133 between Jamira-Bhairabi section under ADEN/Badarpur Ghat. Tender Value: ₹6,28,41,472.69/-, Earnest Money: ₹4,64,200/-. Date & Time of closing of Tender: 15:00 hrs. on 30-01-2025 & opening at 15:00 hrs. of 31-01-2025. The complete information of the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 30-01-2025 in the website www.ireps.gov.in

DRM (W) Lunding at Silchar
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

Equinox India

Sylvanus Properties Limited

(CIN: U70109DL2006PLC150229)

Extract of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2024

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended 31 December 2024	Corresponding quarter ended 31 December 2023	Previous year ended 31 March 2024
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	49.4	34.7	210.5
2	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(22.6)	(55.8)	(1,286.5)
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(22.6)	(55.8)	(1,286.5)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(24.2)	(56.1)	(1,285.9)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising (Loss) / Profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(24.2)	(56.1)	(1,287.9)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	100.0	100.0	100.0
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	(6,858.1)	(5,649.7)	(6,755.8)
8	Securities Premium Account	-	-	-
9	Net Worth	(6,758.1)	(5,649.7)	(6,655.8)
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt	10,085.2	9,653.7	9,906.6
11	Outstanding redemption preference share	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	(1.49)	(1.74)	(1.49)
13	Earnings per Share (EPS) (Face value Per Share ₹10 each)	-	-	-
	- Basic (Amount in ₹)	(2.42)	(5.61)	(128.59)
	- Diluted (Amount in ₹)	(2.42)	(5.61)	(128.59)
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-
15	Debtenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	-	-	-
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	-	-	-
18	Current ratio (In times)	0.43	0.49	0.45
19	Total debts to total assets	1.96	1.76	1.81
20	Long term debt to working capital (In times)	-	-	-
21	Bad debt to account receivable ratio (In %)	-	-	-
22	Current liability ratio (In times)	1.00	1.00	1.00
23	Debtor turnover ratio (In times)	0.31	1.24	1.91
24	Inventory turnover ratio (In times)	0.01	0.01	0.26
25	Operating margin (In %)	(8.07)	(24.39)	(491.51)
26	Net profit margin (In %)	(48.90)	(161.75)	(610.75)

Notes:

- The above results have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors ('the Board') at its meeting held on 10 January 2025.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 52(8), read with 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Company's website (<https://equinoxindia.com/sylvanus/>) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

Registered Office: Office No. 202, 2nd Floor, A-18, Rama House, Middle Circle, Connaught Place, New Delhi- 110 001.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Rikesh Kirtikummar Lakhani
Whole-time Director

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, (Ex JCO) Phool Chand S/o Late Prabhu Dayal Singh, Vill-Jonawas, Teh & Distt. Mahendergarh (HR) My son Abhishek Yadav who is out of control of me and dispossessed or ousted from my movable and immovable property.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mr. Sahabuddin, son of Mr. Rafique, intends to purchase residential freehold vacant land, measuring 44.5 square yards (37.20 square meters), located in Pratap Vihar, Khoda Colony, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, U.P. from Mr. Mohd. Sager, son of Mr. Sheikh Yakub. The property was purchased by Mr. Sager from Mr. Abdul Rauf through a Sale Deed dated 02.12.2010. This same property is being financed by RBL Bank Limited, located at AF 19, 20, 21 FF Aditya Mall, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, U.P. 201012. The original Sale Deeds, Regd. No. 1458 Book No. 01, Vol. No. 1930, on Pages 159-165, dated 28.02.2005, SR-II Ghaziabad, and Regd. No. 1828 Book No. 01, Vol. No. 2291, on Pages 88-94, dated 16.02.2006, SR-II Ghaziabad, along with the notarized General Power of Attorney, Agreement to Sell, and Will dated 12.11.2009, have been lost. An Online FIR (Application Number: LR No 2479236/2025, dated 09.01.2025) has been filed with the PS: Crime Branch, Delhi, regarding the loss of these documents. Any person having information about the lost documents is requested to inform the undersigned or the local police station. If any person(s) objections, regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

Ashwani Kumar (Advocate) Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

THE JAGRITI NAGAR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE BUILDING SOCIETY LTD.

