MONEY 10 EV FIRMS AGREE TO END SUBSIDY AFTER EXISTING SUBSIDY REGIME ENDS: GOYAL

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GRAP III INVOI

s the air quality index plummeted to very poor at 371, the Commission of Air Quality Management (CAQM) invoked stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) with immediate effect, amid a rise in air pollution. As part of the Stage 3 of the GRAP, for private vehicle owners who still drive in a BS 3 petrol car or a BS 4 diesel car, driving the vehicles in Delhi and NCR districts is out of bounds with immediate effect. However, people with disabilities are exempt from these restrictions Moreover. non-essential diesel-operated medium goods vehicles with BS-IV or older standards are banned in the capital. The national capital, battling



smog and poor air quality since the beginning of winter, ranked third among the world's most polluted capitals in Friday's live rankings by Swiss group IQAir. Meanwhile, over 500 flight services were delayed at Delhi airport and dozens of trains were affected across North India as the harsh winter chill has tightened its grip on north India, including Delhi, with dense fog blanketing the region and temperatures plunging further. According to Flightradar24 data, about 145 arrivals were delayed at

departures were also delayed at this airport. The number of delayed flights is expected to increase further.

The minimum temperature was recorded at 7 degree Celsius while the maximum temperature stood at 21.2 degree Celsius in Delhi. Palam recorded the maximum temperature of 17.2 degree Celsius while the minimum temperature stood at 6.6 degree Celsius.

According to forecasts from the India Meteorological Department and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, the air quality situation is predicted to deteriorate further owing to unfavourable meteorological

CBI need not seek state consent: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

In a big win for Central Bureau of Investigation, the Supreme Court has said the CBI does not require the permission of Governments to register an against Central Government officials posted in the different jurisdictions of States. A bench comprising Justices CT Ravikumar and Rajesh Bindal on January 2 overturned the Andhra
Pradesh High Court's order auashing the investigations against two Central government employees over corruption.
CBI is governed by Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act of 1946. According to this archaic Act, CBI needs "General Consent" from each States to start probe. Due to this provision, even in Central Government offices. CBI can't enter and many Opposition party ruled States denied "General Consent" to CBI, which is empowered to probe against corruption in Government offices. in Central

"Irrespective of the place of posting, the aforesaid factual position would go onto show that they were Central g o v e r n m e n t employees/Central government undertaking employees and allegedly committed serious offence under PC Act, which is a central act," said the Order of the top court, giving free hand to CBI.

urable meteorological ons.

Continued on page 2

The case stemmed from the CBI FIRs against the Central Government employees



NEW DELHI, SATURDAY JANUARY 4, 2025; PAGES 12 ₹4

working in Andhra Pradesh They had challenged the CBI's jurisdiction in the Andhra Pradesh High Court, arguing the general consent granted to the CBI under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 (DSPE Act), by the undivided state of Andhra Pradesh did not automatically extend to the newly formed state of Andhra Pradesh postbifurcation.

The High Court agreed with the accused, who were booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act, and quashed the FIRs insisting a fresh consent from Andhra Pradesh was required. Justice Ravikumar, who authored a 32-page judgment, differed with the High Court's interpretation, and ruled the latter had erred in asking for a fresh state consent for CBI's investigations.

The top court framed a question -- if the CBI required the State Government's consent to register an FIR against a Central Government employee under a Central Act simply because the employee worked within the territory of a State — as the central issue.

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Modi kicks off Delhi election campaign, Kejriwal reacts

RAJESH KUMAR I NEW DELHI

a major push In a major push to infrastructure ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday sounded the poll bugle for the BJP by inaugurating developmental projects worth of Rs 4500 crore including Economically Weaker Section (EWS) flats at Ashok Vihar, Sarojini Nagar government quarters, World Trade centre and new DU campuses and college. With this, the PM college. With this, the PM Modi has launched his model against the Kejriwal's modelm putting aside doubts about who would would lead it. Winning Delhi is crucial for the BIP, which has now been out of power in the Capital for more than 25 years.

Taking a jibe at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor Arvind Kejriwal without naming him, PM Modi said he could have built a Sheesh Mahal for himself but chose to prioritise the people. "Mai bhi koi 'sheeshmahal' bana

sakta that. Lekin mere liye toh mere desh wasiyon ko pucca ghar mile, yahi ek sapna tha (I could have also built a sheeshmahal, but for me, it was a dream that my countrymen should permanent houses). get The country knows it well that Modi never built a home for himself but has built more than 4 crore houses for the poor," PM Modi said. The Prime Minister also coined a slogan 'AAPda ko hatana hai, BIP ko lana hai". The Prime Minister said that

by keeping Anna Hazare at the front, few 'kattar beimaan'

(bigoted dishonest) people have pushed the national capital towards the 'aapda' (disaster)."These people used to talk about Delhi's development...Ye AAP, ye 'aapda', Delhi par aayi hai', and hence the people of Delhi has waged a war against 'aapda'. Voters of Delhi have made up their minds to free Delhi from this 'aapda," the PM said while speaking at the event at Ashok Vihar's Ramlila Ground. Giving a call for AAP's defeat, Modi raised the slogan, "'Aapda' ko nahi sahenge, badal kar rahenge (we will not tolerate 'aapda', we will remove it)."

'Yeh kattar beimaan log... Ek to chori upar se seena zori (These staunchly corrupt people... They steal and then defend themselves defend themselves brazenly)... Dilli ke log keh rahe hain, aapda ki nahin sahenge, badal ke rahenge (The people of Delhi are saying they will not tolerate this disaster, but will usher in change)," PM Modi said.

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Gifts to Biden family include \$20K diamond from Modi

AP WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden and his family were air P family were given tens of thousands of dollars in gifts from foreign leaders in 2023, with Jill Biden receiving the single most expensive present: a USD 20,000 diamond from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The 7.5-carat diamond from Modi was easily the most costly gift presented to any member of the first family in 2023, although she also received a brooch valued at USD 14,063 from the United States and a bracelet, brooch and photograph album worth USD 4,510 from the president and first lady of Egypt, according to an annual accounting published by the State Department on

Thursday. President The USD 20,000 diamond Zelenskyy.

the White House East Wing, according to a State according to a State Department document, while the other gifts to the president and first lady were sent to the archives. The first lady's office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment about the diamond's use.

The US president himself received a number of expensive presents, including a commemorative photo album valued at USD 7,100 from South Korea's recently impeached President Suk Yeol Yoon, a USD 3,495 statue Ukrainian ambassador to the of Mongolian warriors from Protests were also held at the Mongolian prime minister, a USD 3,300 silver bowl from the sultan of Brunei, a USD 3,160 sterling silver tray from the president of Israel, and a collage worth USD 2,400 from Ukrainian Volodymyr

Union Carbide waste disposal: Protests rock Pithampur, two attempt self-immolation on Draft Data Rules

wo men were hospitalised I after they set themselves afire on Friday amid a bandh call in Madhya Pradesh's Pithampur against the planned disposal of 337 tonnes of Union Carbide waste in the industrial town,

an official said. During one of the protests against the waste disposal in the town in the Dhar district, two persons poured some liquid on their bodies and set themselves on fire, according to eyewitnesses and a video shot at the scene.

Eyewitnesses said the two men, both aged around 40, were rushed to a hospital in Pithampur, about 30 km from

"From the local facility, they have been moved to a private hospital in Indore. Both were out of danger. The situation is under control but tense," Superintendent of Police Manoj Singh told PTI over the phone from a protest site near Pithampur bus

other places in the town, he

said. Shops and markets remained closed in the town amid the bandh call by Pithampur Bachao Samiti, which claims that the planned incineration of the Carbide waste in the area would harm the local



Pithampur has a population of about 1.75 lakh and its industrial area here has nearly 700 factories in three sectors. On the intervening night of December 2-3, 1984, methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas leaked from the Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, killing at least 5,479 persons and leaving thousands with

ople and environment

serious and long-lasting health issues in Bhopal. The authorities have shifted 337 tonnes of waste from the Carbide factory to Pithampur for scientific disposal, though the move has triggered Bhopal reached incineration unit unit

Pithampur on Thursday.
Amid the bandh call in Pithampur, which saw shops and markets remaining closed on Friday, a group of protesters blocked the road near Eicher Motors, but

Sandeep Raghuvanshi, who has been on a hunger strike at the bus stand since Thursday, said a large number of people have expressed solidarity with him over his protest against the disposal of the Union Carbide waste in Pithampur. The Madhya Pradesh High Court had on December 3 rebuked the authorities for not clearing the Union Carbide site in Bhopal despite court directives, including that of the Supreme Court. It had set a four-week protests. The material from deadline to shift the waste, blopal reached an observing that even 40 years enabling users to request its safeguards for processing observing that even 40 years after the gas tragedy, in after authorities were in a "state of

The high court had warned the government of contempt

police prevailed over them and restored normal traffic with mild cane charge.

proceedings if its directive was not followed.

the draft rules include greater consumer control over data; users can demand deletion of their data; companies should be more transparent with personal data; right for consumers to ask the reason why their data is being collected, and huge penalty of

Meity Invites Objections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has asked the public to send objections and suggestions to the draft rules proposed for the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025. The public feedback can be submitted on mygov.in; the draft rules will be taken into consideration after February 18, the Ministry said in a notification on

Some of the salient features of up to Rs 250 crore for data breach.

Once implemented, the Act Once implemented, the Act will empower consumers with greater control over their data. Companies handling user data will be required to disclose the deletion or specify usage preferences. Additionally, consumers will have the right to demand details on the purpose of data collection, permissible uses, and the t followed.

Continued on page 2

The draft, titled "Digital

Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025," applies to personal data processing within India and to entities offering goods or services to individuals in India. The rules encompass data fiduciaries, data processors, and consent establishing

managers, detailed accountability measures. The rules are expected to provide clarity on various provisions of the law including notice by data fiduciary to individuals, registration and obligations of consent

obligations of consent manager, processing of personal data of children and so on. The rules are also expected to provide clarity regarding the setting up of the Data Protection Board,

appointment and service conditions of the chairperson and other members of the board. The regulations aim to addre

crucial crucial aspects of data protection. These include how organizations must notify individuals about collection, the framew children's information

The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 was passed by the Parliament in 2023. The draft rules, once finalised and notified, will

79.800 79,600-79,400 12:00 pm

Sensex, Nifty tank, ahead of earnings season

PTI MUMBAI

 $E_{\text{Sensex and Nifty buckled}}^{\text{quity benchmark indices}}$ under selling pressure to settle nearly 1 per cent lower on Friday as investors pared exposure to bank and IT stocks ahead of the earnings season starting next week. A depreciating rupee against strengthening US dollar overseas further weighed on

sentiment, traders said. Despite a positive start, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 720.60 points or 0.90 per cent to close at 79,223.11. During the day, it slumped 833.98 points or 1.04 per cent to 79,109.73. The NSE Nifty tanked 183.90 points or 0.76

per cent to 24,004.75. On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark jumped 524.04 points or 0.66 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 191.35 points or 0.80 per cent.
"A sell-on-rally sentiment

prevails in the market due to a strong US dollar, high valuation, and a shift towards a multi-asset investment strategy. Reducing US jobless claims and potential policy shifts in the US indicate that the Fed is not in a hurry to cut interest rates in the near term. "Looking ahead, the market is likely to focus on Q3 earnings, with expectations of improvement in earnings on a QoQ basis," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial

Services, said.
From the Sensex pack,
Zomato, HDFC Bank, Tech
Mahindra, Adani Ports, Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank, Sun Pharma, Larsen & Toubro, HCL Tech and ITC were the major laggards. On the other hand,

Motors, Nestle, Titan, Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries were among the gainers.

Continued on page 2

From begging to manning traffic, inspiring journey of 39 transgenders

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

incredible journey of empowerment for 39 transgenders in Hyderabad who

have been inducted as traffic assistants to help the city police. The transgenders, who have been appointed on a pilot basis, say they now get respect from citizens contrast to the severe discrimination and insults they faced in the past.

"It is wonderful that we manage traffic at places where we used to beg in the past," Nisha, a transgender traffic assistant, told

PTI on Friday. Nisha, who works at Patny Centre here, thanked Telangana Chief

Minister A Revanth Reddy for the opportunity given to transgender community.

Nisha, who studied up Intermediate, recalled facing discrimination from society at large, in college, with friends and even parents.

"My parents did not accept me. But, they accepted me now. My friends used to avoid me. But, now they message me and keep in touch. After I got the job, my relations and others are appreciating. It is a wonder. I cannot describe in words," Nisha

said. Sana, another traffic assistant, said it is a matter of pride for them that they get respect from



Commissioner of Police (Traffic), told PTI that the transgender traffic assistants are doing good and that there are no complaints or there is anything abnormal since they have been inducted about 10 days ago. It will take some time for them to

get professional acumen. They want to get integrated with society and do well, he said. It all began when CM Reddy asked officials in November to appoint transgender persons as traffic volunteers at high-traffic

During a meeting with officials, he said the services of transgenders should be utilised like home guards at traffic signals to prevent traffic violations. He told the officials to finalise a special dress code for

areas in the city.

2024, handed over 'enrolment papers' to the transgender persons who have been selected, they were formally inducted as traffic assistans on December 22. Hyderabad Police Commissioner V Anand had earlier said transgenders face alienation even within their families and society The state government had issued an order to inducting the transgenders as traffic assistants, he said.

transgenders and also salary

along the lines of home guards. While the CM on December 6,

According to him, about 100 transgenders had applied for the posts and 44 of them were shortlisted after a selection process, including physical tests, while 39 successfully completed training.

Health surveillance raised in India over HMPV concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A mid the rising concerns over an outbreak of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) in China, India has stepped up efforts to monitor the situation and is actively coordinating with international health agencies to assess potential

Sources in the Union Health Ministry said that the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has been entrusted with the task to closely monitor respiratory infections and seasonal influenza cases within India, ensuring that the situation is

continuously evaluated.
"We will continue to
monitor the situation closely, validate information and update accordingly," according to a news agency, citing official sources.

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV), belonging to the Pneumoviridae, Metapneumovirus genus, is an enveloped singlestranded negative-sense RNA virus, according to the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC).
China CDC says that the

incubation period after infection is about three to five days, and the immune HMPV is too weak to curb repeated infection.

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention,

CBI need not seek

state consent: SC

It held no such consent was

necessary as the offences in

question were under a central legislation and involved

employees. The consent regime under

Section 6 of the DSPE Act was

not designed to obstruct investigations into central

offences only because they transpired within a state's territorial limits, said the top court. The bench said the

'General Consent' granted by a State under the DSPE Act was sufficient for the CBI

investigations involving central offences and state-

specific formalities, such as a

fresh consent, was not required. "We are of the firm

view that the impugned judgment where under subject FIRs and further

proceedings in pursuance

thereof, were quashed cannot be sustained," it said and allowed CBI's appeal.

Government

From page 1

Central

Metapneumovirus (HMPV) can cause upper and lower respiratory disease in people of all ages. According to reports, in young children and the elderly, HMPV can be severe. Those with weakened immune systems, the virus can cause serious illness.

Symptoms commonly associated with HMPV include cough, fever, nasal congestion, and shortness of breath. It most likely spreads from an infected person to others through secretions from coughing and sneezing, and close personal contact such as touching or shaking hands. Patients can help prevent the spread by washing hands often with soap; avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands, and close contact

with people who are sick, as per the doctors.
Several reports have Several reports have suggested that due to the surge in respiratory illness, particularly HMPV, hospitals and crematories in China are struggling to deal with the situation.
The situation has raised

concerns among the healthcare facilities, especially children's hospitals, which are reportedly under stress due to a sharp rise in pneumonia and "white lung" cases, a term often referred to describe severe pneumonia symptoms, as

Kasganj violence: 28 to sentenced for life

BISWAJEET BANERJEE LUCKNOW

Aspecial National Aspecial National Agency (NIA) court on Friday sentenced all 28 convicted individuals to life imprisonment in the 2018 Kasganj communal clash case, which led to the murder of Chandra Custa Auring a

Chandan Gupta during a Tiranga Yatra. The court also imposed an additional seven years of rigorous imprisonment on Salim, one of the convicts, while acquitting two others, Nasiruddin and Asim

District government counsel Manoj Kumar Tripathi said, "All the accused have been awarded life sentences. Two people were acquitted, and we Salim has also been given an additional seven years of

The special court found the 28 accused guilty under several sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including 302 (murder) and 307 (attempt to murder) as well as charges. murder), as well as charges under the Prevention of Insult to National Honour Act, 1971. Those convicted include Salim, Wasim, Nasim, Jahid alias 'Jagga,' Asiq Qureshi alias 'Hitler,' and others.

Among the 28, Munazir Rafi, already jailed for the Kasganj lawyer Mohini Tomar murder case, remains behind bars, while the remaining convicts, previously out on bail, surrendered over two days— 26 on Thursday and Salim on

Chandan Gupta, an activist affiliated with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), was killed during the January 26, 2018, Tiranga Yatra in Kasganj, Uttar Pradesh. The rally, organized by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and ABVP, featured participants on motorcycles carrying the tricolour and

affron flags.
The rally's entry into the Baddunagar locality, despite administrative restrictions, led to communal clashes. Amid to communal clashes. Amid the ensuing violence, Gupta was shot dead, further escalating tensions. The unrest saw multiple shops, vehicles, and properties set ablaze. The case was initially tried in a district court in Etah before being transferred to the NILA being transferred to the NIA court in Lucknow in 2022.

EPFO to launch new software system

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said that the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) will launch its new software system EPFO 3.0 by June this year to EPFO 3.0 by June this year to be followed by distribution of ATM cards to its subscribers. "The new system will be equivalent to the banking systems in the country and the

website will be more user-friendly. About Rs. 1570 Crore pension was disbursed to more than 68 Lakh pensioners pertaining to all 122 pension disbursing Regional offices of EPFO for December 2024," said Mandaviva in a statement here He said that the first pilot of the Centralized Pension Payment System (CPPS) was successfully completed last October in Karnal, Jammu and Srinagar Regional Offices with

the pension disbursement of

about Rs 11 Crore to more than second pilot was taken up last November in 24 Regional Offices in which around Rs. 213 crores pension was disbursed to more than 9.3 lakh

pensioners.
The full scale implementation of the CPPS across all Regional Offices of EPFO empowers pensioners to access their pension seamlessly from any bank, any branch, anywhere in the country.



Tikait meets Kejriwal ahead of Delhi polls

head of the Delhi Ahead of the Delhi assembly elections, farmer leader Rakesh Tikait met former Delhi Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal on Friday evening over the issue of welfare of advocates and

Senior AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh was also present at the meeting, meeting was held between the AAP convenor and the national spokesperson of the Bharatiya Kisan Union

Sharing the photo of the meeting on X, Singh stated, "National Convenor of Aam Aadmi Party Arvind Kejriwal and struggling farmer leader Rakesh Tikait had a meaningful meeting where issues of farmers and lawyers were discussed."