REGN NO. - 2183
Jagrati Enclave, Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092

PUBLIC NOTICE

In terms of the provisions of Schedule-VII of DCS Rules 2007, the general public is hereby informed that Smt. Ratna Mohla w/o Late Shri Pratap Kishan Jetley (Membership No. 668) of The Jagriti Nagar Co-operative House Building Society Ltd. is being forwarded by Managing committee of the society for draw of lots in her name through RCS/DDA as per the provisions of DCS Act 2003 & Rules 2007 framed thereunder & guidelines thereof. Any person/member having any objection, may file before the President/Secretary of The Jagriti Nagar Co-operative House Building Society Ltd. (Regn. No. 2183) at Regd. Office Jagriti Enclave, Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092 or before the office of the Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Govt of NCT of Delhi, Old Court's Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001 within 3 days of publication of this notice and no objections shall be entertained, thereafter in any manner whatsoever and the society will proceed further accordingly.

For & on behalf of The Jagriti Nagar Co-operative House Building Society Ltd.
President/Secretary

Yaari Digital Integrated Services Limited

(CIN: L51101HR2007PLC077999)

Extract of Consolidated Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2024

Particulars	Quarter ended 31-Dec-24	Quarter ended 30-Sep-24	Quarter ended 31-Dec-23	Year to date 31-Dec-24	Year to date 31-Dec-23	Year ended 31-Mar-24
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Total Income from Operations	-	-	2.57	0.50	2.87	3.15
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(5.54)	(5.59)	(3.67)	(16.41)	(14.91)	(21.61)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items))	(5.54)	(5.59)	(3.67)	(16.41)	(14.91)	(21.61)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(5.54)	(5.60)	(3.67)	(16.42)	(14.91)	(21.61)
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	27.95	(3.75)	(6.13)	28.54	(4.97)	(12.31)
Equity Share Capital	19.74	19.74	19.74	19.74	19.74	19.74
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the audited Balance Sheet						(253.50)
Earnings per Share (EPS) before extraordinary items						
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.37)	(1.63)	(1.48)	(2.15)
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.37)	(1.63)	(1.48)	(2.15)
Earnings per Share (EPS) after extraordinary items						
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.37)	(1.63)	(1.48)	(2.15)
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.37)	(1.63)	(1.48)	(2.15)

Notes:

- The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 10 January 2025.
- Key Standalone Financial Information:

Particulars	Quarter ended 31-Dec-24	Quarter ended 30-Sep-24	Quarter ended 31-Dec-23	Year to date 31-Dec-24	Year to date 31-Dec-23	Year ended 31-Mar-24
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Total Income	0.09	0.09	2.87	0.77	3.20	3.57
Profit/(Loss) before Tax	(10.69)	(10.69)	(8.05)	(32.60)	(29.01)	(43.37)
Net Profit/(Loss) after Tax	(10.69)	(10.69)	(8.05)	(32.60)	(29.01)	(43.37)

3) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/ Nine months Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Nine months Financial Results are available on the Company's website (https://yaari.com/api/static/investors/1736510327305Quarterly-Results_Dec2024.pdf) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

Registered Office: 5th Floor, Plot No. 108, IT Park, Udyog Vihar, Phase-1 Gurugram, Haryana 122016

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Place : Gurugram
Date : 10 January 2025

Kubeir Khara
Executive Director & CEO

The same can be accessed by scanning the QR code provided below

Equinox India

Equinox India Developments Limited

(formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited)

Statement of Unaudited Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2024

Sl. No.	Particulars	3 months ended	Preceding 3 months ended	Corresponding 3 months ended	Year to date figures for current period ended	Year to date figures for previous period ended	Previous year ended
		31 Dec.2024 (Unaudited)	30 Sept. 2024 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2023 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2024 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2023 (Unaudited)	31 March 2024 (Audited)
1	Total income from operations	3,096.1	2,874.1	1,118.5	10,004.1	4,292.1	4,687.5
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the year/period (before Tax, Minority Interest and Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	268.5	337.9	(283.3)	382.4	(926.8)	(3,937.2)
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period before Tax and Minority Interest (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	268.5	337.9	(283.3)	382.4	(7,217.5)	(10,227.9)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period after Tax and Minority Interest (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	223.9	242.7	(385.0)	184.2	(7,360.7)	(10,383.5)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the year/period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the year/period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	223.0	242.6	75.1	374.2	(6,035.6)	(9,072.0)
6	Earnings per Share (of ₹ 2/- each)						
	- Basic (Amount in ₹)	0.35	0.38	(0.71)	0.29	(13.61)	(19.20)
	- Diluted (Amount in ₹)	0.34	0.35	(0.71)	0.25	(13.61)	(19.20)
7	Paid up Equity Share Capital	1,271.7	1,271.7	1,082.2	1,271.7	1,082.2	1,082.2
8	Other equity						26,571.8

Notes to the consolidated financial results:

- The above consolidated results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 10 January 2025. These financial results have been subjected to limited review by the statutory auditors of the Company.

Equinox India Developments Limited

(formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited)

Statement of Unaudited Standalone Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2024

Sl. No.	Particulars	3 months ended	Preceding 3 months ended	Corresponding 3 months ended	Year to date figures for current period ended	Year to date figures for previous period ended	Previous year ended
		31 Dec.2024 (Unaudited)	30 Sept. 2024 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2023 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2024 (Unaudited)	31 Dec.2023 (Unaudited)	31 March 2024 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	51.4	74.7	83.8	212.8	278.5	802.1
2	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(145.5)	(117.6)	(2.7)	(383.5)	(65.1)	31.1
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(145.5)	(117.6)	(2.7)	(383.5)	(65.1)	(35,798.3)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(152.6)	(110.4)	(3.1)	(384.0)	(66.0)	(35,802.3)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the year/period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(152.6)	(110.4)	457.0	(193.0)	1,259.3	(34,482.5)
6	Earnings per Share (of ₹ 2/- each)						
	-Basic (Amount in ₹)	(0.24)	(0.17)	(0.01)	(0.62)	(0.12)	(66.17)
	-Diluted (Amount in ₹)	(0.24)	(0.17)	(0.01)	(0.62)	(0.12)	(66.17)
7	Paid-up equity share capital (face value of ₹ 2 per equity share)	1,271.7	1,271.7	1,082.2	1,271.7	1,082.2	1,082.2
8	Other equity						31,839.9

Notes to the standalone financial results:

- The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 10 January 2025. These financial results have been subjected to limited review by the statutory auditors of the Company.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Company's website (<https://equinoxindia.com>) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

Registered Office: Office No 01-1001, WeWork, Blue One Square, Udyog Vihar Phase 4 Rd, Gurugram, Haryana 122016

Place : Mumbai
Date : 10 January 2025

(CIN) : L45101HR2006PLC095409

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Sachin Shah
Executive Director

India's economy projected to grow 6.6 per cent in 2025: UN

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

The Indian economy is projected to expand by 6.6 per cent in 2025, primarily supported by robust private consumption and investment, according to a United Nations report. The report titled 'the UN World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025' was released here on Wednesday. It also said that the near-term outlook for South Asia is expected to remain robust, with growth projected at 5.7 per cent in 2025 and 6.0 per cent in 2026, "driven by strong performance in India as well as economic recovery in a few other economies", including Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The Indian economy grew by 6.8 per cent in 2024 and is forecast to expand by 6.6 per cent in 2025. The Indian economy is projected to return to the 6.8 per cent growth in 2026.

particular pharmaceuticals and electronics, will bolster economic activity for India. On the supply side, expansion in the manufacturing and services sectors will keep driving the economy throughout the forecast period. Meanwhile, favourable monsoon rains in 2024 have improved the summer-sowing areas for all major crops, boosting agricultural output expectations for 2025. Investment growth has remained particularly strong in East Asia and South Asia, partly driven by domestic and foreign investments in new supply chains, particularly in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam, the report said. In India, the public sector continues to play a pivotal role in funding large-scale infrastructure projects, physical and digital connectivity, and social infrastructure, including improvements in sanitation and water supply. Strong investment growth is expected to continue through 2025. Consumer price inflation in India is forecast to decelerate from an estimated 4.8 per cent in 2024 to 4.3 per cent in 2025, staying within the 2-6 per cent medium-term target range set by the central bank. While decreasing energy prices have contributed to the ongoing decline, adverse weather conditions have kept prices of vegetables, cereals, and other staples elevated in 2024, resulting



in spikes in the country's headline inflation in June and September. It said that several developing economies, including China, India, and Mexico, have maintained robust investment growth, while African nations have faced limited public investment due to high debt servicing burdens, and Western Asia has experienced low investment growth amid subdued oil revenues. Global economic growth is forecast at 2.8

per cent in 2025 and 2.9 per cent in 2026, largely unchanged from the rate of 2.8 per cent recorded in 2023 and estimated for 2024. The positive but moderately slower growth projected for the two largest economies—China and the United States of America—will likely be complemented by mild recovery in the European Union, Japan, and the United Kingdom and strong performance in several large developing economies,

notably India and Indonesia, it said. China is facing the prospect of gradual economic moderation, with growth estimated at 4.9 per cent in 2024 and projected at 4.8 per cent in 2025. Public sector investments and strong export performance are partly offset by subdued consumption growth and lingering weakness in the property sector. The Chinese authorities have stepped up policy support to lift property markets, address local government debt challenges, and boost domestic demand; the impacts of relevant initiatives are expected to be manifested over time, it said. The shrinking population and rising trade and technology tensions, if unaddressed, could threaten the country's medium-term growth prospects, it said. Among developing countries, robust momentum in India and modest growth acceleration in Africa, Western Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean will offset a slight moderation of growth in China. The report noted that weaker external demand, persistent debt challenges, and social unrest and political turmoil in some economies may undermine the outlook for the South Asian region. "However, risks to the outlook are tilted to the downside owing to the possible escalation of geopolitical tensions,