Following the meeting, Tikait Following the meeting, Tikait said, "There were some issues related to welfare of advocates, which he said will be resolved in the first Cabinet after the Delhi elections. He said that Advocation Protection Act will be proceed in Cabinet Said that Advocation Protection Act will be proceed in Cabinet will be passed in Cabinet meeting after the formation

of new government."
A special committee of the Bar Council of Delhi headed by Advocate KC Mittal finalized the Delhi Advocates (Protection) Bill, 2023 for providing safety and security to lawyers from incidents of assaults. intimidation and threats. The bill defines acts of violence, offenders, and punishment and provides for

compensation as well as police protection to advocates in cases of threats. bill also protects 'illegal advocates from 'malicious and



use for trade

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ndia and the Maldives have finalised a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross border trade with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar asserting that New Delhi has always stood by the island

nation. He made these remarks here on Friday at a meeting with his Maldivian counterpart Abdulla Khaleel. He arrived here on Thursday on a threeday visit to explore ways to bolster bilateral ties in several key areas including maritime security, trade and

"I see that the framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross border transaction has been signed," Jaishankar said.

"We have increased our engagement in various sectors and I do want to say that India has always stood by the Maldives You are a very concrete expression our neighbourhood first policy," he added. The Maldives is one

maritime India's key neighbours in the Indian Ocean Region and the overall bilateral ties including in areas of defence and security witnessed an

upward trajectory under the

The ties between India and the Maldives came under severe strain after Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, took charge of the top office in November 2023. Within hours of his oath, he Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country. Subsequently, the Indian military personnel were replaced by civilians. However, there was a thaw in the relations of Muigray. the relations as Muizzu vowed to boost the bilateral ties with India during his

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai becomes DGCA chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Senior IAS officer Faiz Ahmed Kidwai has been appointed the chief of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as part of a senior-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre on Friday. The 1996-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre is currently Additional Secretary in the

Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. He has been appointed as Director General in the DGCA "in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary to the Government of India by keeping the Recruitment Rules of the post in abeyance", an order issued by the Personnel Ministry said. Ashutosh Agnihotri, Additional Secretary in the Home Ministry, has been named Chairman & Managing Director of Food Corporation of India (FCI), it said.

Union Carbide waste disposal...

visit to Delhi in October

Meanwhile, heavy police deployment has been made in Pithampur to maintain law and order.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Thursday addressed doubters and said the issue should not be politicised. He asserted the waste comprised 60 per cent mud and 40 per cent naphthol used to make pesticide methyl isocyanate (MIC) and was "not at all harmful".

"Accordingly, in an effort to prevent further deterioration of the air quality and in pursuance of the Supreme Court's directives, the subcommittee on GRAP hereby decide to invoke ALL actions under Stage-III ('Severe' Air Quality of Delhi) of the extant schedule of GRAP, with immediate effect in right earnest by all the agencies concerned in Delhi-NCR, in addition to the Stage-l and ll actions already in force. Actions under stages-l II & III of the revised GRAP shall be implemented, monitored and reviewed by all the agencies concerned in the entire NCR to ensure that the AQI levels do not slip further," the CAQM said in its order. "All implementing agencies shall

keep strict vigil and intensely measures of the revised GRAP schedule. Citizens are requested to strictly adhere to the citizen charter under GRAP Stage-III," it added. GRAP Stage 3, which was lifted last Friday, entails a ban

non-essential construction work. The stage 3 restrictions also include a ban on non-essential construction work, Classes up to grade V are required to shift to hybrid mode and parents and students have the option to choose online education wherever available. Stage 3 also bans nonessential diesel-operated medium goods vehicles with BS-IV or older standards in

At Delhi's India Gandhi International Airport, over 500 flights were delayed as

zero At 8 am, the Palam airport in Delhi reported a 0 m visibility, while the Safdarjung Airport in New Delhi reported a 50-metre visibility. Both the airports are not used for commercial flight operations. Due to

Taking to social media X, the Delhi Airport wrote in a post "While landing and take offs continue at Delhi airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected." The airport management asked passengers to check with their respective airlines flight updated information, expressing regret for any inconvenience.

affected.

contact the airline concerned for updated flight information," the post further read.The inconvenience caused to passengers is regretted.Any inconvenience caused is deeply regretted. the post further read. Flights heavy fog conditions, Delhi airport issued an advisory stating that non-CAT III compliant flights would be belhi airport reported an average delay of six minutes for arrival flights and 47 minutes for departure flights, as per FlightRadar24. At Kolkata airport, 17 departing flights were delayed, one was cancelled, and 36 arriving flights were also delayed. At least 24 trains, including several long-distance services are running late due to the conditions, toggy cone Railways said.

Sensex, Nifty tank, ahead of earnings season released by companies, ahead

Despite the short recovery in the past two sessions, markets lost the momentum as there is still a lot of pessimism due to slowing growth, higher domestic valuations, foreign fund outflows, and uncertainty over US trade policies post Trump's resumption as the country's president. Hence, markets may see bouts of Shanghai ended lower. correction, and investors will continue to maintain caution while keeping an eye on global developments," Prashanth developments," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. The BSE midcap gauge fell 0.33

per cent, and smallcap index dipped 0.02 per cent.
Among sectoral indices, BSE

Focused IT declined 1.42 per cent, IT (1.31 per cent), teck (1.13 per cent), bankex (1.07 per cent), capital goods (1.06 per cent) and financial services (0.87 per cent). BSE energy, telecommunication, consumer durables, utilities, metal and oil

Japanese markets were closed for the New Year holiday.

Markets in Europe were trading lower. US stocks were

Thursday.

& gas were the gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul

The rupee dropped 4 paise to dollar on Friday. in the negative territory on

"In the near term, we expect markets to witness stock/sector specific action on the back of pre-quarterly business updates

of their Q3 results," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers on Thursday after remaining net sellers in the recent past. They bought equities worth Rs 1,506.75 crore, according to exchange data.

close at a record low of 85.79 (provisional) against the US Global oil benchmark Brent

crude declined 0.43 per cent to USD 75 60 a barrel In the previous session, the

BSE benchmark jumped 1,436.30 points or 1.83 per cent -- its best single-day gain in more than a month -- to settle at 79,943.71. The Nifty surged 445.75 points or 1.88 per cent

to 24.188.65 "Reflecting on 2024, the year emphasised the importance of discipline over speculation.

Despite pockets of volatility, markets did not see dramatic deviations. As broad-based rallies give way to more selective opportunities, the focus will shift to individual

stock picks.
"Moving forward, disciplined about valuations and adhering to well-defined strategies will be crucial in navigating the ever-changing market landscape," Krishna Appala, Senior Research Capitalmind Research, said.

Modi kicks off Delhi election campaign, Kejriwal reacts

He accused the AAP of being involved in scams across sectors including education and health. In a sharp response to Modi's accusation that Aam Aadmi Party is an 'aapda' (crisis) for Delhi Kejriwal said the BJP-led Centre has not done any development work in Delhi or else. Prime Minister Narendra Modi would not have had to spend 39 minutes of his 43-minute speech cursing the people of the capital and the government they elected with the "PM Modi gave a speech of 43 minutes today. For about 39 minutes he abused people of Delhi and the elected

Modi government performed in ten years, he would not have needed to abuse people of Delhi," Kejriwal said. He pointed, "It took BJP as much time to lay foundation stones for three colleges as it took AAP to build 22,000 classrooms, three new universities. university campuses, and 11 new vocational colleges."
"PM Modi for abusing people of

Delhi and the majority government elected by them. AAP chief claimed that PM Modi would not need to abuse him, had his government performed in ten

years of power at the Centre since 2014," he added. In a veiled attack on AAP which

"used Anna Hazare as its face" to come to power, PM Modi accused the party of having become "a disaster" for the people of Delhi, and urged voters to take steps to "liberate" themselves from the incumbent "Aapda", or disastrous, government.
"If highways are being built in the

capital and the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has been able to make houses for the poor, it is because "aapda" does not have much role in these sectors, he added. He said 2025 would bring many new possibilities for India asserting that the country had become a symbol of political and economic stability in the world.India will rise to become a

big manufacturing hub in the new year in which new records in the agriculture sector and women-led development will be registered as The prime minister asserted

global standing and image would also be strengthened in 2025. Earlier, taking to his X handle, PM

Modi earlier said this was an important day for Delhi's development. "Today is an important day for Delhi's development. At a programme in Ashok Vihar, will be inaugurating and laying the foundation stones for a wide range of development works which will boost 'Ease of Living' for the people of Delhi," he keys to eligible beneficiaries of EWS flats at Swabhiman Apartments in the Ashok Vihar

The rally in Ashok Vihar is strategically planned to target the AAP's stronghold among slum dwellers in areas like Wazirpur, Model Town, and Shalimar Bagh. These neighbourhoods, part of the Chandni Chowk parliamentary constituency, have previously seen AAP dominate despite being a BJP bastion in the past. According to estimates, roughly 20 lakh people live in Delhi's slums. Though they were traditionally Congress supporters, especially during the tenure of ex-CM Sheila Dikshit,

the AAP won them over during the 2013 and 2015 assembly

elections After Ashok Vihar, PM Modi's second rally will be held on January 5 at Rohini's Japanese Park. The event will include the foundation stone laying of a metro project connecting Rithala to rural areas, addressing a longstanding demand of rural voters. The rally will focus on consolidating support in rural regions where AAP has performed strongly in past elections. The Prime Minister is expected to inaugurate Section 4 of the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor on Sunday which connects Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar. Currently,

the 42km functional portion of the RRTS is entirely located in Uttar Pradesh.

Sources in the party said the rally, planned for 29 December, was postponed after former PM Manmohan Singh died on December. According to the BIP's internal surveys, Delhi's ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) currently has a slight edge. However, the BJP believes the trend will start to reverse once Modi kickstarts the campaign for Delhi.Apart from that, the Delhi BIP unit has been organising leaders and workers staying in slums and interacting with people to understand their problems.

PM Modi lays foundation stone for two new DU campuses

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday virtually laid the foundation stones for two new Delhi University campuses and a college named after BJP ideologue Veer Savarkar. The project, with an investment of over Rs 600 crore, aims to boost educational opportunities and modernise facilities. The foundation-laying ceremony was held at Ashok Vihar where the prime minister also launched a slew of other infra projects for the

national capital.
The Prime Minister under-scored that in the field of higher education, the reputation of Delhi University is continuously growing stronger. "Our effort is to provide more opportunities for higher education to the youth of Delhi right here. Today, the foundation stones for new campuses have been laid, which will allow hundreds of students to study at DU annually. The long-awaited Eastern and Western campuses will now be developed in Surajmal Vihar and Dwarka, respectively", Modi added. Additionally, a new college in the name of Veer Savarkar ji will also be built in Najafgarh. The East campus at Surajmal Vihar and the West campus at Dwarka Sector 22 are being



added to the existing North and South campuses as part of DU's efforts to expand its presence across the city.

The East Campus, spanning 15.25 acres, is being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 373 crore. It will offer LLB, LLM and an integrated fiveyear LLB programme, along-side other multidisciplinary courses.

The campus will feature stateof-the-art facilities, including 60 classrooms, 10 tutorial rooms, six moot courts, four computer labs, two cafeterias two common rooms, spread across a built-up area of

59,618 square metres. The West Campus, being built at Rs 107 crore, will be a new

academic block in the first phase. Covering 19,434.28 square metres, it will have 42 classrooms, two moot courts, a digital library, conference rooms, seminar halls and separate common rooms for boys and girls. In addition to the campuses, Modi laid the foundation stone for Veer Savarkar College at Roshanpura, Najafgarh, just a five-minute

walk from the West Campus.
The college, with a built-up area of 18,816.56 square metres and an estimated cost of Rs 140 crore, will offer modern facilities, including 24 classrooms eight tutorial rooms, 40 faculty rooms, department libraries, conference rooms and a canModi virtually inaugurated the CBSE's integrated office complex at Dwarka built at around Rs 300 crore. It includes offices an auditorium, an advanced data centre and a comprehen-

sive water management system,

among others.

On the education front, the Prime Minister reiterated the government's focus on improv-ing access to quality education and opportunities for all children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. "Every family dreams that their children will receive the best government is working towards providing top-tier schools, colleges, and universities across the country," he stated. The

Prime Minister also praised the National Education Policy (NEP), which emphasizes teaching in mother tongues to ensure that children from all backgrounds, including marginalized communities, have the opportunity to succeed. "Under the new National Education Policy, children from poor families now have a clearer path to becoming doctors, engineers, and professionals,"

he noted. Modi also acknowledged the crucial role of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in improving India's education system. He announced the construction of

a new CBSE building to support the expansion of modern educational practices. new CBSE building will help expand modern education and the adoption of advanced examination methods," he said.

The Prime Minister high lighted that the Central Government is handling major projects in Delhi like roads, metro systems, hospitals, and college campuses. However, the state government has failed to fulfill its responsibilities, especially in areas like the cleaning of the Yamuna River. Neglecting the Yamuna River has led to a crisis where peo-ple are left with dirty water, he

Kejriwal has done no real work in city: BJP

STAFF REPORTER - NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Friday attacked the AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, stating that he has done no real work in Delhi and has been involved in numerous corruption scandals over the past 10 years. "While the central government

has developed significant land-marks in Delhi such as Yashobhoomi, Mandapam, Eco Park, Bansera Park, Pragati Maidan Tunnel, UBR-2, Ring Road-3, East-West Corridor, Delhi-Meerut Highway, and Alipur Bypass, along with the revitalization of landmarks like Ambedkar Memorial, Birsa Munda Chowk, and Kartavva Path,

Kejriwal has done little for Delhi's growth," he asserted. Responding to AAP Convenor's claim that BJP has not done any work for the peo-ple of Delhi in the last 10 years, Sachdeva said, "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has provided quality housing to over 5,000 slum residents in Delhi. The PM's visionary



ter employment opportunities for Delhi's youth, especially in Delhi-NCR, along with new prospects as gig workers." "Conversely, Arvind Kejriwal has given Delhi several scan-dals including the liquor pol-

dals, including the liquor policy scam, spying scandal, panic button scam, ration card scam, hospital construction scam, neighborhood medicine and diagnostics scam, and the classroom construction scam, among others. The list of his corruption cases is endless," he

alleged. Sachdeva accused Kejriwal of depriving the poor of Delhi of the benefits of transformative schemes like the PM Awas Yojana and Ayushman Bharat. "While the Prime Minister

Kejriwal focused on building a luxurious Palace for himself and failed to allocate the 40,000 flats in Narela meant for the underprivileged, leaving them to become ruins," he said. He added that while Keiriwal

talks about education, his gov-ernment did not open a single new school or college in ten years, while the central government opened seven Kendriya Vidyalayas, constructed the East Delhi Campus of Delhi University, and laid the foundation for two new colleges and university projects. The Delhi BJP chief demanded answers from Kejriwal regarding the stalled progress of his promised Sports University and Military Training School due to alleged corruption. Additionally, he urged Kejriwal to explain Delhi's poor public transport system, his failure to purchase

address why Delhi's public health system collapsed during the COVID-19 pandemic and why a massive scam occurred over oxygen allocation during

even one new bus for the DTC, and the terrible state of Delhi's

Congress fields AIMC President Alka Lamba from Kalkaji constituency

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In what promises to be one of the most closely watched contests in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, the Congress has fielded All India Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba to contest from the Kalkaji constituency. Lamba will be pitted against

senior AAP leader and current Delhi Chief Minister Atishi. In an official statement, the Congress on Friday announced
"The Central Election Committee has approved the candidature of Alka Lamba as Congress candidate to contest the forthcoming general election to the Legislative Assembly of Delhi from 51 – Kalkaji constituency.

She began her political journey as a student leader, joining the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), the student wing of the Congress party. After one year in 1995, she contested the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) election for the post of President and won huge margin.

In 2002, she was appointed the General Secretary of All India Mahila Congress and unsuc-



cessfully contested Delhi Assembly elections from Moti Nagar Constituency against the senior BJP leader Madan Lal Khurana a year after. In 2006, she became a member

of All India Congress Committee (AICC) and was appointed General Secretary of Delhi Congress.

At the same time she was also appointed Vice Chairperson of National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), an autonomous body of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of

She served as the Secretary of AICC from 2007 to 2011. In a dramatic turn of events, she parted ways with the Congress

in December 2014, making a bold leap to join the AAP. Lamba went on to represent the Chandni Chowk constituency from 2015 to 2020, solidifying her position as a key figure in Delhi's political landscape. However, she again rejoined Congress in September 2019 as she was disenchanted for quite some time with the AAP leadership.

announced the names of 47 candidates including Devender Yadav from Badli, Sandeep Dixit from New Delhi, Ragini Nayak in Wazirpur, Jai Kisan from Sultanpur Maira and Haroon Yusuf from Ballimaran. On contesting the upcoming Delhi state elections against Chief Minister Atishi, Lamba

'They should first clarify if she is a Chief Minister or a 'tem-porary' Chief Minister since AAP supremo has himself called her that, insulting the constitutional post as well as the woman sitting on that post. Moreover, I don't consider this as a fight against an individual rather against the hazardous air, polluted Yamuna and crime in Delhi."

No hike in electricity bills of consumers in NDMC zone

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

mid speculations of hike in sumers in the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) zone, the NDMC Chairman Keshav Chandra on Friday clarified that people in the area need not panic as the council will not allow any increase in the electricity bills of consumers, irrespective of the orders of the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC).

In a statement, Chandra said, "The NDMC has decided to appeal against the DERC's order proposing to increase the Power Purchase Cost Agreement (PPCA) in electricity bills for the quarter January to March 2025. This hike was to increase the electricity bills of consumers in the NDMC area.

He assured the consumers that NDMC will not allow any increase in the electricity bills of consumers, irrespective of the order of DERC. Currently, there are around 55,000 electricity connections in the NDMC area, of which more than 60 per cent are domestic consumers. The Chairman informed that

not been done in the absence of tariff order. "In this context, the PPAC order of DERC, which proposes an increase in the cost of electricity, has caused unnecessary panic among consumers. NDMC does not accept this current PPAC and will seek a reduction in the proposed rates from DERC," he said. He clarified that PPAC is a sur-

charge imposed by the DERC to meet the fluctuations in the cost of electricity purchased by distribution companies.

Speaking to the media, Vice-Chairman Kuljit Singh Chahal informed that DERC has allowed the increase of PPCA from 38.75 per cent to 54.52 per cent, which would lead to an increase in electricity bills in the quarter of January to March

He assured the consumers that under the leadership of the Prime Minister and Home Minister, NDMC is working for their welfare and no consumer will be charged extra.