deceleration in external demand, ongoing debt challenges, and social unrest. In addition, as the region is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate hazards, extreme weather events pose a significant risk," it said. It said that the labour market situation in developing countries remains challenging, with significant variations in the outlook driven by differing economic conditions and policy responses. Some economies have exhibited resilience, it said adding that employment indicators in India have remained robust. In India, employment indicators have remained strong throughout 2024, with labour force participation near record highs, the report said, citing the Reserve Bank of India data. Urban unemployment stood at 6.6 per cent during this period—virtually unchanged from the rate of 6.7 per cent recorded in 2023. Although there has been progress in female labour market participation in the country, substantial gender gaps remain. Climate-related shocks have battered South Asia in 2024. During the first half of the year, several of the region's countries—including Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—experienced heatwaves, droughts, and irregular rainfall patterns, which led to reduced crop yields and elevated food prices.

India's industrial production growth hits six-month high of 5.2 per cent in November: Government data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's industrial production (IIP) growth accelerated to a six-month high of 5.2 per cent year-on-year in November 2024, riding on the increased festive demand and pick up in manufacturing sector, according to the official data released on Friday. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) recorded a growth of 2.5 per cent in November 2023, according to a statement by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. The previous high growth rate at 6.3 per cent was recorded in May 2024. It grew by 4.9 per cent in June and 5 per cent in July 2024. The IIP growth was flat in August before picking up at 3.1 per cent in September and 3.7 per cent in October 2024.



The growth in the factory output, measured in terms of the IIP, in April-November 2024 grew by 4.1 per cent against 6.5 per cent in the year-ago period, the data showed. As per the data, the mining output growth decelerated to 1.9 per cent in November from 7 per cent expansion in the year-ago month. The manufacturing sector's growth accelerated to 5.8 per

cent in November from 1.3 per cent a year ago. Power generation growth slowed to 4.4 per cent from 5.8 per cent a year ago. As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment growth accelerated to 9 per cent in November 2024 against a contraction of 1.1 per cent in the year-ago period. Showing festive demand, consumer durable (or white)

goods production grew by 13.1 per cent during the reporting month against a contraction of 4.8 per cent in November 2023. In November 2024, consumer non-durables output growth remained almost flat at 0.6 per cent compared to a contraction of 3.4 per cent in November 2023. According to the data, infrastructure/construction goods reported a growth of 10 per cent in November 2024, up from a 1.5 per cent expansion in the year-ago period. The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged a 2.7 per cent growth in November 2024 against 8.4 per cent a year earlier. The expansion in the intermediate goods segment was 5 per cent in the month under review, higher than 3.4 per cent a year ago.

Fund raising from capital markets to jump 21 per cent to ₹14.27 lakh Crore in FY25: Buch

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Overall fundraising from capital markets, including through equity and debt instruments, is estimated to jump by nearly 21 per cent to Rs 14.27 lakh crore in FY25 from the Rs 11.8 lakh crore in FY24, Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch said on Friday. Buch said in the past nine months of the current fiscal, entities have mobilised Rs 3.3 lakh crore in equity and Rs 7.3 lakh crore from the debt markets, with the overall mop-up reaching Rs 10.7 lakh crore. "If we project for the next quarter (Q4), we will probably end somewhere like over Rs 14 lakh crore raised for the year in terms of capital, both equity and debt," Buch said addressing a NISM-organised conference here. A presentation made by Buch pegged the FY25 estimate at Rs 14.27 lakh crore. Buch said money raised by real estate investments trusts, infrastructure investment trusts and municipal bonds has a very small contribution to the



overall capital raising at around Rs 10,000 crore in the first nine months of FY25, but added that she sees the activity growing over the next decade to even exceed the money raised from equity and debt markets. The capital markets regulator is working towards expediting the time taken for clearing issuances, Buch said, committing to reduce the time taken for clearing small and medium enterprises (SME) board proposals. She said Sebi is taking up to 3 months for such SME issuances, while the banks are

giving in-principle approvals in 15 minutes, and added that it will like to use more of tech tools to advance the issuances. Buch said a lot of attention is paid to IPOs and Sebi is "flooded" with new applications on the same, but added that other avenues including preferential issuances, institutional placements and rights issues are also important and may go unnoticed. She added that the regulator has come up with a system for expediting rights issuances, and hoped that the industry adopts the same. Pointing out that the regulator has been clearing mutual funds' new offers much faster, the Sebi chairperson said systematic investment plans (SIP) with a minimum amount of Rs 250 will be launched shortly. She appreciated the resource mobilisation done by domestic institutional investors over the last few years, and added that this money has helped in times of volatilities which may see a pull-out by foreign portfolio investors.

Snag in system: Government extends monthly GST return, payment deadline

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Friday extended the deadline for filing monthly GST sales return form GSTR-1 and GST payment by 2 days after taxpayers reported technical glitches in the GSTN system. As per a notification by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the last date for filing GSTR-1 for December is January 13, while that for taxpayers opting for quarterly payment under the QRMP scheme for the October-December period will be January 15. Normally, the last date for filing GSTR-1 for monthly return filers is January 11, while for quarterly taxpayers it



is January 13. The deadline for GST payment by filing GSTR-3B for December has been extended to January 22, from the existing date of January 20. For taxpayers who pay GST quarterly, the due date has been extended to January 24 and January 26, depending on the state-wise registration of the business. Earlier in the day, GST Network said in a post on X

that it has sent an "incident report" to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) on the technical glitches in the system and requested an extension of the filing date of GST sales return or GSTR-1. "GST portal is currently experiencing technical issues and is under maintenance. We expect the portal to be operational by 12:00 noon. CBIC is being sent an incident report to consider extension in filing date," GST Tech, the official handle of GSTN, said in a post on X. The GST Network has since Thursday as taxpayers were unable to generate summary of GSTR-1 and file the return.

Sensex, Nifty extend losses for third consecutive session

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty nursed losses for the third consecutive session on Friday, in lockstep with a weak trend in global equities as concerns over economic growth and a slowdown in quarterly earnings sapped investors' risk appetite. Surging crude oil prices and a strengthening dollar index also contributed to the weak trend in equities. In a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex declined 241.30 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 77,378.91. During the day, the benchmark gyrated 820.15 points between the day's high of 77,919.70 and a low of 77,099.55.



The NSE Nifty dropped 95 points or 0.40 per cent to 23,431.50. From the 30-share blue-chip pack, IndusInd Bank, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Sun

Pharma, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, Tata Steel, Power Grid, Adani Ports and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the major laggards. Tata Consultancy Services

jumped nearly 6 per cent after the IT services company reported an 11.95 per cent jump in the December quarter net profit to Rs 12,380 crore. Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Infosys and Bajaj Finserv were the other big gainers. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 7,170.87 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. "Domestic market sentiment remained subdued due to rising crude oil prices, driven by supply concerns, and a strengthening dollar index. Despite the IT sector's resilience following positive early Q3 results, broader indices bled due to uncertainties surrounding Trump policies and high

valuations. "Consolidation may persist in the near term, yet investors are closely watching the US non-farm payroll data today for further guidance," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. European markets were trading lower. US markets were closed on Thursday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 2.02 per cent to USD 78.47 a barrel. In the previous session, the 30-share BSE benchmark dropped 528.28 points or 0.68 per cent to sink below the 78,000 level at 77,620.21. The Nifty slumped 162.45 points or 0.69 per cent to 23,526.50.

Redevelopment of Exclusive La-Mandre Villa Community

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Yugen Infra unveils its latest venture—the redevelopment of La-Mandre, an elite villa community near Mandrem Beach, North Goa. Spanning 8000 square meters, the project features 13 exquisitely designed villas, offering luxurious living amidst serene landscapes. Located just minutes from Goa's iconic beaches, these RERA-approved villas boast spacious plots ranging from 215 to 590 square meters, with nearly 50 per cent open space. Residents will enjoy access to the world-class Golf Course at Yugen Golf City near Mopa Airport. Amit Mangain, Director of Yugen Infra, remarked, "La-Mandre blends opulence with nature, creating a lifestyle of privacy and connectivity in Goa's lush landscapes."