He also informed that in 2017, the Government of India had

issued guidelines to NDMC to move towards green power and promote renewable energy. Despite this, NDMC had requested the Delhi Government to de-locate two expensive plants—Bawana and Pragati—but no action was

Bawana is Rs 18 per unit, which is the most expensive in Delhi, while NDMC provides electricity to consumers at between Rs 3 to Rs 8 per unit. NDMC has to bear an addi-

crore every year from the Delhi Government," he said, adding that despite this burden on the Council, we will not pass on these additional costs to his

He also informed that under the PM Surya Ghar Free Electricity Scheme led by the Prime Minister, a subsidy of up to Rs 30,000 is given for installing 1 kW Rooftop Solar System. "NDMC is considering increasing this subsidy and is working on a plan to provide free solar energy to consumers,

Chahal said that with the work being done towards making NDMC self-reliant in the field of solar energy, we are moving towards 'ZERO metering' in NDMC.

Slamming the Delhi government and its people for trying to harass the citizens of Delhi, he confirmed that NDMC has already filed a petition with DERC stating that they will not follow the DERC order and will not impose any surcharge on consumers.

"We will not let Arvind Kejriwal's anti-people plans succeed and will not burden the public with any kind of additional charge," he

Over 1,000 questions listed for Question Hour in Seventh Vidhan Sabha: Ram Niwas Goel



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly speaker Ram Niwas Goel on Friday said that over 1,000 questions were listed for Ouestion Hour in the 7th Vidhan Sabha.

Vidhan Sabna.

During a press conference,
Goel said that the first meeting of the 7th Vidhan Sabha was held on February 24, 2020, and the 74th meeting was held on December 4 last year.

were listed for Question Hour in the seventh Vidhan Sabha and members were given ample opportunity to ask supplementary questions. Under Rule-208, 702 matters of special mention were raised and members were given full views," Goel said. "A total of 28 bills were passed. Four government resolutions and 14 other resolutions, along with 13 motions were passed. A total of 39 short-term discussions were were raised," Goel said.

The 7th Vidhan Sabha also did important work in the field of committees. Goel said that 19 reports from various committees were presented and accepted. He emphasised that despite being the Vidhan Sabha of a union territory and having limited powers, the work done was remarkable.

During 2020-21, arrangements for COVID tests were made on a large scale in the Assembly premises for its employees. The corona warriors' memorial was also unveiled on August 9 2022 he said

Ashoka Pillar was installed in the Vidhan Sabha on January 25, 2021. On January 3, 2022 the murals of Jallianwala Bagh and Rani Laxmibai were inaugurated, he said. The second Delhi Youth

Parliament was organised between 23 and 25 January On December 6 and 2024, Delhi Yuva Samvad 2024 was also organised in which students from various schools and colleges of Delhi participated and expressed their

views, Goel said.
"As the speaker of the assembly, I performed my duties impartially and gave equal importance to both the ruling party and the opposition. I considered it my main responsibility to make maximum use of the time of the House," he

Police claim to identify, deport seven illegal Bangladeshi immigrants



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Friday I claimed to identify and deport seven Bangladeshi nationals residing illegally in different parts of the national Capital in a bid to address rising concerns over the unauthorized stay of migrants including Bangladeshi nationals in the capital.
In Southwest district, the

police identified and deported two illegal immigrants from Bangladesh who had been residing in Safdarjung area of southwest Delhi. The husband-wife duo, identified as 54 year old Liyacat and 39 vears old Nasreen, had been living in Delhi since 2012 and were native of Bangladesh's Bagaerghat district.
Deputy Commissioner of

Police (Southwest) Surendra Chaudhary said, "The police team was systematically briefed for day and night patrolling, ensuring effective vigilance and proactive measures against illegal activities. Team's dedication and efforts have led to the successful apprehension of two illegal

Bangladeshi national hus- Immigrant Detection Team of band-wife

He added that January 2, during patrolling, on the basis of secret information two illegal migrants were detained from Shamsham Ghat road in Green Park and their documents were collected and verified."On interrogation, they revealed that both have been residing at different places in Delhi-NCR capital since 2012 and at present they were residing in Old Seelampur in Gandhi Nagar. Following thorough verification and interrogation, the necessary legal formalities were completed resulting in their deportation through the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO),

the officer said. In another case in southeast district, the police identified five Bangladeshi immigrants residing illegally in Sarita Vihar. The accused has been identified as Sheikh Sofiul Alam Sabbir, Md. Takdirul Khan, Bijovohmod Sahi, Habibur Rahman and Md. Musa Miah Khan who had been arrested by the Illegal South-East District on

'All these illegal staying Bangladeshi came to India on the pretext of visiting Bosnia Embassy for obtaining work permit visa. They were apprehended and produced before the FRRO for initiation of deportation proceedings," DCP (South-east) Ravi Kumar Singh said.

also been initiated against the owner of the guest house where the individuals were staying for failing to adhere to the mandatory provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946. "Compliance with these provisions is essential to ensure proper reporting and monitoring of foreign nationals staying in India. This operation is part of a broader drive launched on November 19, 2024 by the South-Fast gal immigrants. Since the commencement of the drive, 14 illegal Bangladeshi immihave been identified

and deported so far," he stat-

He added that legal action has

a narrative against the Office of the Lt. Governor.

The claims made by Bhardwaj in his petition that LG Office had rendered his government incapable of implementing the 'Farishtey Scheme', have been belied and he has been

exposed. It vindicates the stand taken by

Bharadwaj's claims regarding 'Farishtey Scheme' against LG's office baseless: Raj Niwas

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The withdrawal of the writ petition filed in the Supreme Court by Health Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj regarding the 'Farishtey Scheme' against the Office of the Lt. Governor is an admission that all the claims that he made against the LG Office in and done with an intent to malign the Office of the Lt. Governor, Raj Niwas said on

Making this assertion, officials said fearing that the AAP government's lies will be exposed in the Supreme Court, Bhardwaj did not press for the petition on Thursday.

As per the affidavit submitted by the LG office, 'the writ petition' was unfounded aimed at maligning the Office of the Lt. Governor, stemmed from concealment of material facts and had been filed without any cause of action only to build up

The withdrawal of the writ petition by Bhardwaj, in the Supreme Court vindicates what the LG Office had said and proves that all along, Bhardwai had been indulging in pointless and malicious blame game and was a 'classic example of dragging politics into the Court

the LG Office and the Finance Department, both of Secretary, Health, GNCTD that 'Farishtev Scheme' had never been made infructuous, as alleged by Bhardwaj.

total number of beneficiaries under the scheme during FY 2022-2023, was 3698 and the same stood at 3604 till October in FY 2023-2024, when the writ petition was moved. Bhardwaj lied to the Court in his writ petition. Also, contrary to claims made

by Bhardwaj in his writ petition that payments were not being made under the scheme, payment of Rs 4.85 crores during FY 2022-2023, and a payment of Rs 4.98 crores till February 12 in FY 2023-2024. were made to private hospitals under the scheme.

These figures prima facie neither indicate a "halt" in the 'Farishtey Scheme' nor do they support allegations of "nonpayment" made by Bhardwaj,

The implementation of Farishtey or any other scheme of the Health Department was done by the Health Department itself, with financial allocations made by the

which are transferred subjects totally under the control of respected Ministers and any failures thereof are the sole responsibility of the Ministers. Moreover, Minister Health, Saurabh Bhardwaj is himself the Chairman of Delhi ArogyaKosh and it is him, who clears every file submitted directly by Director General of Health Services (DGHS), to him and the question of Secretary of the Health Department or the LG Office being anywhere in the picture does not arise.

Meanwhile the AAP said that this is shameful, as the LG stooped to such lows that he did not even bother to respond to the letters of the Chief Minister of Delhi until he received notice from the

Supreme Court.
"After the Supreme Court issued notice to the LG, the funds of Rs. 29 crore were immediately released to DAK (Health Department), and payments could be made to private hospitals, allowing the scheme to become operational," the party said in a statement.

Bangla infiltration: BJP whitewash Didi 'blueprint' claim

s Bengal politics sparked As Bengal points spanked over Bangladeshi infiltra-tion the State BJP on Friday hit back at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee after she accused the Centre and BSF for encouraging infiltrations. The State BJP said the infiltrators were Banerjee's vote bank. Launching a scathing attack on Banerjee for her "malicious campaign" junior Union

Minister and Bengal BJP president Sukanto Majumdar said that all those who were enter-ing Bengal illegally and settling down in the border districts Chief Minister's Trinamool

... everyone knows who these infiltrators are ... they are the vote bank of Mamata Banerjee which is why they are given grand welcome by the Trinamool Congress govern-ment," Majumdar said won-dering how she was unaware of the large scale infiltration that has been taking place on daily basis --- if the Chief Minister's claim that nothing that hap-pened escaped her knowledge was true. Incidentally the Chief Minister is also in charge of the Home of the State

The BJP's counterattack came a day after Banerjee charged the Centre with preparing a 'blueprint' in connivance with the Bengal.

Alleging that the Bangladeshis infiltrators that settle in Bengal promptly acquire the voter and aadhar cards as also the membership of the TMC, Majumdar said these illegal immigrants "work in the elections to garner vote for Mamata Banerjee," Majumdar said that the Chief Minister was not interested in the future of the people and her State rather "she is interested about winning elections only ... she is not interested about

the future of the country. Even as a section of the BIP condemned the Chief Minister for making "seditious" state-



ments by implicating the BSF and the Centre and accusing them of making a "blueprint" to engineer infiltration Majumdar said "today she is making reckless remarks to save her face but

2021 Assembly elections she had instigated people to attack Central forces... If it would have been Pakistan forces then she would have welcomed

Majumdar's statements came amid the present volatile situ-ation in Bangladesh and regular arrests made by the Indian security forces of people who had infiltrated into India and had been working as terror modules of Ansar ul Bangla ments also came within hours

of the Chief Minister making an aggressive statement accusing the Centre and the BSF of aiding infiltration.

In apparent bid to shift the blame on the Centre's doors Baneriee on Thursday alleged

BSF was which responsible for guarding the borders, was allowing Bangladeshis to cross into India from Islampur, Sitai, and Chopra in North Bengal. "Border is guarded by BSF and not the TMC," Banerjee said adding how the BSF was aiding infiltration "to destabilize Bengal" as a part of a blueprint

"It is an inside job of the BSF, and it is a blueprint of the Central Government. If there was not any blueprint from the Central Government, then it would not be possible ... I have repeatedly spoken to the Central Government that what they decide will be our path, but we will protest against them if they facilitate militants to disrupt the state...We will send a protest letter to the cen-tre also for this," Banerjee said drawing instant criticism from Union Minister Giriraj Singh who said that Bengal during her rule had become a breeding ground of infiltrators.'

India protests China's creation of two new counties in Hotan, asserts area part of Ladakh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

India on Friday said it has lodged a "solemn protest" with China over creation of two new counties in Hotan prefecture, asserting that such moves will not lend legitimacy to Beijing's "illegal and forcible" occupation in the region.

In a strong reaction, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said parts of these so-called counties fall in India's Union Territory of Ladakh and that the Chinese action will have no bearing on New Delhi's consistent position regarding its sovereignty.

China's announcement on establishing the two counties came days after Special Representatives of the two nations resumed boundary talks that was stalled for almost five years. "We have seen the announcement pertaining to the establishment of two new counties in Hotan Prefecture of China. Parts of jurisdiction of these so-called counties fall in India's Union Territory of Ladakh," Jaiswal said.

'We have never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of

Indian territory in this area," he said. "Creation of new counties will neither have a bearing on India's long-standing and consistent position regarding our sovereignty over the area nor lend legitimacy to China's illegal and forcible occupation of the same," Jaiswal added. He further said: "We have lodged a solemn protest with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels."

The latest irritant in ties came weeks after India and China ended an over four-and-a-halfyear border standoff and announced steps to reduce mistrust. Following an under-standing reached on October 21, the two sides completed the disengagement of troops at the two remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks on the margins of the BRICS Summit in Russia on October 23 and agreed to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms, signalling an intention to normalise the relations.
In the nearly 50-minute meet-

ing, Modi underscored the importance of properly handling differences and disputes and not allowing them to disturb peace and tranquillity in

Nearly four weeks later, the Special Representatives on the border issue -- India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and China's foreign minister Wang Yi held talks in Beijing. It was the first dialogue under the framework of Special Representatives in nearly five years. In the talks, Doval and Wang focused on "positive" direction for cross-border cooperation including resuming the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, river data sharing and

Moreover, days after China announced its plan to build a mega dam on Brahmaputra river in Tibet, India on Friday said it will continue to moni-

tor and take necessary measures to protect its interests. In its first reaction to the proposed dam, New Delhi urged Beijing to ensure that the interests of downstream states of the Brahmaputra are not harmed by activities in upstream areas. We will continue to monitor and take necessary measures to protect our interests," Jaiswal

There have been apprehensions that the dam will have adverse impact on Arunachal Pradesh as well as Assam. "As a lower riparian state with established user rights to the waters of the river, we have consistently expressed, through expert-level as well as diplo-matic channels, our views and concerns to the Chinese side over mega projects on rivers in their territory," Jaiswal said.
"These have been reiterated,
along with the need for transparency and consultation with downstream countries, following the latest report," he said.
"The Chinese side has been urged to ensure that the inter-ests of downstream states of the

SC to devise effective mechanism to combat caste-based discrimination in educational institutions The top court sought Centre's

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Terming it as a sensitive issue, the Supreme Court on Friday said it will devise an effective mechanism to combat caste-based discrimina-tion in educational institutions in the country. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan directed the University Grants Commission (UGC) to notify

draft regulations to ensure no caste-based discrimination happened with students in the Central, State, private and deemed universities.
The Bench directed the UGC

to furnish data on the number of institutions which had established equal opportunity cells in compliance with the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions Regulations) 2012, popularly called "UGC equity regulations". "We are equally conscious of this sensitive issue. We will do something.

We will have to find out some

effective mechanism and

modalities to see that the 2012

regulations are translated into reality," the bench said.

ing such discrimination. While Vemula, a PhD scholar at Hyderabad Central University died on January 17, 2016, Tadvi, a student at TN Topiwala National Medical College, died on May 22, 2019, after she was subjected to purported discrimination by three doctors in her college. The bench said a PIL was filed in 2019 but no substantial hearing had taken place on the issue so far. "From now on we

response on the issue and asked the UGC to furnish data within six weeks on the complaints over such discrimination among students in all universities and higher education institutions besides the consequent action. Senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for the mothers of appearing for the mothers of students Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadvi, who allegedly died by suicide after facing caste-based discrimination, said from 2004 till now over 50 students (mostly from SC/ST) had killed themselves in IITs and other institutions after fac-

will list this petition periodically so that some effective solution could be found in the

matter as since 2019 nothing much has happened," said Justice Surya Kant.
The UGC counsel submitted

a committee constituted by it gave recommendation and the commission drafted new reg-ulations to stop caste-based discrimination. "The draft regulations need to be put on the website to invite objections and suggestions from the public in a month's time and thereafter it will be notified," he said. The bench questioned the UGC over the delay and said it had been sleeping all this while and not come up with new regulations.
"How much time is needed to

notify the new regulations? You do it in one month and place it on record," the bench said and posted the matter after six weeks. It sought the assistance of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta on the matter along with the response of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, an autonomous institution under the UGC which assesses and accredits higher education institutions.

On September 20, 2019, the top court issued notice on the

enforce the fundamental rights, particularly the Right to Equality, Right to Prohibition of Discrimination against caste, and the Right to Life. The plea alleged "rampant prevalence" of caste-based discrimination in higher educational institutions throughout the country. The petitioners sought directions to the Centre and the UGC to strictly ensure the enforcement and compliance of the 2012 regulations. Seeking directions to the Centre and the UGC, the plea asked to ensure all the educational institutions, complied with the regulations in "letter and in spirit" apart from estab-lishing equal opportunity cells on the lines of similarly existing anti-discrimination internal complaints mechanisms. and have representation from the SC/ST, NGOs or social sector to ensure objectivity and impartiality. Further, a direction was sought to all univer-sities to take strong disciplinary action against victimisa-tion of students or staff over

Right to property a Constitutional right, says SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court has said that the right to property is a constitutional right and an individual cannot be deprived of his property without him being paid adequate compensation in accordance with the law. A bench of justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan said the right to property ceased to be a fundamental right due to the Constitution (Forty-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1978, however, it continues to be a human right in a welfare state and a constitutional right under Article 300-A of the

Article 300-A of the Constitution provides that no person shall be deprived of his property, save by authority of law. The apex court delivered its verdict on Thursday on an appeal challenging a November 2022 judgment of the Karnataka High Court in a matter pertaining to land



Corridor Project (BMICP). "As discussed hereinabove, though the right to property is no more a fundamental right, in view of the provisions of Article 300-A of the Constitution of India, it is a constitutional right," the bench said. "A person cannot be deprived of his property without him being paid adequate compensation in accordance with law for the same," it said in its verdict on the compen-Infrastructure structure corridor project.

The bench noted that in January 2003, a preliminary notification was issued by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) for acquiring lands for the project and in November 2005, the possession of land of the appellants was taken over. The court said the land owners, who were appellants before it, were required to knock at the doors of the courts on a number of occasions during the last without any compensation for the same.

Brahmaputra are not harmed

by activities in upstream areas,

The top court noted there was no delay which could be attributed to the appellants in not getting compensation, but it was on account of the "lethargic attitude" of the officers of the State/KIADB that the appellants were deprived of compensation. The bench said that only after notices were issued in contempt proceedings, the compensation was determined by the Special Land Acquisition Officer (SLAO) on April 22, 2019, taking guide-line values prevailing in 2011 for determining the market value of the acquired land.

The judgment said if the compensation to be awarded at the market value as of 2003 was permitted, it would amount to permitting a travesty of justice and making the constitutional provisions under Article 300-

A a mockery.

It was a fit case for the apex court to exercise its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution and direct the deprived of their property mination of the market value of judgment.

the land of the appellants.
"We, therefore, in exercise of power of this court under Article 142 of the Constitution

of India, find it appropriate in the interest of justice that the SLAO be directed to determine the compensation to be awarded to the appellants herein on the basis of the market value prevailing as on April 22, 2019," the bench said. The top court directed that the SLAO shall pass a fresh award taking the market value prevailing as on April 22, 2019 within two months after hearing the par-

"The rights of parties to chal-lenge the award in reference, if they are aggrieved by it, shall remain open," the bench said. It noted the appellants have been deprived of their legitimate dues for almost 22 years. "It can also not be controvert-ed that money is what money buys. The value of money is based on the idea that money can be invested to earn a return, and that the purchasing power of money decreases over

SC agrees to examine CBI's plea against acquital of Ram Rahim

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

upreme Court on Friday Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine the CBI's appeal against the acquittal of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh and four others in the 2002 murder of Ranjit Singh, a former manager of the sect. The Puniab and Harvana High Court on May 28, 2024, acquitted Singh and others in the case, observing the probe was "tainted and sketchy".