Gold rises ₹250 to ₹80,550 per 10 gm; silver trades flat

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose Rs 250 to Rs 80,550 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday as rupee hit record low amid consistent buying from retailers and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal ended the previous session at Rs 80,300 per 10 grams. However, silver traded flat at Rs 93,000 per kg on Friday. The price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity continuing to shine bright for the fourth straight session by appreciating Rs 250 to Rs 80,150 per 10 grams. It had finished at Rs 79,900 per 10 grams on Thursday. Traders said the rise in gold prices at local market is also propelled by robust overseas demand. Meanwhile, the rupee declined 14 paise and touched the crucial 86-mark for the first time against the US dollar on Friday as it failed to resist pressure from a stronger



American currency and huge outflow of foreign funds. On a weekly basis, gold prices surged Rs 1,550, or 2 per cent, to Rs 80,550 per 10 grams, while silver shot up 2.5 per cent to Rs 93,000 per kg. On the MCX, gold contracts for February delivery climbed Rs 388, or 0.5 per cent, to Rs 78,492 per 10 grams in the futures trade on Friday. Silver contracts for March delivery bounced Rs 506, or 0.55 per cent, to Rs 92,217 per kg on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). Comex gold futures increased USD 16.10 per ounce, or 0.6 per cent, to USD 2,706.90 per ounce in the overseas market. "Gold extended rally on

Friday on the back of safe-haven demand due to uncertainty around future US monetary policy under President-elect Donald Trump," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. According to Augmont's Head of Research Renisha Chainani, gold continued its winning streak due to safe-haven demand sparked by worries about Donald Trump's proposed policies, while the UK faced a Budget crisis. "The Federal Open Market Committee's (FOMC) members hinted that more (rate) easing would be appropriate if the data came in as anticipated. "Market participants will be looking for the upcoming US non-farm payrolls and UoM Consumer Sentiment data for additional economic cues," Chainani said. Silver comex futures in the Asian market hours shot up 0.6 per cent to USD 31.20 per ounce.

SpiceJet to fly 10 grounded aircraft by mid-April

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic carrier SpiceJet on Friday announced plans to bring back into operations 10 of its grounded aircraft, including four Boeing B737 Max, by mid-April. The airline said it has added 10 planes to its fleet since October 2024 -- three grounded aircraft that were brought back into service and seven inducted on lease. The move comes close on the heels of SpiceJet signing a pact with US-based engine MRO StandardAero Inc last month for the restoration of its grounded MAX fleet. SpiceJet has 28 aircraft, of the total 62 in the fleet, in operations, comprising 20 B737, six De Havilland Canada DHC-8 Dash 8 and two Airbus A320, as on January 10 as per flight tracking website planespotter.Com. The remaining 34 aircraft -- 16 B737s and 18 De Havilland Canada DHC-8 Dash 8 -- are on the ground due to various reasons, as per the website. The return of 10 grounded



aircraft back into operations will help the airline significantly increase its current fleet of 28 aircraft, even as some of these planes are re-delivered to lessors during the same period, SpiceJet said. Over the past three months, SpiceJet said its network expansion strategy has resulted in the addition of more than 60 new flights, further enhancing connectivity and service options for its passengers. This pact with StandardAero Inc followed successful partnerships with CFM International, Inc, the OEM for LEAP-1B engines, and a key lessor, paving the way for the un-grounding and return to service of three Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, SpiceJet said.

INBRIEF

RAJASTHAN'S GROWTH ENGINE: HINDUSTAN ZINC DRIVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

India's largest and only integrated zinc, lead and silver producer, Hindustan Zinc (NSE: HINDZINC) completes 59 years of operations. Incorporated in 1966 as a public sector undertaking, Hindustan Zinc Limited has grown leaps and bounds since then providing zinc sufficiency to the country and the world at large. As a fully integrated producer, Hindustan Zinc operates underground zinc-lead mines, smelters, and captive power plants in Rajasthan.

POFESSOR VANDANA BHALLA OF GNDU HONOURED BY INDIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

AMRITSAR: Prof. Vandana Bhalla from the Department of Chemistry of the Guru Nanak Dev University, has been honoured with the prestigious fellowship of the Indian Academy of Sciences (IAS), Bangalore. This recognition places her among the leading scientists in the country and marks a historic achievement for GNDU, as she becomes only the third individual from the university to receive this distinction in the past 55 years.

PROF KARAMJEET SINGH CELEBRATES LOHRI WITH GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

AMRITSAR: The joyous festival of Lohri was celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor at Guru Nanak Dev University campus in front Administration Block. Vice Chancellor Prof. Karamjeet Singh joined the non-teaching employees of the university to mark this auspicious occasion.



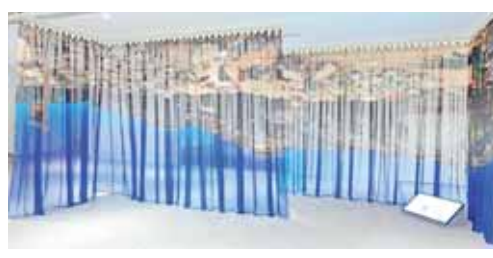


ROOTS AND REFLECTIONS

At KNMA's *The Elemental You*, artists explored Earth's essence through works reflecting nature's intricate narratives and connections, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

"To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wildflower..."