Sirsa-based sect leader Singh, who is serving a 20-year jail term for the charges of raping two of his disciples, is currently lodged in Sunaria Jail in Rohtak, Haryana.

He was also awarded lifeterm imprisonment for the murder of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati, which will commence after the completion of his current sentence. Singh in the past grabbed headlines for secur-

ing Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Saniav Kumar issued notices to the five acquitted persons including Singh. The bench took note of the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI, that a bench headed by Justice Bela M Trivedi had issued notices to the acquitted per-sons on a separate plea filed by the deceased's father against the High Court ver-

'Our attention has been drawn to the office report dated September 9, 2024 regarding the order passed by the bench of Justice Bela Trivedi, Issue notice... Matter is to be listed before the bench presided over by Justice Bela Trivedi," said the top court. Ranjit Singh was fatally shot at by four unidentified assailants at Khanpur Kolian Village in Haryana's Kurukshetra on July 10, 2002.

The murder was allegedly On Friday, a bench compris- suspected the deceased of sons.

being behind the circulation of an anonymous letter accusing him of sexually exploiting his women followers. The CBI, which took over the probe in November 2023, said there was a clear motive

caste-based discrimination

any hostility in campuses.

A division bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, however, acquitted Singh observing the prosecution's failure to conclusively establish the motive and said the case was "shrouded in

Those acquitted include Avtar Singh, Krishan Lal, Jasbir Singh, and Sabdil Singh whereas another accused Inder Sain, died during the pendency of the trial in 2020. A special CBI court in Panchkula, Haryana, con-victed all the accused in October, 2021 and sentenced them to life-term imprisonment in the murder case. Singh was held guilty of hatching a criminal conspir-

SC upholds order saying Haryana Congress MLA Panwar's arrest illegal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has observed ED's "high-handedness" and "inhuman conduct" during an almost 15-hour long interrogation of former Haryana Congress MLA Surender Panwar and upheld an order saying his arrest was illegal. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said it was an "inhuman conduct" on part of ED officers as the case was not related to some terror activity but of an alleged illegal sand mining. "This is not the way to treat people in such a case. You have virtually forced a person to make a statement," it said. Dismissing the Enforcement Directorate (ED)'s plea against the high court order, the bench held, "We are not inclined to interfere with the finding of the high court that the arrest of the



respondent was illegal." The High Court's findings, it said, were only for deciding whether Panwar's arrest was illegal. "These findings will not affect the merits of the pending complaint under Section 44 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002," said the bench in its order on December 2. The

court said the ED's approach in

conducting the probe was a "shocking state of affairs" where a person was virtually forced to make a statement.

ED's counsel Zoheb Hussain said the High Court had erred in its finding that Panwar was continuously quizzed for 14.40 hours, pointing to a dinner break during the interrogation. The lawyer said ED in a 2024 circular asked its officials

to maintain certain standards of interrogations and to ensure people were not interrogated during late night and in early hours of the day.

Panwar, 55, was taken into custody in the wee hours of July 20, 2024, in Gurugram and produced before a special PMLA court in Ambala which sent him to the custody of the ED till July 29, 2024 in an illegal mining-linked money-laundering case. The agency raided the premises of the former Sonepat MLA in January, 2024, on charges of "large-scale illegal mining" in the Yamunanagar area of the state. The money-laundering case

stems from several FIRs regis-tered by the Haryana Police for probing alleged illegal mining of boulders, gravel and sand that took place in the past in Yamunanagar and nearby districts despite a ban imposed by

MEA rejects Washington Post report linking New Delhi to plot against Muizzu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ndia on Friday rejected two recent reports published by the Washington Post -- one linking New Delhi to a failed plot to impeach Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu and another on Indian agents allegedly attempting to eliminate certain terror elements in Pakistan.

Dismissing the reports, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the newspaper and the reporter in question appear to nurse a "compulsive hostility" towards India.

In its report on the Maldives, the Washington Post, citing a document titled "Democratic Renewal Initiative", claimed that opposition politicians pro-posed bribing 40 members of Parliament, including those



vote to impeach him. After months of secret talks, the plotters failed to gather enough votes to impeach the president,

"Both the newspaper and the reporter in question appear to nurse a compulsive hostility

pattern in their activities. I leave you to judge their credibility. As far as we are concerned, they have none," Jaiswal said.

"As regards (the report on)

Pakistan, I remind you of what Hillary Clinton said -- 'You cannot keep snakes in your

Clinton had made the comments in a blunt message to Pakistan in 2011, when she was serving as the US secretary of

She had also said that Washington intended to "push the Pakistanis very hard" to remove militant safe havens and tackle groups like the Haqqani network that are responsible for cross-border

In its report on India's "shadow" operations in Pakistan, the Washington Post, quoting unnamed Pakistani and west ern officials, claimed that the Indian intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), is carrying out a programme since 2021 to "kill at least a half a dozen people" inside Pakistan.

Protests intensify in Bihar over BPSC exam controversy, rail and road traffic disrupted



Protests intensified on Friday over the demand for cancellation of the recent Bihar PSC exam, as agitators disrupted rail and vehicular movement in Patna, while police stopped a few Left-leading students' organisations from marching to the CM's

A day ahead of fresh tests for a select group of candidates, Independent MP Pappu

Yadav led his supporters in blocking rail and road traffic in several areas of Patna as well as other parts of the state, including Araria, Purnea and Muzaffarpur,

officials said. officials said.

The protesters gathered at Sachiwalay Halt Railway Station and squatted on the tracks for a brief period, causing a delay in the train movement, they said. Yadav's supporters also burnt tyres supporters also burnt tyres on roads in Purnea and

Patna, the officials said. "The agitators stopped the Buxar-Fatuha passenger train at Sachivalaya Halt Station around 9 am. The train was stopped for 20 minutes," East Central Railway Chief Public Relation Officer Sarswati Chandra told PTI. Members some Left-leaning students' organisations also clashed with police upon being stopped from marching towards the chief

minister's residence in the state capital, the officials said. Meanwhile, Jan Suraaj founder Prashant Kishor with his fastunto-death that he began on Thursday to press the demand for cancellation of the 70th Combined Competitive Examination (CCE) conducted by the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) on December 13. Mocking Kishor, Yadav likened the

former political strategist to well-known conman 'Natwar "He is 'Natwar Lal', who sits

on fast-unto-death in the evening after having lunch. Please don't talk about him," Yadav told reporters.
The Independent MP, along with his supporters, also took out a march from Sachiwalay Halt Railway Station to JP Golumber, where police stopped them from proceeding further.

Top leaders pay tribute to former PM Manmohan Singh at prayer meet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Several top dignitaries paid tributes to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at a prayer meet organised in his memory at Gurudwara Rakab

Among the top leaders who attended the prayer meeting (Kirtan and Antim Ardas) included Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress Nalikarjuh Kharge, Congress
Parliamentary Party
chairperson Sonia Gandhi,
Punjab Chief Minister
Bhagwant Mann, former
Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Former SGPC president Bibi Kaur, Leader of Opposition in Punjab assembly Pratap Bajwa and former deputy chairperson of the then Planning Commission Montek

Singh Ahluwalia also attended the prayer.

Others who attended the ceremony included Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and Pawan Khera, former Union ministers Salman Khurshid and Ajay Maken, and Sukhjinder Randhawa. BJP's Praneet Kaur and Manjinder Singh Sirsa were also present. Earlier, former vice-president

Hamid Ansari, Sonia Gandhi and Kharge were among the dignitaries who attended the 'Akhand Path' at the ex-prime minister's residence on Friday. Former prime minister's wife, Gursharan Kaur sang a 'shabad (verse)' from the Sikh holy scriptures during the 'Akhand path (continuous recitation of Guru Granth Sahib)' at his

Gurugram traffic police to wear body cameras to enhance road safety and transparency

STAFF REPORTER
GURUGRAM

¬he Gurugram traffic police will soon be equipped with body-worn video cameras to catch traffic violators on vital roads of Gurugram like MG Road and Golf Course Road. The cameras are expected to enhance road safety for both the traffic police and the residents of Gurugram.

"All traffic inspectors and zonal officers were given instructions to use body-worn cameras while challaning and were also instructed not to



work with Virender Vij, DCP (traffic),

While challaning, the activities of the driver and the intersection will also be

body-worn cameras. All these recordings will be kept safely so that in future if required, these body-worn camera recordings can be used for any evidence," he said.

Manipur CM clarifies apology, says opponents seeking unrest amid ethnic conflict

 $M^{\text{anipur Chief Minister N}}_{\text{Biren Singh on Friday}}$ claimed that those who are indulging in politics over his apology to the people on the 20-month-long ethnic conflict are seeking unrest in the northeastern state, and said his government's priority is to restore

Claiming that "past is past", he appealed to communities to sit together and find a permanent solution to the conflict that has plagued the northeastern state since May 2023. "Those who are indulging in politics over my statement are seeking unrest.

The opposition has no ideology. What I said was an expression of sadness and grief. My apology was to those who have been suffering and have lost their loved ones. Why should I say sorry to terrorists? I am saying sorry to the innocent people and those who were displaced from their homes," Singh said.

The chief minister had on Tuesday apologised for the ethnic conflict in the state, which claimed more than 250 lives and rendered thousands homeless and appealed to all communities to forget and forgive past mistakes and start afresh.

President Droupadi Murmu hails NIMHANS as model for integrated medicine services underlined

PTI ■ BENGALURU

President Droupadi Murmu Pon Friday hailed NIMHANS for its integrated medicine services as she considered it as a model for all. According to her, the application of Yoga and Ayurveda in the promotion of mental health and well being is worth emulating.

"The integrative medicine services of NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences) has been a model for all to examine the applications of Yoga and Ayurveda in the promotion of mental health and well being, and in that treatment of psychiatric and neurological disorders," Murmu said during the



Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Institute here.

On the occasion, she inaugurated the Psychiatry Specialty Block, Central Laboratory Complex and Bhima Hostel at NIMHANS. The President also dedicated state-of-the-art diagnostic facilities - the advanced 3T MRI Scanner and DSA

She said different kinds of meditations are also useful in countering negative mental forces, and added that they are being integrated in the Mental health care models. importance of using traditional approaches that are beneficial for all. Murmu said, "Our scriptures

tell us that the mind is at the root of everything we perceive in the world." She underlined that greater focus on mental health promotions will become even more important in the years ahead.

In the past, issues and concern of mental health had not received enough attention in some societies, the President said, adding that in recent times, awareness about mental health has been rising. She further said that the unscientific belief and stigma associated with mental illnesses are a matter of past,

the suffering from various sing ailments to seek help. that "This has been a welcome

development, especially at this juncture, because a variety of mental health issues variety of mental health issues are taking epidemic proportions around the world. The COVID 19 pandemic in particular led to

pandemic in particular led to a spike in such concerns," Murmu pointed out. According to the President, working professionals face more stress, and a large number of the elderly people suffer from loneliness due to social challenges.

social challenges. However, it is truly heartening to note that the rising awareness has made it possible for patients to open up and share their problems," she said.

Former union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla takes oath as 19th Governor of Manipur

 $F_{\text{tary Ajay Kumar Bhalla}}^{\text{ormer union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla}}_{\text{took oath as the 19th governor}}$ of Manipur during a function at the Raj Bhavan here on

Bhalla was administered the oath of office by Manipur High Court Chief Justice D Krishnakumar in the presence of Chief Minister N

He inspected the guard of honour by Manipur Rifles

Speaking on swearing-in as the governor, the chief minister said, "He is a dynamic person who knows the ground reality and the situation of the state very well. He is a very committed person. I wholeheartedly



welcome him. With his appointment as the governor of the state, I believe that normalcy and peace will be restored at the earliest."

Bhalla's The former union home secretary took oath as the governor at a time when strife-torn Manipur has been witnessing periodic ethnic clashes between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May

"Appointing one of the intelligent and competent persons as the governor of the state during these trying times shows that the central

government is serious about

solving the problems of Manipur," Singh said. Bhalla, who has the rare distinction of being the longest-serving union home secretary, completed his fiveyear tenure in August last

, He is a 1984-batch retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Assam-

President Droupadi Murmu appointed Bhalla the governor of Manipur last month.

"I know Bhalla ji. He is a wellexperienced person and held many important posts. He held posts in the home department.

appreciate appointment as the governor of Manipur. I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for Bhalla's appointment," the chief minister said.

Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya was holding additional charge

Police constables arrested for hotel manager's death in new year's party braw

A police constable was arrested and another placed under custody for allegedly killing a hotel manager at a New Year's party in Himachal Pradesh's Chamba district, officials said on

The accused, Anoop Kumar and Amit Kumar were posted as constables in the Chamba district while the victim was identified as hotel manager Rajinder formally placed under arrest

Kumar. According to police, the incident occurred during a New Year's party when three police personnel visited a hotel in Banikhet, Chamba.

argument with Rajinder and Sachin, a hotel

In the heat of the moment, Rajinder, Anoop and Sachin fell from the hotel's elevated parking space and suffered injuries. While Anoop and Sachin suffered fractures, Rajinder Kumar succumbed to injuries.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhishek Yadav said that Amit has been arrested while Anoop will be after getting discharged from the hospital. The involvement of the third police personnel is under investigation.

Rajinder's family members Anoop and Amit got into a earlier held a protest and added.

demanded action against the accused. They blocked the Pathankot-Chamba National Highway for a few hours which disrupted vehicular movement. They withdrew the protest after the SP assured them of stern action. Yaday said that the accused were posted in Chamba and were sent to Dalhousie for

"While they were returning from their duty, they headed up to the hotel where the incident took place. We have also checked CCTV footage in which we can see that a scuffle had taken place" he

Further investigation into the matter is underway, he

Odisha CM declares unseasonal rain as natural calamity

PTI BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday declared the unseasonal rain in December last year as a natural calamity to facilitate disbursement of compensation from the state disaster response fund (SDRF) to farmers for crop damage due to the untimely weather event.

Addressing the 'Krushi Odisha Conclave' 2025 here, he said farmers who have lost 33 per cent or more crops due to the unseasonal rain, would be provided assistance as per the provisions in the relief code

The assistance of around Rs 291 crore will be given from the state disaster response fund (SDRF), he said.

'Unseasonal rain was not on the list of natural calamities in the state. However, keeping in view the crop damage and plight of farmers, our government today declares the unseasonal rain as a natural calamity in the state to facilitate the disbursement of compensation from the state disaster response fund," he

According to district collectors, 6,66,720 farmers have so far reported 33 per cent or more crop loss due to rain between December 20 and 28, the chief minister said. "These cultivators are entitled to get financial assistance of about Rs 291.59 crore as compensation," he said.

Crop on around 2,26.791 hectares of agricultural land has been damaged by the untimely weather event, he added.

2013 to 2025, Maha Kumbh grows threefold in 12 years

BISWAJEET BANERJEE

s the sacred city of As the sacred city of Prayagraj prepares to host the Maha Kumbh 2025, an air of excitement envelops the region, promising a spiritual gathering unparalleled in scale and splendor. This iteration of the Kumbh Mela surpasses the grandeur of 2013, showcasing transformative progress in infrastructure and amenities, making it a hallmark of modern governance and cultural heritage. The event's ?5010 crore

budget, bolstered by ?2010 crore from the central government. marks monumental rise from the ?1214 crore allocated for the 2013 Kumbh. Uttar Pradesh Minister Yogi



Adityanath remarked, "This vear's Kumbh is not just a religious event but a global spectacle. The increased budget reflects our dedication creating world-class

infrastructure for devotees from around the globe' have expanded from 16 square kilometers in 2013 to a 40 sprawling square an estimated 40 crore pilgrims over 45 days. Mahakumbh Nagar, a temporary district with 25 sectors and 56 police stations, exemplifies meticulous exemplifies meticulous planning. "The scale of Maha Kumbh 2025 is unprecedented. This transformation highlights how far we have come in managing such a massive event," said Dr. Shailendra Singh, a senior official

overseeing preparations.
For devotees, the improvements are palpable. The number of toilets has surged from 33,903 to 1.5 lakh, complemented by 300 portable units, while change rooms have increased fourfold to 10,000. "Our aim is to provide not just a

spiritual experience but also a safe and hygienic environment for everyone," said Ramesh Tiwari, sanitation head of said Ramesh sanitation head Mahakumbh Nagar.

Mahakumon Nagar.
Naval Raghuvanshi, a regular
pilgrim from Vidisha,
Madhya Pradesh, shared his
experience: "I also came to
the Maha Kumbh in 2013. There is a lot of difference between that system and today's system. Facilities have increased. Earlier, we had three toilets in our camp; this time, we have 11. We used to get two taps; now, we have six

Transportation facilities have also undergone a remarkable upgrade. Over 7,000 buses, including 200 air-conditioned ones, and more than 200 charter flights will charter

complement regular flights from 23 cities, while 3,000 special trains will ensure seamless connectivity. The infrastructure is geared to handle the daily influx of approximately passengers.

Lighting and energy have seen significant advancements, with 3391 avancements, with ?391 crore allocated to power the Kumbh area. The setup includes 1,532 kilometers of wiring, 67,000 streetlights, and 170 substations. 170 substations. "Illuminating the Kumbh is as symbolic as it is practical, embodying the light of spirituality that guides millions," observed A.K. Mishra, Chief Engineer for

Maha Kumbh 2025 Technology will play a vital role, with drones, AI-powered

cameras, and face-recognition systems ensuring security and efficiency. Visitors can also access real-time assistance via dedicated Google Chat feature. The event is expected to break

records, with peak attendance serving as a beacon of India's rich cultural legacy and innovative capabilities.

on Mauni Amavasya, January 29, anticipated to exceed 4 crore devotees, surpassing the 3 crore recorded in 2013. Swami Anand Giri, a noted spiritual leader, expressed, "Maha Kumbh 2025 is not just an event; it is a phenomenon that unites humanity in faith and devotion." With its fusion of tradition and modernity, Maha Kumbh 2025 is set to redefine spiritual gatherings,

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

America under attack

A series of seemingly unrelated attacks highlight a troubling pattern of violence that has become a daily occurrence in the US

t is not a good beginning of the new year for the United States. The United States witnessed a series of attacks that shook it to core: a truck-ramming incident in New Orleans, a shooting incident in New York and a shooting spree in Las Vegas. These events, happening in quick succession, underscore an alarming pattern of violence that warrants deep analysis into their causes and potential implications. In New Orleans, a truck driven by Shamsud Din Jabbar plowed into a crowd, killing 15 and injuring 30. The truck, bearing an ISIS flag, was found to contain weapons and potential improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Jabbar was killed in a shootout with law enforcement and the FBI is treating the incident as an act of terrorism. Several people were injured after a mass shooting incident at the Amazura nightclub in Queens, New York late on Wednesday. Meanwhile, one person was killed and seven were wounded when a Tesla Cybertruck exploded outside a hotel belonging to US President-elect



Donald Trump in Las Vegas. Motives remain unclear, but early investigations point to ideological influences. The attacks share a few commonalities. All incidents targeted densely populated, high-profile locations to maximise casualties and media cov-

In New Orleans and potentially Las Vegas, ideological motives appear central, with Jabbar's ISIS affiliations highlighting international terrorism's persistent threat. The use of a vehicle, explosives, and firearms demonstrates the adaptability of attackers, making prevention increasingly complex. The motivations behind these attacks stem from several inter-

secting factors. Jabbar's case exemplifies how individuals, even the US citizens, can become radicalised through extremist propaganda, facilitated by online networks. The $\,$ New York incident is case in point of hazards of allowing free gun culture and resistance to any law on gun control. Early reports from Las Vegas suggest mental health challenges combined with ideological leanings may have fueled the attack, a trend increasingly observed in lone-wolf attackers. The growing threat of extremism, combined with unchecked emotions and easy access to firearms, continues to claim innocent lives. The implications of these attacks call for enhanced surveillance, with increased monitoring of online platforms and extremist networks. The gun control is the need of the hour. Though the US is divided on the gun control, it is high times at least some initial steps were taken in this direction. The recent spate of attacks underscores a volatile and evolving threat perception in the US. While law enforcement's swift action has mitigated further tragedy, addressing the root causes of such violence requires a multifaceted approach. From tackling radicalisation to bolstering community resilience, the nation must remain vigilant and united against the forces that seek to sow fear and division.



A legacy of leadership, humanity and service



Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States, leaves behind an extraordinary legacy as a leader, peacemaker and humanitarian



mmy Carter, was one of the oldest living American presidents. Along with being the individual who has lived the longest after serving as prest in American history, he is also distinguished for spending the most extended post-presidential period alive. Jimmy Carter, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his efforts in promoting human rights and conflict resolution, passed away in 2023. He was the 39th President of the United States, and he outlived many of his contemporaries, including George H.W. Bush, who he defeated in the presidential race in 1980. Born James Earl Carter Jr. on October 1, 1924, he has made a significant mark on American history.From 1977 to 1981, Jimmy Carter served as the President of the United States. Before becoming president, Jimmy Carter served as the Governor of Georgia in 1971. Despite running for president again in 1982 (Democrat) and competing against Ronald Reagan, he faced defeat.

After leaving the presidency, he, along with his wife Rosalynn Carter, established the Carter Centre in 1982 in pursuit of helping the disadvantaged. Rosalynn Carter became the first lady and the first woman to

In 2002, Jimmy Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts towards peace and his exemplary actions in promoting human welfare. Despite reaching the age of 90, he remained active in various fields. Carter continued his philanthropic work, including building houses for lowincome families through Habitat for Humanity, reduc ing diseases and elevating the quality of life for the underprivileged. His advocacy for human

IN 2002, JIMMY rights, international conflict resolution, presidency, human rights, and socio-economic development reflects his dedication to humanitarian causes. Carter's dedication to peace and social justice, as well as his active involvement in public service, sets him apart among U.S. presidents. Carter played a key role in mediating international conflicts, notably contributing to the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. His post-presidential activities, including receiving the Nobel Peace Prize and actively participating in various humanitarian initiatives, showcase his commitment to making a positive impact on the world.

CARTER WAS AWARDED THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR HIS EFFORTS TOWARDS PEACE AND HIS EXEMPLARY ACTIONS IN PROMOTING HUMAN WELFARE. DESPITE REACHING THE AGE OF 90, HE REMAINED ACTIVE IN VARIOUS

American hostages in Iran, known as Operation Eagle Claw, failed.In his personal life, Jimmy Carter married Rosalynn in 1946, and their marriage lasted more than seven decades. They have four children: Jack, James, Donnel, and Amy. Roselyn "Rosalynn" Carter, actively participated in various activities, including writing, activism, and advocacy for different causes. She was born in 1927. Rosalynn was actively involved in various meetings and discussions as the First Lady.

She faced controversies, engaged in foreign trips, and represented her husband in diplomatic roles.In 1978, the then-American President Jimmy Carter visited India. Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister at that time. He had a meeting with 500 media persons. Carter visited the village of Chumukedima. The purpose of his visit was to

revitalize the village where his mother, Lillian Peace, had served in the Peace Corps. During his journey, Carter distributed a considerable amount of money and television to the villagers. The village was later renamed as Carterpuri. In 2015, Jimmy Carter was diagnosed with

cancer, and in 2019, he faced health challenges related to multiple falls. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Carter, at the age of 96, stayed at home due to the pandemic's circumstances. Despite facing challenges and controversies, Jimmy Carter remained an active and influential figure in national and international affairs throughout his life. His contributions to diplomacy, human rights, and conflict resolution earned him recognition and respect. Even though his time as the American President failed, he left the White House and conadvocate for human rights. He established the Carter Presidential Foundation to protect human rights globally, helping those in need and experiencing hardship.

The organization has grown globally, assisting those in distress in Africa, Latin America, and other societies. Carter's compassionate activities in these regions included healthcare services and other humanitarian initiatives. Today, he remains one of the eminent figures among the great presidents of America.
(The writer is an associate

Balancing dreams and parental aspirations: A dilemma for students



In a society deeply rooted in tradition and shaped by economic uncertainty, parents often tread cautiously when guiding their children's career paths

The tend to be over-cautious when we tive examinations. The fee charged by guide our children in their professional choices. I realised this only after I had cajoled my children into studying sciences till their class 12. My rationale was that they could always switch to any other course for graduation, but the reverse was not possible. They are now happily pursuing their non-science professions, often ribbing me about how much better they could have done in their Board examinations had I not insisted. Many parents from my social circle still struggle to resolve the conun-

A senior colleague faced such a dilemma for his daughter two decades back. My daughters were by now happily pursuing their dreams. I freely dispensed my wisdom to let the young lady pursue whatever she wanted. He was conbefore agreeing. He remembered his school friend, the son of a famous medical doc-

The friend was pushed into a medical college sometime in the late sixties. He quit after a couple of years, joined a



a contented leading artist. I was born a few years after independence. I believe our parents were excited about freedom but were equally apprehensive about the future or the next generation.

They opted for the more secure government jobs for us through engineering or medical studies. Children from families who had already seen enough government jobs through second-generation elders started moving to other options in the nineties. The liberalisation of the Indian economy opened professional choices hitherto unknown to children and parents alike. But it was still not the same across the entire spectrum. A junior colleague sought my advice regarding his son's admission to an engineering course. The child had not per

formed well in the competi-

The fee charged by the available lower-rung colleges was exorbitant, necessitating the father to take a loan. It was tragic as he came to me after five years, a year after the young man had completed his graduation and had been unable to secure a job. requesting if I could arrange a job even at a measly monthly salary. I witnessed several similar cases and wondered about the strange phenomenon even half a century after independence when several better-paying career options

were available An improved economy has resulted in a continuous upward movement of people financially from the belowpoverty line to the lower class o the lower-middle-class to the middle-middle-class, and so on. However, an increasing population also ensures a part of the population remains in the lower financial strata These parents are insecure about the future leading them towards the perceived safer educational courses for children to pursue. We read about senior leaders exhorting young people to become job providers instead of job

Not many talk about the ways to achieve this or the alternate career options. Engineering and medical colleges keep mushrooming without the government and the leaders pausing to reflect upon the implications of unplanned growth. This will continue for a few more generations till the population stabilizes. I narrate experiences from my life when interacting with the young in

college. I tell them to pursue their dreams. A few of them invariably ask me whether to follow the courses that their parents have chosen for them or if they should follow their dreams. It is a difficult question to answer I draw upon life when I respond "Follow your parents today, they only want the best for you. But do not let your dreams die. Life gives enough opportunities for you to pur sue vour dreams - if not today, certainly sometime in the future."

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; view are personal)

ENSURE WORKERS' SAFETY

Madam —This refers to the editorial, 'Save sibility of the Indian government to ensure the safety and security of millions of Indian nationals who choose to avail the employment opportunities extended in other countries. When the government is not able to provide employment in India, it is but natural that helpless peo ple venture going abroad seeking livelihood means. Had the government provided jobs they would not have thought of going abroad. Therefore, the government should negotiate with the countries employing Indians to ensure the safety and security of the employees.

In case any of them are found guilty of any crime, they should be sent back to face legal proceedings in the home country. This is not new. In the case of Abu, the extradition is agreed to with the condition of not awarding him capital punish ment. Above all, it is time to rethink awarding capital punishment. Let us imagine a scene of punishing all those involved in various crimes, those who instigated and promoted them in Manipur in the recent months An individual killing another individual is a crime to be punished by awarding death sentences, but mass killing and raping go unpunished and even if punished, enjoy remission and paroles. Review is imminent.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

ISIS STRIKES AGAIN Madam-Apropos of the headlines 'Terror Strikes United States' (January 3), the ghastly terror strikes before Donald Trump swears in his second term as president are ominous for his upcoming tenure and may influence and harden his policy on terrorism throughout the world. The army veteran Shams Ud Din Jabbar, swaved by ISIS, can't be alone in executing the terrorist attacks killing 14 people and fatally injuring several citizens. In fact, he got the advanced arms training and technology from the US army itself. The police investigation may unearth the

Sports award winners announced



ETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FIELDS

he list of sports award winners is finally made received the government nod for the Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award include D Gukesh, Harmanpreet Singh, Manu Bhaker and Praveen Kumar. Also, there is a long list for the Arjuna Awards, Dronacharya Award and the others. Although every recipient is worthy of receiving the honours for doing exceptionally well in their respective sports field. But D Gukesh is worthy of receiving extra appreciation for clinching the

deep conspiracy, but the vulnerability for terror attacks is conspicuous.

Islamic fundamentalism has already destroyed Islamic countries where nationality and geographical boundaries are deeply divided among ethnic groups. Islamic terrorism has gripped Asia, America and Africa and the peace is unsustainable. Let Islamic countries settle their own nationalities and borders without foreign intervention and fight internecine wars among themselves. There is a need to adopt a policy of keeping away from Islamic fundamentalist countries from all diplomatic channels, trade and security agreements. The extremist and fundamentalist leadership of all those countries are inflicting grue-some attacks in the US, Europe and India. The diplomatic channels in the Islamic countries are failing. It may be recalled that in the past, the US had to abandon Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan after decades of feeding them and strengthening them. The world needs to rethink

Vinod Johri | Delhi

title at such an early age of 18. He excellently carved out his own space for the national sport honours by becoming the winner of the FIDE

most recently last December 2024. His calmness, grit and sacrifices on personal grounds, as well as his patience for his sports category, made him the utmost deserving candidate for this very honour. He has taken chess to new heights for being a cynosure in the Indian sports history. Today chess has become a popular mindgame among the youth, especially Gen Z & Gen Alpha. All credit goes to the young aspirations & zeal of D Gukesh. R Vaishali and Praggnandhaa who have made this 6-century-based, Indian-origin game called Shatranj reach the epitome of sports craze among players of every generation. He is in true sense, India's Khel Ratna (Sports

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

SOLAR POWER FOR RESIDENTS

Madam — It is an excellent initiative by the UT Administration of Chandigarh to provide solar plants to the residents of the 'City Beautiful' under the RESCO (Renewable Energy Service Company) scheme at no cost, inviting the tapping of solar energy and savings for every house-hold. The sun is available in plenty in northern India, which will make the scheme very successful. This scheme needs to be promulgated rapidly in other cities of the nation too, with the initiative of the Union government, to benefit the maximum number of people.

It will help in saving natural energy, a privilege available in abundance to only a few select countries. The government should ensure that benefits are given only to those holding authorised infrastructure duly registered to discourage further unauthorised constructions and ensure correct utilisation of government funds.

R S Narula | Patiala

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FIRST COLUMN

OVERCOMING JEALOUSY AND POSSESSIVENESS

In a world driven by competition and material aspirations, they become the silent tormentors



RAVI VALLURI

The world has become exceedingly ruthless and is not populated by monks and sages. Renunciation today is seen as an act contemptibly performed by someone lacking in courage. Competition fuels the aspiration to launch territories and enlarge the area of dominance. Companies, countries and communities have all become wary of the material success of their 'competitors' and in the process compromise with their goals and objectives. Consequently, they resort to shortcuts to emerge triumphant and victorious. The attribute of jealousy arises in an individual when the mind is possessive of certain belong-

They fail to appreciate it is primarily inadequacy and deficiency in the personality that triggers this kind of capricious and mercurial behaviour. Interestingly, envy in many also arises out of shortages. There can be a lack of aptitude, talent, resources, connections, opportunities or because of unfavourable outcomes. This engenders negative feelings towards perceived competitors, which culminates in jealousy and other negative feelings.Individuals subsumed by jealousy build walls of false security walls around their personalities.

Such minds feel cheery about their possessions. They attach importance to this property, clinging on to it. This could be a physical property, position, power and pelf, pleasure or sex. As per the Mahabharata, Karna was extremely jealous of Arjuna, which eventually proved to be his nemesis. Similarly, Dev Dutt remained extremely envious of his enlightened



cousin, Buddha, which only led to his downfall. The jealous and possessive mind is acquisitive by nature, taking both animate and inanimate objects for granted and getting attached to things, like an addiction to

Additionally, such a mind is perpetually petrified at the prospect of losing acquisitions. Fear in such minds harbours negative tendencies such as hatred, greed and ruthlessness. For instance, an artiste aspiring to be a lead artiste in a drama plays foul with a more talented actress becoming fearful and gripped with hatred and greed. Her ruthless mind kept conjuring tricks, trying to outsmart the second lead and in the bargain lost the plot. Jealous and envious minds have become laboratories of antagonism that spew hatred. How do we overcome attributes such as jealousy, envy, and possessiveness? At one end of the spectrum are organisations and authorities which need to take up this responsibility. This includes proper parenting, where children are brought up on ideals of inherent goodness, an effective educational system that imparts values as part of their pedagogy, governments that take up the responsi-bility of providing equal opportunities to the citizens and try to carve out an egalitarian system and a society that addresses the core issues of humaneness amongst its citizenry. Vasudeva Kutumbakam (or what is termed one world family) is the net result. The spiritual touch is an important colour in the rainbow of goodness. One can practice any faith, but we need to be tolerant of other peoples' points of view. Spirituality succeeds where religions draw the fault lines and wave red flags. Globalisation has made the world flat, but has resulted in an exponential increase in crass commercialisation and human minds have fallen prey to antipathetic traits such as jealousy, envy, attachments, entanglements, greed and possessiveness. The vicious tendencies of jealousy and possessiveness can be tackled by following the two-fold approach highlighted so that the chasm between individuals diminishes." Manifest plainness Embrace simplicity Reduce selfishness Have few desires."— Lao Tzu

ter is the CFO of Chhattisgarh Fast Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living: views are personal)

How waterways shape global dominance



Beyond the rhetoric of ideologies and resources, history reveals a stark reality: whoever commands the strategic arteries of global trade rules, the world



the world's most significant conflicts haven't often been about land or wealth, but about water—specifically, the narrow, strategic passages that govern the flow of global commerce? What if the true history of power isn't written in the conquest of continents, but in the manipulation of these invisible arteries that sustain entire civilisations? We've been conditioned to believe wars are fought over ideologies, religions, or resources, but in reality, the greatest power struggles have always boiled down to one thing: who controls the waterways. In the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE), Athens fought for dominance over the Adgean Sea, while the Punic Wars (264–146 BCE) saw Rome and Carthage clash over Mediterranean trade routes. The Viking Invasions (8th–11th Century) leveraged rivers and coastal routes to expand across Europe. The Hundred Years' War -1453) revolved around control of the English Channel, vital for military and trade

The Spanish Armada (1588) attempted to invade England via the Channel, only to fail, marking the rise of English naval power. The Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652–1674) pitted England against the Dutch for supremacy over global trade routes. The Opium Wars (1839–1860) saw Britain assert control over Chinese trade routes, while the Crimean War (1853–1856) focused on access to the Black Sea and key straits. History teaches us one undeniable truth: whoever controls the waters, controls the world. So, are today's tensions over waterways merely the latest chapter in an ongo ing imperialist saga, where the West fights to preserve its dominance, regardless of the cost? Consider the Suez Canal, that artificial marvel that stitched together the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

To the naked eye, it may appear as nothing more than a lifeline for global trade, but dig deeper and you'll find it at the heart of Western exploitation. When the British seized control in 1882, under the convenient pretext of 'protecting their investments,' they didn't just shorten maritime routes; they solidified their chokehold on the world's shipping routes, ensuring that they would remain the dominant force in global com-



merce. When Egypt's Nasser attempted to break this grip in 1956, his actions sparked the Suez Crisis, where Britain, France, and Israel launched a military intervention to maintain their control. As US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles famously, quipped, "The United States will not tolerate the use of force to interfere with the free flow of commerce." And yet, isn't it glaringly obvious that this was never about commerce at all—it was about the West's attempt to secure THE PANAMA its monopoly, at any cost?In the same vein, the Panama Canal stands CANAL EXISTS as a bold symbol of imperial manipulation. The US didn't merely build' the canal—it stole it.

UNITED STATES the United States orchestrated the ORCHESTRATED disintegration of Colombian server eighty in 1903. This wasn't a disintegration of Colombian sover-THE moment of engineering brilliance, DISINTEGRATION but a calculated exercise in imperialism. With the canal, the US OF COLOMBIAN secured its unchallenged control over the Atlantic and Pacific, guar-SOVEREIGNTY IN anteeing military and economic supremacy for the century to come. 1903. THIS WASN'T Even when Panamanian discontent A MOMENT OF festered, and the CIA's once-trusted ally Manuel Noriega threatened ENGINEERING the established order, the United BRILLIANCE, States responded with military force under the guise of fighting drug car-BUT A tels. To the naive, it was a noble cause.

CALCULATED To the cynical, it was a ruthless EXERCISE IN move to preserve a stranglehold over one of the world's most critical arter-IMPERIALISM ies. The canal may have technically been handed back to Panama in 1999, but let's not fool ourselvesit remains an essential tool of Western control, albeit one with a

> Let's not forget the Strait of Hormuz, a sliver of water that handles a quarter of the world's oil. The British recognised its significance early on, securing their dominance over

Hormuz had become the beating heart of the global oil trade, and any attempt to disrupt its flow was met with swift intervention. Both sides sought to shut it down, understanding that control over Hormuz meant control over global energy. Yet, even today, with Iran

flexing its military muscles, Western powers continue to police this waterway as though it were their birthright, ensuring that the oil flows uninterrupted, no matter the cost of human lives. Now, as the world shifts into a new era, the Northern Sea Route (NSR) is emerging as the latest theatre of power.