These words by William Blake come alive as you enter *The Elemental You*, an exhibition at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art. Curated by Akansha Rastogi, it brings together the works of Simryn Gill, Neha Choksi and Hajra Waheed, each exploring the element of "Earth" with a vision that is both timeless and urgent. The experience engages your senses on multiple levels. Neha Choksi's *Porous Earth* series draws attention to limestone cast in kiln-glass, revealing stories of geological change and human fragility. Her work highlights the delicate interplay between the permanence of Earth's materials and the fleeting nature of human life. Simryn Gill shifts focus to *Port Dickson*, an industrial port town in Malaysia. Her long-term photographic documentation captures moments of transformation and decay, inviting viewers to reflect on what persists and what fades with time. There is a quiet, poignant beauty in her images that speaks of history and memory. Hajra Waheed's

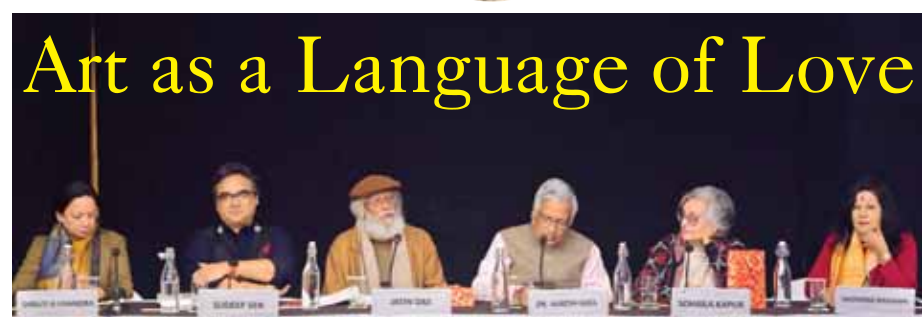
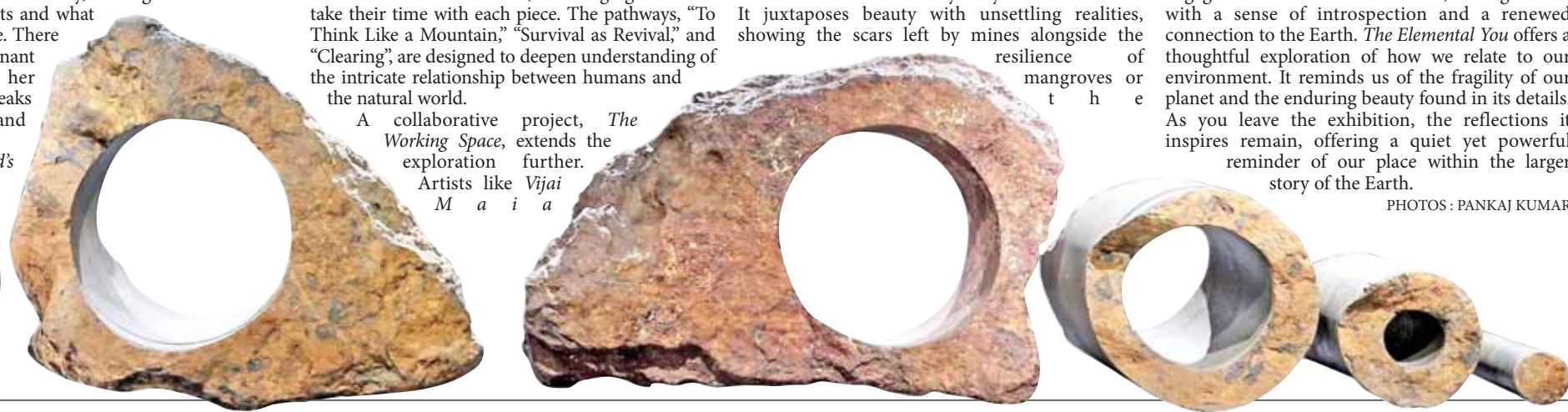


interpretation of the night sky leads you to consider boundaries, both physical and emotional. Her drawings evoke the vastness of Kashmir's starlit skies, working together with personal and collective narratives. It's as though the heavens hold untold stories, offering a sense of both wonder and loss. The exhibition is unhurried, encouraging visitors to take their time with each piece. The pathways, "To Think Like a Mountain," "Survival as Revival," and "Clearing," are designed to deepen understanding of the intricate relationship between humans and the natural world.