Stretching along Russia's Arctic coastline, this passageway promises to bypass traditional choke-points like the Suez and Panama Canal, opening up a new frontier for global shipping. With the ice caps melting, climate change has inadvertently opened a new battlefield for dominance. The West, for all its talk of climate change solutions, is deeply uneasy about the NSR. For centuries, the Western maritime powers have been used to dictating global trade, yet now they face the challenge of a new route that cir-cumvents their long-held control.And then there are the Turkish Straits—where the promise of control has always been laced

with deception. In World War I, the Entente powers offered Russia control over the straits in exchange for military support, only to revoke that promise after the Bolshevik Revolution. Since the Montreux Convention of 1936, Turkey has held sway over the straits, but with conditions that serve the interests of the West. These waters remain a hotbed of tension, especially now, as the Russia-NATO conflict forces us to re-evaluate the importance of these narrow water-

Yet, in all of these conflicts, one fact it through protectorate agreements is clear: Western powers have never in the 19th century. By the time of relinquished their thirst for control.

line for Asia's maritime trade, and the silent battlefield of geopolitical manoeuvring. In the 16th century, the Portuguese recognised its importance as the gateway between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, and later, the Dutch would follow. During World War II, Japan's occupation of Malava underscored the strait's value, as it was the critical supply line for its imperial ambi-

Today, China's dominance of the strait has triggered an uneasy response from the United States, which seeks to counter China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. The Malacca Strait is as vital as it is contested, and its importance will only increase as the world edges closer to a new era of Cold War. Donald Trump's reemergence as a political force serves as a blunt reminder that these conflicts are far from distant. His comments on Greenland—a

land abundant in resources and strategic significance—and on seizing Panama if needed, are not just idle musings. The United States' thirst for the Arctic has always been driven by the same imperial instincts that have defined its foreign policy for over a century. His fixation on the Panama Canal reveals the same ambitions, albeit with more brash rhetoric.

While many dismiss his comments as the reckless utterances of a man out of touch with the world's realities, those who know history understand that this is how empires operate: through calculated moves

disguised as political theatrics.
The bottom line is this: the manipulation of waterways remains an open secret, and the struggle for control is as intense as everwhether by the West or any power with imperialistic and hegemonic

(The writer is a journalist and a personal)

Dalal Street ends 2024 on a bearish note: Rs 9.65 trillion investor wealth eroded

A focus on earnings growth and moderation in valuations will be critical for sustaining long-term market performance in 2025

⊣he absence of new year cheer was evident as
Dalal Street continued crashing in the last week of December leading to 2025, in the process eroding investors' wealth to the tune of Rs 9.65 trillion as Sensex tanked by 2.915 points. The bear run at a time when the market was already grappling with thin year-end volumes was made worse by a weakening rupee as it slid towards the 86-perdollar mark. This further dampened the appeal of Indian equities for foreign institutional investors (FIIs) leading to robust FII outflows. The prevalence of this phenomenon was worldwide with Japan's Nikkei 225, China's Shanghai Composite, Australia's ASX 200, Germany's DAX, France's

CAC 40 and NASDAQ Composite showing similar bearish sentiments.The current stock market meltdown is influenced by several factors. Not only in India, but global

markets are witnessing this trend particularly due to profit-taking, and tax-loss harvesting focussing on year-end tax strategies, giving a miss to the traditional 'Santa Claus rally'. Institutional and retail investors alike booked profits and rebalanced their portfolios, particularly in large-cap stocks which posted strong growth in 2024, leading to selling pressure across the board and a broad-based cor-

As economic interlinkages of India with the world have deepened, so has the integra



HIMA BINDU KOTA

tion with global stock markets. The uncertain global economic conditions, particularly in countries like the United States, coupled with fears of a global recession fuelled by weak manufacturing data from China, have dampened investor sentiment both worldwide and in India. A decline in the demand for Indian exports, mainly in the IT and manufacturing sectors further led to the market's downward spiral. Geopolitical tensions including regional wars, ambiguous crude oil prices and subsequent disruptions in supply chains have impacted the markets and sector-specific tragedies like the Jeju Air crash in South Korea contributed to the overall bearish sentiment. Weaker than expected third

quarterly results, particularly in the banking and consumer goods sector, dampened the confidence displayed by the markets due to the resilient first two quarters showed by the Indian economy. This reduced the conviction fur-ther as the banking and consumer goods sectors were considered growth engines since the beginning of the



India and around the globe were elevated in 2024. In India, the higher valuations

were fuelled by strong domestic economic growth and robust corporate earnings. leading to sustained investor confidence.

Several companies ranging across industries were trading at premium P/E ratios, like Infosys (28-30x); HUL (55x); Bajaj Finance (40x); and

Zomato (10-12x) to name a few. However, since the question of sustaining the overvalued stocks in the backdrop of weak quarterly earnings is difficult, it led to the year-end market corrections that we are experiencing at the end of December 2024.

Although the aggressive monetary policy by the Reserve Bank of India was able to combat inflation during the year, high interest rates negatively affected the borrowing costs of businesses and retail

This led to increased interest in investments in fixedincome securities instead of finding equity markets attractive. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) who were attracted to the Indian growth story and wanted to be its

integral part also turned into net sellers in December 2024. A risk-averse stance and a strong USD value made emerging nations like India less attractive during the year-end, leading to capital outflows, which in turn led to a weakening rupee again. Overall, the bearish stock market sentiment in

December 2024 was a combination of year-end profit-tak-ing strategies, global economic outlook, high stock valuation concerns, weak sectoral performance and outlook and several international events However, all is not bleak. These fluctuations are a part of the larger economic cycle and the markets will see an upward cycle with a longterm focus on the funda-

mentals and relevant steps at

the policy level. The resilient Indian economy and its economic growth will be the key driver for renewed opportunities for growth and investment in 2025.

This economic growth will be supported by increased invest-ments in infrastructure, boosting the manufacturing environment to improve the industrial output, a burgeoning middle class and a revival of the rural economy may increase the demand for automobiles, FMCG and consumer durables in 2025. In addition, India's rapidly growing digital economy will continue to support new-age companies and sectors.

(The writer is Associate Professor at Amity University, Noida. The views expressed are personal)

Rana's attorney seeks review of US court's decision to extradite him to India

PTI WASHINGTON

n attorney for Mumbai-An attorney for manager Rana has urged the US Supreme Court to review the lower court's decision to extradite him to India, citing the principle of double jeopardy which prevents a person from being tried or punished twice for the same offence

India is seeking the extradition of Rana, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, as he is wanted in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks case

Having lost the legal battle in lower courts and several federlower courts and several reder-al courts, including the US Court of Appeals for the North Circuit in San Francisco, Rana had filed a "petition for a writ of certiorari" before the US Supreme Court on November

On December 16, US Solicitor General Elizabeth B Prelogar urged the Supreme to reject the tition. Rana's counsel Joshua L Dratel, in his response on



December 23 challenged the US Government's recommendation and pleaded with the Supreme Court that his writ be accepted. In a long battle, this is Rana's last legal chance not to be extradited to India.

"The (Supreme) Court should grant the writ. On the merits, it should hold that the term "offence" in the double jeopardy provision of the United States Îndia extradition treaty (and many other similar treaties) refers to the conduct underlying the charges in the two countries, rather than the ele-

ments of the crimes the respec-

Dratel argued. The court has scheduled a conference for both parties on this

issue on January 17. Rana, currently lodged in a jail in Los Angeles, faces charges for his role in the Mumbai attacks and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.

In his 'petitions for a writ of certiorari to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Rana argued that he was tried and acquitted in federal court in the Northern District of Illinois (Chicago) on charges relating to the 2008 terrorist attack on Mumbai.

"India now seeks to extradite him for trial on charges based on the identical conduct at issue in the Chicago case," it

Prelogar disagreed. "The government does not concede that all of the conduct

on which India seeks extradition was covered by the govern-ment's prosecution in this case," the US Solicitor General had said. "For example, India's forgery charges are based in part on conduct that was not charged in the United States: petitioner's use of false information in an application to formally open a branch office of the Immigration Law Center submitted to the Reserve Bank of India," she said.

"It is not clear that the jury's verdict in this case—which involves conspiracy charges and was somewhat difficult to parse-means that he has been convicted or acquitted" on all of the specific conduct that India has charged," Prelogar

A total of 166 people, including six Americans, were killed in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in which 10 Pakistani terrorists laid a more than 60-hour siege, attacking and killing people at iconic and vital locations of

China downplays reports of flu outbreak, says country safe for travel

लागत (रू. में)

5.94.39.194/-

China on Friday played down reports of a massive outbreak of flu in the country overwhelming hospitals, saying that cases of the

विवरण Website <u>https://www.mptenders.gov.in</u> पर है।

01 2024 UAD PRAPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF PARK

_391606_1 AT NAMO VAN AT LALGHATI M.P.

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occur during the winter were less severe this year compared

to last year.
The Foreign Ministry here said it is safe for foreigners to travel to China

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, (यांत्रिकी शाखा), भोपाल

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

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निम्न कार्य हेतु म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकत ठेकेदारों से ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। विस्त

"Respiratory infections tend to peak during the winter season in the northern hemisphere," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told the media here in nse to a question on the

भोपाल, दिनांक 30.12.2024

का अंतिम

28-JAN-2025 05:30 PM

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Municipal Corporation Bhop

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Last date of EMD Deposit

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spread of influenza A and other respiratory diseases in China. Videos circulating on social media show over-crowded hospitals.

"The diseases appear to be less severe and spread with a smaller scale compared to the previous year," she said.
"I can assure you the Chinese government cares about the health of Chinese citizens and foreigners in China. It is safe to travel in China," she said. She also referred to guidelines issued by the National Disease Control and Prevention Administration of China regarding the pre-vention and control of respiratory diseases in the winter For the past few days, reports of a massive flu outbreak in China have been circulating abroad, particularly in India

and Indonesia. Health officials, however maintain the outbreak is an annual occurrence during the winter. China is currently experiencing severe cold weather for the past few

PUBLIC NOTICE Notice is hereby given that my client Sarita is in process to avail the LAP against her property of land area measuring 10 maria, out of Nhewat (Khat an 0.744/865, Mustatil no. 105, Killa no. 16(7-4), 17(8-0), cituated in the revenue estate of Bhonds, Henbid Schna, Distt. Gurugram, Haryana (availing) loan from PCHH), having acquired the same wide Sale dated 3011/2018, Doc no. 4349 executed by Urmial, She Confirmed she is not having the below mentioned Documents per taining to the property in question for 31/10/25 vide application no. 1322/70425/500066. 31/10/25 vide application no. 1322/70425/500066. 31/10/25 vide application no. 1322/70425/500066. Original Sale Deed dated 17.08.2012 executed by Verdpal in about of Urmial (Doc no. 5370). All persons is having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereoft, by way of sale, exchange, mortages (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, frust, inheritance, family arrangement, musintenance, bequest, partnership, persession, lease, subblease, tenancy, license, linn. charge, piedge, essement or otherwise lowscopers.

ate hereor, Tauning Writch the claim of claims, if any, such person or persons will be considered to have een waived and/or abandoned. Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaluxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351

MANIBHAVNAM HOME FINANCE INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND BENCREMENT OF SECURITY INTERST ACT, 2002. The undersigned being the Authorised Officer, under the provision of the Securification and Reconstruction marcial Assets and Inforcement of Security interest AC, 2002. of Manifeshaman Home Finance India Privat mitted having its Registered Office at 2nd Floor, N-2, South Extension Part-1, New Dehl-110049, (hereinalte efferted to as "MBHF"), which has duly been Anthorised by the central Government, wide a notification date of the Committed Committed

MUKHI DEVI W/O RAM DEV SAHANI, 2. RAM DEV SAHANI C/O RAM SWARUP SAHANI, 3. LAXMI /O RAMDEV SAHANI, 4. DHEERAJ SAHANI S/O RAM SWARUP SAHANI, AII At. - PLOT NO-112 B. HASRA NO. 115, ANTHURUA, UTERSHAND ENCLAYE, BURARI DELHI - 110052, ALSO AT.- M-215, GALI O. 14, SHASTRI NAGAR, ASHOK VIHAR (NORTH WEST DELHI), DELHI - 110052.

oan A/c Numbers : LP0000000002145 & HL000000001356, Loan Amount Availed /Date : R 0,0,000 / 29-jun- 2020 & Rs. 19,70,000 / 30-Apr-2019 : 20ate of 13(2) Notice : 12-12-2024, NPA Date : 09-0rt-2024

and Date and Amount as Per Sec. 13(2) Act. Notice : Rs. 28 52 995 17/- as on 05-DEC-2024

ortgage Properties: All That Piece And Parcel Of Property Entire Single Storey Built Up Property aring No. 112-8 (Old), & New No. 112, With Land Area Measuring, 50 Square Yards Or Say 41.805 uare Meters, Comprising Of Ground Floor With Its Roof/Terrace Rights Upto Sky High, Comprising In asks Alo. 11.5, Situated in The Area Of Willage Burard, Delhi-1 10084, Abadi Known As Shashiri Park Extn. trakhand Entaive, Block-A, Gall No.3, Burard, Delhi-1 10084, And The Same Is Bounded As Under- East: ad, North: Other Stroperty, West- Road, South Other's Property.

. SONAM W/O- KAMAL MAVI, 2. KAMAL MAVI S/O- BHOOP SINGH., Both at - R/O-GT ROAD OP HHPRAULA POLICE CHOWK DADRI, UTTARPRADESH - 203207. ALSO AT:- KHASRA NO. 782, VILLAGE-HRIER HARAMPURA GALTIAN BUJHAN NAGROW UTTAR PRADEST 203207. Sr. NO. 248 bot at - 15.05 AT:- UTILE FE RESTIGE SCHOOL GT ROAD OPP CHIHPRAULA POLICE CHOWK DADRI, UTTAR PRADEST-03207 LESO AT:- KHERA DHARAMPURA CHIMPRAULA GAUTHA BUDHA HAGAR UTTARPRADEST 20109.

nand Date and Amount as Per Sec. 13(2) Act. Notice: Rs. 29,27,606.47/- as on 13-DEC-2024

fortgage Properties: ALL THAT THE PIECE OF PARCEL OF PROPERTY RESIDENTIAL HOUSE AREA FLEXURING 284 SQ. YDS., LE, 237.45 SQ. METERS, OUT OF KHASRA NO. 782, STUAITED IN THE AREA OF LILLAGE KHERD ANDRAM PURA MARIA, CHHAPPAULA, PARGANA & TEHSLI ADDRI, DISTRICT GAUTAM BUDH AGAR, U.P. Boundaries: East- Road 12ft, West-House Bijendra, North-House Aarad, South-House Anand.

. Danavati W/O Naresh Kamat, 2. Naresh Kamat 5/O Janak Kamat, 3.Dinesh Kamat 5/O Janah amat, 4. Umesh 5/O Janak Kamat. All At. + I No-315 Bombay Colony Nandgram Ghazishad - 201001 iso At.- Dps Public School, No. 526/1, Judges Enclave, Ahinsa Khand 2, Indirapuram-201010. Also At: mily International School, Sector 4, Sector 6, Vasudra, Ghazishad-201012.

oan A/c Numbers : LP000000005135, Loan Amount Availed / Date : Rs. 482339 / 30-Jul-2022 late of 13(2) Notice : 17-DEC-2024, NPA Date : 09-12-2024

mand Date and Amount as Per Sec. 13/2) Act. Notice: Rs. 451379 43/- 14-DEC-2024 ortgage Properties : ALL THAT PIECES AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY H.NO 315 BOMBAY COLONY AM GHAZIABAD UTTAR PRADESH UTTAR PRADESH GHAZIABAD 201003.10tal area 26.14 sg.mt.

urther with reasons, we believe that you are evading the service of demand notice, hence this publication emand notice. You are hereby called upon to pay MANIBHANNAM HOME FINANCE INDIA PRIVATE LIMIT within a period of 60 days of date of publication of this demand notice the aforesaid amount alongwith further. any one or more of the secured assets including taking possession of this secured assets of the borrower/ further you are prohibited U/S 13(13) of the said Act from transferring either by way of sale/lease or in an other way the afforciasid secured assets Flease note that no further demand notice will be issued.

Authorized officer
MANIBHAVNAM HOME FINANCE INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

PUBLIC NOTICE

y claim or right in respect of the said Property way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, se, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, theres or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise hereby required to intimate in writing to the dersigned within 07 days from the date of blication of this notice of his/her/their share or the same of the share or the same of the share or the same of inin, if any, with all supporting documents at low mentioned address. After expiration of notice riod, the claims, if any, of such person shall be ated null and void and also treated as waived

nd not binding on our client,
Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate) H No. 26/161, Basement,
Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi -110024

Date: 03/01/2025 & Place: New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the public at large that I, Mrs. Durgesh Kumari, has lost the Sale Deed dated 14.03.2016, executed by Mrs. Sangeeta Gupta in lavour of Mrs. Laxmi bearing no. –4653, contained in Book No. 1, Zidi No. 312.9 Page No. 1862/08 in the Olo Sub-Registrar-IV, Chaziabad, pertaining to property address Freehold Residential Plot No. A-61, admeasuring area 25 sq. vg. (20.90 sq. mtr.) of Falling under Khasra No. 427 situated at Pushp Whar in Willane-Sadullahd Parrana & under Khasra No. 427 situated at Pushp Vihar, in Village-Sadulladd, Pergana & Tehsi - Loni, Dist. - Ghaziabad (U.P.). In lieu of the same an NCR/FIR/Information Report L.R. No. 244361/12024 dated 28.12.2024 has been filed with P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi, Hence, this notice is issued to public at large that if anyone finds the same, kindly contact the undersigned within 07 days of this publication.

TAPAIN RAGHAV (Advocate)
Ch. No. 6-220, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032. (M. -8800096522)

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (E0I) FOR ASSIGNMENT OF NRRA (NOT READILY REALIZABLE ASSETS) UNDER REGULATION 37A OF THE IBBI (LIQUIDATION) PROCESS REGULATIONS, 2016

IN THE MATTER OF COMPACT LAMPS PRIVATE LIMITED- IN LIQUIDATION (CIN - U31501DL2005PTC1400731)

EOI's are being invited for assignment of following Not Readily Realizable Assets ("NRRA") matter of Compact Lamps Private Limited under Regulation 37A read with Regulation 44A o

as follows: -Transaction Application under Preferential and Undervalued Application filed under Section 43 and 45 of the Code having IA No. 2658/2020 and Fraudulent Trading or wrongful trading Application filed under Section 66 of the Code having IA No. 2660/2020. (All rights and interest

incurring intigation right), interested parties may submit their offers to the undersigned latest by 20" January, 2025 and scoordingly relevant documents will be shared with the interested parties for their due diffigured the assignment will be subject to the provisions of the IBC, 2016, Regulations made thereunder and the process document. For further details please refer to process document published in website https://insolvencyandbankruptcy.in/public-announcement/compact-imps-private-limited/

Note: - The issuance of this EOI does not imply that the Liquidator is bound to select an applicant/ assignee/transferee or to appoint the Preferred applicant/assignee/transferee as successful applicant/assignee/transfere

Deepika Bhugra Prasad - Liquidator Compact Lamps Private Limited (in Liquidation) IBBI Regn No: IBBI/IPA-003/IP-N000110/2017-2018/11186 AAA Insolvency Professionals LLP, 64, 1st Floor, Okhla Estate, Phase III, New Delhi-110020 Email ID: compact.lamp@aainsolvency.com; assetsale@aaainsolvency.in Contact No.: +91 8800865284 (Mr. Wasim/Raj Kumar)

South Korea's impeached president defies warrant after hourslong standoff

South Korean investigators left the official residence of impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol after a near-six-hour standoff on Friday during which he defied their attempt to detain him.

It's the latest confrontation in a political crisis that has paralyzed South Korean politics and seen two heads of state impeached in under a month. The country's anti-corruption agency said it withdrew its investigators after the presidential security service blocked them from entering Yoon's residence for hours, due to concerns about their safety.

The agency said its outnum-bered investigators had several scuffles with presidential security forces and expressed "serious regret about the attitude of the suspect, who did not comply with the legal process." Outside the resilence, a large group of pro-Yoon protesters braved freezing temperatures for hours, waving South Korean and American flags while chanting slogans vowing to protect him.

The National Police Agency said it planned to investigate the chief and deputy chiefs of the presidential security service on suspicion of obstructing official duty and summoned them for questioning on Saturday.

Yoon, a former prosecutor, has resisted investigators' attempts to question him for weeks. The last time he is known to have left the residence was on Dec. 12, when he went to the nearby presidential office to make a televised statement to the nation, making a defiant statement that he will fight efforts to oust him.

Investigators from the country's

anti-corruption agency are weighing charges of rebellion after Yoon, apparently frustrated that his policies were blocked by an opposition-dominated parliament, declared martial law on Dec. 3 and disPolice officers arrive at the gate of the presidential residence as supporters of impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol stage a rally to oppose a court having issued a warrant to detain Yoon, in Seoul, South Korea, on Friday. Investigation Office for Highranking Officials, which is leading a joint investigation with police and military investigators, lacks the authority to investigate rebellion charges.

> assist in detaining Yoon, and could face arrest by either the "presidential security service or any citizens." They didn't elaborate further on the claim. If investigators manage to detain Yoon, they will likely ask a court for permission to make a formal arrest. Otherwise, he will be released after 48 hours. During a background briefing to reporters, an official from the anti-corruption agency said its investigators were able to approach within 200 meters (yards) of Yoon's residence but were stopped by a barricade comprising around 10 vehicles and approximately 200 mem-

tors were eventually allowed to

approach the building but they

weren't able to confirm whether

They said that police officers don't have the legal authority to

lion or treason. bers of the presidential securi-

ty forces and troops. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity per department rules, said three of its prosecu-

Yoon was inside While the presidential security act mandates protection for Yoon, it does not authorize the presidential security service to block court-ordered detainments, which would amount to an infringement on judicial authority, said Park Seongbae, an attorney specializing in criminal law. While the president mostly has immunity from prosecution while in office, the protection does not extend to allegations of rebel-

"There's a high possibility that the act of blocking the execution of a detainment warrant would constitute an obstruction of official duty,

The law requiring consent of the person in charge for searches in locations with potential military secrets could continue to hinder Yoon's detainment. Courts often require law enforcement officials to obtain search warrants with detainment warrants in case they need to search the site to locate the suspect, which is also what the anti-corruption agency did in their pursuit of Yoon.

Ukraine's president hopes Trump's strength and unpredictability can help end war with Russia

US President-elect Donald Trump is "strong and unpredictable," and those qual-ities can be a decisive factor in his policy approach to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy. However, Zelenskyy said it won't be possible to end the almost three years of war in one days on Theorem 2. day, as Trump claimed during his election campaign he could o. "The hot' stage of the war can end quite quickly, if Trump is strong in his position," Zelensky said in a Ukrainian television interview late Thursday, referring to fighting on the battlefield.

"I believe (Trump) is strong and unpredictable. I would very much like President Trump's unpredictability to be directed primarily toward the Russian Federation," Zelenskyy

Trump, who takes office on Jan. country is short-handed on

20, hasn't publicly fleshed out his policy on Ukraine but his previous comments have put a question mark over whether the United States will continue to be Ukraine's biggest — and most important — military backer.

patched troops to surround the

Parliament overturned the dec-

laration within hours in an

unanimous vote and impeached Yoon on Dec. 14,

accusing him of rebellion, while South Korean anti-corruption

authorities and public prosecu-

tors opened separate investiga-

A Seoul court issued a warrant to detain Yoon and a separate

warrant to search his residence on Tuesday, but enforcing them

is complicated as long as he remains in his official resi-

Yoon's lawyers, who filed a challenge to the warrant on Thursday, say it cannot be

enforced at his residence due to

a law that protects locations potentially linked to military secrets from search without the

consent of the person in charge. The office said it will discuss

further actions but did not

immediately say whether it would make another attempt to

detain Yoon. The warrant for

his detention is valid for one

Yoon's lawyers have also argued

National Assembly.

tions into the events.

dence.

Zelenskyy is eager to guaran-tee that Washington's support keeps coming, and he met with Trump in New York even before last November's US residential election.

With the war about to enter its fourth year next month, and with Trump coming to power, the question of how and when Europe's biggest conflict since World War II might end has

come to the fore. Russia controls about one-fifth of Ukraine and last year capitalised on weaknesses in Ukraine's defences to slowly advance in eastern areas despite high losses of troops and equipment. The war's trajectory is not in Ukraine's favour. The



the front line and needs continued support from its Western partners. Trump responded favorably to the possibility raised by French President Emmanuel Macron of Western peacekeepers being deployed in Ukraine to oversee an agreement that stops the fighting, Zelenskyy said. He met with Trump and Macron in Paris last month. "But I raised an issue, saying we didn't hear what specific countries will join this initiative, and whether the US will be there," Zelenskyv said. The Ukrainian leader is determined for his country to become a NATO member. The alliance's 32 member coun-

tries say Ukraine will join one day, but not until the war ends.
"The deployment of European troops (to keep the peace in Ukraine) should not rule out Ukraine's future in NATO," Zelenskyy said in the television interview. Zelenskyy described the incursion by Ukrainian forces into Russia's Kursk border region as a "very strong trump card" in any future peace negotiations.

In a bid to counter glum news from the front line, Ukraine seized part of Kursk last August in what was the first occupation of Russian territory since World War II.

But the incursion didn't significantly change the dynamic of the war, and military analysts say Ukraine has lost some 40% of the land it initially captured. Nevertheless, Zelenskyy said the achievement impressed countries in Asia, South America and Africa and tarnished Russia's military reputa-

Al cannot replace human decision-making on battlefield, Chinese military warns its forces

PTI RELIING

vesting heavily in modernisa-Ition, the Chinese military has cautioned its armed forces against banking heavily on artificial intelligence saying that AI should be a tool to guide but not a replacement for human decisionmaking in the battlefield because it lacks self-awareness capability. 'As AI evolves, it must remain a tool guided by human judgment, ensuring accountability, creativity, and strategic adaptability remain at the forefront of military decision-making" an article published in People's Liberation Army Daily, the official media of

the Chinese military said on New Year's Eve. 'AI must work in tandem with human decision-makers to optimise command effectiveness enhancing rather than replacing human agency," it said.

AI can be used to augment human capabilities – through data analysis, simulations or planning – but cannot replace the

Human autonomy and creativiare indispensable on the bat tlefield, it said adding that while human commanders can respond to situations dynamically, and exploit enemy weaknesses AI operates within predefined algorithmic boundaries and its responses often lack originality, it said.

The Daily said PLA preferred a model where "humans plan and AI executes" in which the technology is used to carry out the strategies and tactics developed by commanders and keeps an element of human oversight.

The military prefers a structure where machines analyse data. provide insights and suggest potential actions. However, "final decisions rest with human commanders, safeguarding against errors stemming from Al's blackbox nature", the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post report said.

The article said another weakness

to reflect on its own actions or take responsibility for its decisions, unlike human commanders who can refine their plans in response to the circumstances. Even advanced systems, such as autonomous missile defence, typically rely on human operators for final decisions to ensure accountability.

Last month a comprehensive report by the Pentagon on the Chinese military said the PLA is modernising its capabilities and improving its proficiencies across all warfare domains to become a ioint force capable of the full range of land, air, and maritime as well as nuclear, space, counter space, electronic warfare, and

cyberspace operations.
But despite its progress, the force still has significant deficiencies including in commander profi-ciency, long-distance logistics,

and urban warfare. The PLA Army (PLAA) continues to modernise equipment and focus on combined arms and

joint training to meet the goal of becoming a world-class mili-tary by 2049.

The PLAA has continued to demonstrate long-range joint fire capability, the US Department of Defence report titled "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China" said. The PLA Navy (PLAN), numerically has the largest navy in the world, with a battle force of over 370 ships and submarines, including more than 140 major surface combatants. The PLAN is largely composed of modern multi-mission ships and submarines, it said.

PLA Air Force (PLAAF) is modernising and indigenising its air-craft and unmanned aerial systems rapidly, matching US standards

In 2023, the PLA transferred significant portions of PLAN shorebased, fixed-wing combat aviation units, facilities, air defence, and radar units to the PLAAF, the Pentagon report said.

toward normalcy

On the same block where the

"I know with this music, it heals,

it transforms the feelings that

we're going through into some-thing better," Green said. "Got to

keep on going."
The Sugar Bowl college football game between Notre Dame and

Georgia, which was postponed

by a day in the interest of nation-

al security, was played Thursday

The Joan of Arc parade in the

French Quarter is still scheduled to take place Monday to kick off

carnival season ahead of Mardi Gras, said Antoinette de Alteriis,

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Joginder Kumar and his wife Rita Devi both R/o A-43 Ground Floor, Gali No.01, Aali Vihar Sarita Vihar, South Delhi Delhi

laughter Roshni from their al noveable-immovable

noveable-immovable properties and severed all relations with her due to her disobedience. My clients shall not be responsible for her any act.

A.K. Mishra (Advocate) Ch. No.415, Saket Court New Delhi-17

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Mrs. Raj Bala owner of Plot no. 84-A. area measuring 250 as, yds. part of Plot no. 84. Total area measuring 500 sq. yds. part of Plot no. 84. Total area measuring 500 sq. yds. out of Khasra no. 523, situated in the aband of Lal Dora of Village Mahipal Pur. New Delhi-110037. Through Registered Relinquish Mert Deed Dated 23.12.2024 executed by Mr. Prashant Sehrawat (Son) and Mr. Paras Sehrawat (Son) Vide Reg. no. 2024/R/V/S16 at SR-VII A DELLI the above-mentioned property is going to be mortgage with Fedbank. Financial Services Limited. If any person/ bank/ financial institution having any claim/ right, lien. Any objection whatsbeever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/ Adv. Vishal Mehan. F-713. Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. Adv. Vishal Mehan. F-713. Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092; Mob.: 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE

public NOTICE

formation is given to general public at large that
aman Nio Rahul Kashyay who is/are purchasing the
roperty Bearing Municipal No. 2523, Ground Floor
vithout roof Rights, having area measuring 52 Sq.
tards, Ward No. Nic. Standard Labad Punjabian Subut
Anad, Delhi-110007 from inder Mohan Sharma Sjo
Gushal Kumar Sharma who was the owner off
soperly by vitue of Sale Deed dated 13.10.2023 (Doc.
46. 2023/19/11356), registered in the office of
Sub-Registrat-Delhi executed by Verra Samsi Wio
noter Mohan Internet off mortigage the same against the
Internet Sale Standard Common Subham Hostifican
Formation of original Sea of the Standard Sharma Sio
Sale Standard Sale Deed dated 13.10.2023 (Doc.
No. 2023/19/11356) or sisted property is lost and not
available with Seler ie In Inder Mohan Sharma Sio
Kaushal Kumar Sharma. To comply the requirements
of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any
person(s) having any objection regarding ownership
and or creating mortage of the said property is jest
hereby requested to intimate in writing to the
undersigned within of days at below address.

NCR LUM ASSOCIATE
Advocates & Consultants A-9 Sector-9, Nev
Vijay Nagar, Charisbad, (U.P.)-201005
Mob. 9999826427, 9999972115

Notice is henethy eighen that mot Gleatt Bohns is in process to nutrhase the Ptot No. 50 Property ID No P070050006573, hear Measuring 96 Sq. yfs. our of Khasra No. 823, situated at Walka Mauga Ballabgarh. Teshis Ballabgarh, District Fardabud, Haryana (availing Joan Trom PCHFU from Meenu , having acquired the said property wide Transfer Deed dated 1219/2022 (Document No. 4390) executed by her monther Girraja. He confirmed that his seller is on thaveng the below mentioned Documents pertaining to the property in question for that ordine HFI has selenced to the property in question for that ordine HFI has selenced of Company 122/2024 wide application Original Sale Deed dated 31,10.11995 in flavour of Girraja (Dic No. 4157). All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by wary of sale, exchange, mortragae (equitable/legistered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnershyp, arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnershyp, arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnershyp, arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnershyp, charge, paging, excennent or otherwise hovespeer, are herbyr requisted to nority the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned bollow within 7 days from the date hereof.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAPAN RAGHAV (Advocat

PUBLIC NOTICE

one of the organizers.

day after the violence.

mix of law enforcement, A mix of law emorethems, street performers and football fans has filled New Orleans' blocks as the city inches back to normalcy while mourning vic-tims of the deadly New Year's rampage in which an Army veteran ploughed a truck into rev-

The attack along Bourbon Street killed 14 people, along with the driver, Shamsud-Din Jabbar, who officials said was inspired by the Islamic State militant group. Jabbar was fatally shot in a fire fight with police after steering his speeding truck around a barricade and ploughing into the crowd. About 30 people were injured.

Authorities finished processing the scene Thursday morning, removing the last of the bodies wide for music, open-air drink-



CHANGE OF NAME

Sujata, Mother No.15456524N Sep/AA Ravichandr Melmatti, R/o- A/P Basav Nagar, Shindikurbet, Tq Dist- Belgaum, Gokak. Karnataka- 591306, changed my name from Sujata to Sujata Melmatti, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi

PD(1189)C

Mallappa, Father of-No.15456524N Sep/AA Ravichandr Melmatti, R/o- A/P Basav Nagar, Shindikurbet, Tq Gokak, Dist-Belgaum Karnataka-591306, changed my name from Mallappa to Mallappa Melmatti, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi PD(1190)C

I, P Madhavi W/o- JC-774717H Sub Kantarao Ponduru, R/o-1-83, Diguvastreet (Street), Kesavaraopeta Shermahmmadpuram (PO) Srikakulam (Dist), A.P.- 532402, have changed my name from P Madhavi to Ponduru Madhavi, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025

before Notary Public Delhi. PD(1191)C

No.15326399L Hav S Sridharan, R/o- 1/546, Savulur Nallampalli, Pagalahalli, Dharmapuri, Tamilnadu-636807, declare that S Sathya is my Wife, in my service document's her DOB is wrongly written as 01/05/1986, whereas her correct DOB is 19/08/1985, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi

PD(1192)C Mamta Devi, Mother of-No.16026820M Nk Devender Kumar, R/o- Vill- Amadalpur, Post- Khari, Teh & Dist- Jhajjar, Haryana-124108, have changed my name from Mamta Devi to Munni Bai, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025 before Notary

Public Delhi

PD(1193)C

This is to inform the public at large that my client ICICI Bank is advancing an education loan to Mr. Aaryaman Khurana, Mr. Amit Khurana & Mrs. Vartika Khurana for Apurtment No. 2002 (260.31 Sq. Mtrs.), 20th Floor, Tower No. WT-03, Windchants, Sector-112, Village - Chauma, Gurugram, Haryana ('said property', The said opporty' was originally owned by Mr. Suinder Mahlotra, however, upon his demise, the property devolved upon Mrs. Sushman Mahlotra (hor), and Ms. Varuna Mahlotra (daughter). The son and the daughter executed a Relinquishment Deed in favour of Mrs. Sushma Mahlotra and subsequently a Conveyance Deed dated 25.08.2020 was executed by Mfs. Experion Developers Pvt. Ltd. The said property was purchased by Mr. Arnit Khurana and Mrs. Varikia Khurana and ser on being metragaged. It anybodify by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, bease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, parfners, encumbrance however or otherwise is required to intimate in writing to the underesigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice with supporting documents. After the expiration of notice period, the claim(s), if any of such person shall be treated as waived.

**TAPAN RAGHAV (Advocate)* I, Menka Loomba W/O Gauray Loomba R/o E- 143, Paramount Golf Foreste, Sector Zeta, Greater Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar have changed my name from Menka Loomba to Menka

PD(1194)C

I, Mohammad Aslam Asif S/o S.K. Ahamad Ali R/o H.NO.- C-544, behind telephone exchane. Sector-19, Noida, Gautam Buddha naar, Uttar Pradesh-201301 declare that My daughter's name has been changed for all purposes as a (School student) Arisha Asif instead of Arisha Faiza Musawwir.

I. Hmangte Thangneireng Kom, JC-552741P Rank Nb/Sub 9th Assam Regiment, resident of Lukhumbi Village, PO Moirang, Churachandpur Dist. Manipur. PIN: 795133. I have changed my son's name from HMT Kamboilen Lennedy Kom to Hmangte Kamboilen Lennedy Kom (15 years) including my two daughter names from HMT Ringkipnei Glory Kom to Hmangte Ringkipnei Glory Kom (14 years) and HMT Ringsutnei Hanan Kom to Hmangte Ringsutnei Hanan Kom years) vide Affidavit date 23-12-2024 sworn before notary N Singhajit Singh, Imphal, for all future purposes. PD(1196)C

New Orleans inches | 30 killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza

At least 30 people, including Children, were killed in Gaza by Israeli strikes ing and festive vibes — reopened for business by early afternoon. overnight and into Friday attack took place, trombone player and lifelong New Orleanian Jonas Green said it was important morning, said hospital staff, as air sirens sounded across Israel and stalled ceasefire talks were for his band to be out there the set to resume. Staff at the Al Aqsa Martyrs

hospital said more than a dozen women and children were killed in strikes that hit various places in Central Gaza, including Nuseirat, Zawaida, Maghazi and Deir al Balah. Dozens of people were also killed across people were also killed across the enclave the previous day, bringing the total of people killed in the past 24 hours to 56. Strikes Thursday hit Hamas security officers and an Israelideclared humanitarian zone. The Israeli army did not immediately comment on the latest strikes, but says it only targets

militants and blames Hamas

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information is given to the general public at large that my client Mr. Zafar Ali Sio Mohd. Ali who is the owner of One Shop bearing Pxt. No. B. on Ground Floor without roof rights, area measuring 15.79 sq. mtr., Part of Property bearing Municipal No. XIV/1055-5 and 1062; situated at Ward No. XIV/1057-5 and 1062; situated by Mr. Anil Kumar s/o Late Jagat Ram (Doc. No. 7839). Any person(s), institutors); having any claim and/or objection in respect of the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at our address within 07 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, falling which all the claim, of such preson(s) institutions) shall not be binding upon the said property or purchaser.