Patchineelam and Ranjana Dave connect themes of grounding and immersion, using tools, landscapes, and micro-stories to reveal the subtle interactions between people and their environments. The *Artists' Roundtable* becomes a dynamic space where materials and ideas evolve, creating a dialogue that is both intimate and thought-provoking. The exhibition does not shy away from hard truths. It juxtaposes beauty with unsettling realities, showing the scars left by mines alongside the resilience of mangroves or the

lifelessness of dead snakes beside the enduring strength of mountains. This contrast challenges visitors to confront the environmental challenges of today while appreciating the artistry that brings these narratives to life. The simplicity of the presentation allows the works to speak for themselves. The museum provides a space for these artists to explore their deep engagement with the natural world, leaving visitors with a sense of introspection and a renewed connection to the Earth. *The Elemental You* offers a thoughtful exploration of how we relate to our environment. It reminds us of the fragility of our planet and the enduring beauty found in its details. As you leave the exhibition, the reflections it inspires remain, offering a quiet yet powerful reminder of our place within the larger story of the Earth.

A collaborative project, *The Working Space*, extends the exploration further. Artists like Vijai M a i a



Art as a Language of Love

By TEAM VIVA

The 10th edition of *Vividh Mat: Perspectives*, presented by Devyani Jaipuria in collaboration with ASAVARI, focused on the theme *Shringara: Rang Anurang*. This edition explored *Shringara*, a concept that embodies love, beauty and the depth of the human experience. The event began with an engaging discussion led by Padmeshri Shovana Narayan, SNA awardee and Ambassador Dr Suresh Goel, former DG of ICCR. The panel also included Jatin Das, the renowned artist and sculptor, celebrated poet Sudeep Sen and actor-director Sohaila Kapur. Together, they shared their insights into *Shringara*, highlighting it as more than just an aesthetic concept, but an essential part of life. Jatin Das explained that *Shringara* is not only about visual beauty but is also the very pulse of life. He described it as a delicate balance between form and emotion, where art touches the soul. Sudeep Sen further elaborated by describing *Shringara* as "the poetry of the senses," a celebration that speaks directly to the heart, connecting art, love and life. He emphasised how *Shringara* invites us to reflect on the deepest layers of the human soul. Sohaila Kapur added to the discussion by describing *Shringara* as a means of capturing the essence of beauty through performance. She noted that it is the emotional core of art, brought to life through movement, offering an experience that connects the audience directly to the emotions conveyed. The conversation highlighted how *Shringara* is not only a visual or emotional experience but also a spiritual one, bridging cultural and philosophical perspectives. Shovana Narayan, deeply connected to classical Indian dance, shared her personal view of *Shringara*, describing it as a language that speaks directly to the heart. For her, the evening was a celebration of beauty; it was the culmination of



years of dedication, creating a space where everyone could to the rhythm of life. The event concluded with a *Baithaki Bhaav* dance performance by Madhura Phatak. The classical dance embodied *Shringara* beautifully, giving the audience an immersive experience. *Vividh Mat: Perspectives* combined intellectual discussion and artistic expression, highlighting how art connects us to humanity, bridging cultures and emotions.

LAYERS OF MEANING



Echoes of Elegance presents a unique exploration of India's vibrant art scene through its diverse creators, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

that mirrors human relationships. It's a work that encourages reflection, inviting the viewer to interpret its layers of meaning. Similarly, *Keep ones end up*, another acrylic on canvas, uses bold strokes and vivid hues to explore themes of balance and stability in an ever-changing world. The fluidity of the painting offers a sense of movement, making it feel as if the artwork is alive. *Parody II*, a striking fiberglass piece, challenges the viewer's perception with its playful yet thought-provoking

commentary on modern life. The use of fiberglass in this piece gives it a dynamic quality, blurring the line between reality and illusion. It's a work that not only entertains but also encourages a deeper contemplation of society and its contradictions. Alongside these, the exhibition showcases a range of works by renowned artists such as Bose Krishnamachari, Dileep Sharma, Farhad Hussain, George Martin, Jyothiraj Moyampilly and Mukesh

Sharma. Each of their pieces brings forth unique perspectives on culture, identity and contemporary issues. Whether it's through abstract expressionism, surreal imagery or figurative forms, the diversity of styles on display ensures that there is something for everyone to connect with. The exhibition invites viewers to move beyond admiring art from a distance, encouraging them to understand the creative process and engage with the ideas behind each piece. *Echoes of Elegance* is a journey into the heart of Indian contemporary art. It's an opportunity to witness the talent, vision and passion of some of the country's finest artists, offering a deeper understanding of the dynamic and ever-evolving art scene.

PHOTOS : PANKAJ KUMAR