Ram Prakss Pandey, (Advocate), 26/23, 3°Floor, Jhandewalan Extn., New Delhi-110055, Mob. 9871308962

This is to inform the general public that Mr. Naresh Kumar Gupta is the GPA Holder of Property Bearing No. 18. B. ace measuring 25 og dys. ie., 20.00 65 g. Mtrz., out of khaars No. 1014, zhuated at Subhash Park-2, Makanpur colony, Pargana Lonf, Tehel 5 District Chazishad Uttar Pradesh -201309. He is in possession through Regd. GPA dead 15.06.2018 as do. no. 4312 executed by 5mt. Archana in tavour of Mr. Naresh Kumar Gupta intends 10 transfer file womenship of allorementoed Property by way of Sale Deed to Mr. Bigendra Singh; is the process of mortgaging the sade property with SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd., for mort Fullerino India Home Finance Co. Ltd., for mort Fullerino India Home Finance Co. Ltd. for mort Fullerino

for civilian deaths.

Israelis also woke up to attacks early Friday morning. Israel said missiles were fired into the country from Yemen, which set off air raid sirens in Jerusalem and central Israel and sent people scrambling to shelters. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage, though a faint explosion, likely either from the missile or from interceptors, could be heard in Jerusalem. Israel's army said a missile was inter-

cepted. As the attacks were underway, efforts at ceasefire negotiations were expected to resume

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he had authorized a delegation from the Mossad intel-ligence agency, the Shin Bet internal security agency and the military to continue negotiations in Oatar.

The delegation is leaving for

Qatar on Friday.
The US-led talks have repeat edly stalled during 15 months of war, which was sparked by Hamas-led militants' Oct. 7 2023 attack into Israel. The militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250.
Around 100 hostages are still

inside Gaza, at least a third believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive in retaliation has killed over 45,500 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which says women and children make up more than half the dead. The ministry does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its tally.

Israel's military says it only targets military says it only tar-gets militants and blames Hamas for civilian deaths because its fighters operate in dense residential areas.

M.P. STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD Office of The Chief Engineer, 26 Arera Hills, Jail Road, Bhopal Board/Nirman/P.Cell/Consultant Empanelment/24-25/1259 Bhopal, Dated : 02.01.2025

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

M.P. State agricultural Marketing Board, Bhopal ("MPSAMB") invites REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL from reputed organization, agency for "Empanelment of Consultants & Architects/firm" for providing Technical Consultancy Services, Architectural Planning, Designing & Estimation, Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), Bid Process Management etc. for various Infrastructures, building construction projects and PPP (Public Private Partnership) & BOT (Built, Operate & Transfer) projects in Head Office Bhopal, Divisional Office and APMC (Agricultural Produce Market Committee) of Madhya Pradesh. (STN No. 2025_MPSAM_392598) Interested firms may submit their proposals on e-procurement portal i.e. www. mptenders.gov.in. The following Empanelment Tender to be received Online up to 5:30 PM on 23.01.2025. Technical bid documents with EMD & Financial Offer to be received online only as per Detailed NIT. The tender documents can be obtained Online on the http://mptenders.gov.in as per the Notice Published on the above Portal and detailed information can also be seen on website www.mpmandiboard.gov.in Note: Any corrigendum in this NIT, if required, shall be displayed only in above portal regarding any matter included in this NIT or otherwise. Other details can also be seen on our

website www.mpmandiboard.gov.in
M.P.M./118119/2025 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (PROJECT CELL)



राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, कुरूक्षेत्र NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India) KURUKSHETRA-136119 (HARYANA)

Special PhD Admission Drive for SC/ST in Even Semester of Academic Year 2024-25 National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra invites online applications via Google Form from Indian and Foreign nationals for admission in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree Programs on Full Time (Institute/CSIR-UGC-NET-IRF), Self-Financed Full Time and Part Time seats for Academic Year 2024-25. Number of Seats, Online Application Form Link, and other relevant details along with Ph.D. Regulation are available on the Institute website: www.nitkkr.ac.in.under Admission 2024-> Ph.D. tab.

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regulations of the University, will be published on the Director website only.

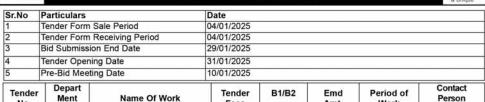
Dean Academic Affair

Prof. Dr. Subheet Kumar Jair Director, Directorate of online Studies GNDU, Amritsa Parveen Kuma Directo

Pune Pune

NA/12/27281/2023/40468 Dated CHD :- 1/3/2025

Ch. No. G-220, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032. (M - 8800096522) PUNE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION-HEALTH DEPARTMENT TENDER CELL DEPARTMENT TENDER ADVERTISEMENT



5	Pre-Bid Meeting Date		10/01/2025					
Tender No.	Depart Ment Name	Name Of Work	Tender Fees	B1/B2	Emd Amt.	Period of Work	Contact Person Mobile No	
PMC/ Health/ CMS/12 /2024- 25	Health	For Pune Municipal Corporation's hospitals and dispensaries to purchase medical equipments and instruments for a period of 24 months.	17987/-	B-2		24 months	Rahul Namdev Wadgaye 9881190696	
	5		Sd/-	1		Sd/-		

ADVT NO: 3/1160 DATE: 03.01.2025 Dr. Sanjeev Wavare Asst. Medical Officer of Health **Pune Municipal Corporation**

Dr. Nina Borade **Medical Officer of Health Pune Municipal Corporation**

CORRIGENDUM NO. 01

Corrigendum for Tender Notice of work contract vide DRM(Works)/Katihar's Notice No KIR/Engg./55 of 2024 Dated: 23-12-2024

Please read the modified Date of Closing & Opening of the tender as under

The existing	Date & Time	The modified Date & Time		
Date & Time of	Date & Time of	Date & Time of	Date & Time of	
closing of Tender	opening of Tender	closing of Tender	opening of Tender	
15:00 hrs.	15:30 hrs.	15:00 hrs.	15:30 hrs.	
on 22-01-2025	on 22-01-2025	on 03-02-2025	on 03-02-2025	

Bidding start date on 20-01-2025 instead of 08-01-2025. All other terms and conditions of above tender

Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Katiha MORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

	verka Her Din Do, Har Dil Do						
	THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155. SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66 Notice Inviting Tenger						
		www.verka.co					
	ders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items						
Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentativ Qty					
1.	For Verka Head Office, Chandigath a) LN2 Containers b) - Maize hybrid - Bajra hybrid(Multicut seeds)	Annual/ 252 No's 1228.07 Qtls 468.17 Qtls					
	c) Thermoforming packaging film for vacuum packing of paneer.	Bottom web: 45 N Top film: 18 MT					
3.	For Verka Bathinda Dairy						
	80 ML paper cone sleeve with sugar rolled.	051					
	i. Stawberry	05 Lacs 05 Lacs					
	ii. Black Current iii. Caramel	05 Lacs 05 Lacs					
	b) Lids for 80 ML Ice Cream Cone	U5 Lacs					
	i. Stawberry	05 Lacs					
	ii. Black Current	05 Lacs					
	ii. Black Current iii. Caramel	05 Lacs					
	c) Ice Cream Cones 40 ML for Ice Cream	US Lacs					
	i. Butter Scotch	20 Lacs					
	ii. Chocolate	20 Lacs					
	d) Lids for 40 ML for Ice Cream Cones	20 Lacs					
	i. Butter Scotch	20 Lacs					
	ii. Chocolate	20 Lacs					
	e) 125 ML IML cups for Ice Cream	20 Lacs					
	i. Cookies and Crumb	50000 No's					
	ii. Muddy Chocolate	50000 No's					
	iii. Almond Chocolate	50000 No's					
	iv. Almond Carnival	50000 No's					
	v. American Nut	50000 No's					
	vi. Afghan Dry Fruit	50000 No's					
	vii. Kaju Anjir	50000 No's					
	viii. Mango	20000 No's					
	ix. Strawberry	20000 No's					
	x. Pink Guava	20000 No's					
	xi, Litchi	20000 No's					
	f) Polyfilm for 60 ML bar and Ice Candy	20000 No s					
	i. Choco delight	2500 kg					
	ii. Rabri Kulfi	1000 kg					
	iii. Mango Bar	500 kg					
	iv. Cola Bar	500 kg					
	v. Orange Bar	1000 kg					
	vi. Mango Duet	1000 kg					
	vii. Black Current	500 kg					
	viii. Raibhog	2000 kg					
	ix. Pista	2000 kg					
	x. No Added Sugar	2000 kg					
	g) Used corrugated waste, can steels, Polyliner/Polyfilm Scrap	2000 kg					
	(milk,curd,lassi,butteretc), Assorted used curd/kheer cups/ misc bottles scrap, assorted used matka scrap, empty ghee tins, ghee	Annual Rate					
	jars, plastic tray, powder tins, SMP/WMP craft paper and liner, PVC cutting rolls, primary and secondary packaging material, Misc. used Cannies (Capacity 1 to 15 litre) Scrap, Misc used Cannies (capacity above 20 to 50 litres) scrap.	contract					
	above 20 to 50 litres) scrap. h) Disposal of other unserviceable items lying at Verka Bathinda Dairy.	Half Yearly Rate					

NA/12/27285/2023/40473 Dated CHD :- 1/3/2025

Dv. General Manager (Purchase

STORES E-PROCUREMENT

E-procurement Tender Notice No. S/31/2024-25 Dated: 30-12-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works.

SN.1. Tender No. 83/24/0004C/OT/261/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 13-01-2025

Brief Description: Thermal Tickets Rolls of 500 each for Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) as per specification under RB's Commercial circular no. 12 of 2018 dated 09.02.2018 and 55 of 2018 dated 25.09.2018 [both attached], special note:- (1) Top coated thermal paper shall be with image durability of minimum two years. (2) Masking tape/paper tape used for joining plain white paper at the end of last ticket shall be affixed on the front side of the ticket roll in such a manner that the black mark on behind of the ticket does not get over lapped. Tape should not cover ticket more than 5 MM. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Quantity Tolerance (+/-): 1% age, Item Category: Normal, Total PO value variation Permitted: Max 8 lacs] 1) Qty-2368.00 Numbers for Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP/DEPOT, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty-9162.00 Numbers for Guwahati FORMS DEPOT, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty- 6070.00 Numbers for Katihar/GSD, NFR

(Bihar), 4) Qty-5467.00 Numbers for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), P.L.No.- 83250050. SN.2. Tender No. 61/24/5546/OT/262/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 16-01-2025

Brief Description: Manufacture and Supply for Nylon reinforced Grooved Rubber Sole Plates 6 mm thick for 1 in 8.5 turnouts on 60 kg PSC sleepers to RDSO Drg. No. T-4965, conforming to IRS specification for Rail pads for placing beneath Rail, SI. No. T-55-2023. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [UVAM linking:] Item Type: Goods, Qty- 406 Set for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam)

SN.3. Tender No. 30/24/1329A/OT/263/2024-25

Closing/Opening date: 20-01-2025

Brief Description: Set of control arm for LHB bogies consisting of 1) Control Arm Lower Left, Drg No FIAT 1267716 Ver 00R2 or latest 2) control arm upper to FIAT Drg no. 1277122 Ver-01R3 or latest Mat Spec.:- 17.334 100 06/107/01 Amnd. 01, MDTS-166 Rev-02, IS:1865:91 SG 400/18L [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI. Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UVAM linking:] Item Type-Goods 1) Qty-140 Set for Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP/DEPOT, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty: 66 Set for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty- 156 Set for New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP/DEPOT, NFR (Assam). 4) Oty- 20 Set for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), 5) Oty- 6 Set for Katihar/GSD, NFR (Bihar), P.L.No.- 33500137.

SN.4. Tender No. 61/24/5412/OT/264/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 27-01-2025

Brief Description: Elastic Rall clips MK-V as per RDSO Drg No T-5919 with latest alteration and in accordance with IRS Specification IRS T-31-2018, (Fourth Revison) and as amended up to 20 days prior to the date of closing of tender. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp. Yes, Stages: 1] [UVAM linking:] Item Type: Goods, Qty-2077544 Nos for SSE/P.WAY/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam), P.L. No.- 60110557

SN.5. Tender No. 30/24/1465/OT/265/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 30-01-2025

Brief Description: Manual uncoupling arrangement assembly for LHB passenger coaches. MAT. SPEC. RDSO/2011/CG-03 (REV-03) [Warranty Period: 84 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UVAM linking:] Item Type: Goods 1) Qty- 541 Nos. for Dibrugarh Town/ WORKSHOP/DEPOT, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 40 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, NFR (Assam), 3) Qty- 401 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP/DEPOT, NFR (Assam), 4) Qty- 2 Nos. for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, NFR (West Bengal), P.L.No.- 33542600.

SN.6. Tender No. 61/24/5474/OT/266/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 21-01-2025

Brief Description: Fabrication and supply of newly developed improved Switch Expansion Joint for 2 degree to 4 degree curve for 60 kg (UIC) rall section for long welded Rall on PSC sleepers along with all parts as per Drawing excluding ERCs, Liners & Rubber Pads (a) 60 kg Improved Switch Expansion Joint for 2 degree to 4 degree curve as per RDSO Drg No. T-8924 (Rahee make Drg.No. RH/PC5911 (Rev-4) [Warranty Period: 84 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages 0] [UVAM linking:]. Item Type: Goods. Qty: 18 set for SSE/P.Way/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam), P.L. No.

SN.7. Tender No. 61/24/5225A/OT/267/2024-25 Closing/Opening date: 27-01-2025

Brief Description: T/O 1 in 16 60 kg, RDSO DRG No. T-5891 (Fabricated switches [Description-11200mm O/R (Curved) Fan shaped Switch for 1 in 16 T/O for BG 60 KG (UIC) on PSC Sleepers to RDSO Drg. No T/5692 Alt. 03 as per IRS Specification IRS-T-10-2023 complete with stock rails, tongue rails and all parts with fittings including check rails as listed in the RDSO drawing but excluding Liner, Elastic rail Clip, Fish plate & Fish Bolts, & PSC Sleeperl and CMS Xing body [Description-CMS Crossing 1 in 16 BG for 60 kg Rails on PSC Sleepers as per RDSO Drg No. T/5693 (Alt.02) complete with fittings as per specification No. IRS T-29 (Revised 2022). List of fittings to be supplied with is enclosed as Annexure-A) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UVAM Linking:] Item Type: Goods, Qty; 6 set for Sr. Section Engineer/P.Way/New Haflong, NFR (Assam). (ii) Qty; 7 Set for SSE/P.Way.Hill/Lumding, NFR (Assam). P.L. No. 60220077.

Note: For full details of tender notice and tender documents, tenderer may log on to the website (www.ireps gov.in). Prospective bidder who intend to participate in above tender are required to log on themselves with the above website and submit their offer electronically, if they are already registered with IREPS. In Case they are not registered with IREPS, they are advised to obtain class-III Digital Signature Certificate from the certifying agencies under Govt. of India IT Act 2000 and participate in the above tenders.



EV firms agree to end subsidy after existing subsidy regime ends: Goyal

ommerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said the electric vehicle (EV) companies present in the meeting have unanimously agreed that they would no longer need subsidies once the existing subsidy regime ends.
Stakeholders from the EV sector held

deliberations with the minister here on issues pertaining to development of battery charging and swapping infrastructure.
The minister also said that companies

are free to choose their own business

Whether they prefer to collaborate and share resources for battery swapping or sell vehicles with their own batteries, the decision is entirely up to them, he said.
"Everybody was unanimous in the room that once the existing subsidy

regime comes to an end, none of them requires the subsidy to grow requires the subsidy to grow further...Each sector has one or the other model which makes it self-sustaining and does not call for further subsidies," Goyal told reporters when asked about the views of companies on subsidies.

In a bid to woo global EV makers into the country, in March last year the government rolled out an electric vehicle policy, under which duty concessions were offered to companies setting up manufacturing units in the country with a minimum



investment of USD 500 million. The government has plans to install 10,763 public charging stations across the country under the FAME-II

Under FAME-India Scheme phase-II, incentives are provided to buyers of electric vehicles in the form of an upfront reduction in the purchase price of electric vehicles.

There is another scheme - PM E-DRIVE - to support electric mobility through support for 14,028 e-buses, 2,05,392 electric three-wheelers (L5), 1,10,596 e-rickshaws and e-carts and 24.79.120 electric two-wheelers

In addition, e-trucks, e-ambulances, EV public charging stations and

upgrading of testing agencies are also

supported under the scheme.

The government has also rolled out the production linked incentive (PLI) schemes for auto sector manufacturing of Adv manufacturing of Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC). Electric vehicles are covered under

PLI scheme for automobile and auto components, which was approved in 2021 with a budgetary outlay of Rs 25,938 crore for a period of five years. Goyal said that awareness is increasing among people about cost benefits of using EVs.

"The electric mobility today is absolutely ready and set to fly. They do not need newer incentives or help them give that appropriate kick start to the EV ecosystem...There are options and ideas available by which electric mobility can be successfully marketed," he said. When asked about their discussions

on battery charging infrastructure, he said Petroleum and Explosive Safety organization (PESO) has released draft guidelines for installation of multiple EV charging/battery swapping facilities at petrol pumps. The idea is to make it easier for setting up charging infrastructure at petrol pumps or gas stations

pumps or gas stations.

The ministry has suggested to make those guidelines self-monitored and self-certified so that whoever is setting up the charging station will self-regulate those.

'Similarly, we want to encourage resident welfare associations, commercial establishments, office complexes to have electric charging equipment. Charging, swapping or auto companies are ready to do the investments," Goyal said.

The ministry also suggested the industry body of the sector to run a campaign to increase awareness about

Besides, he said, they can consider developing a common app or tool through which people will know the nearest charging stations and other information required for growth of

EPFO rolls out centralised pension system in all regional offices

PTI NEW DELHI

Retirement fund body EPFO has completed the Centralized Pension Payments System (CPPS) rollout in all its regional offices across the country that will benefit over 68 lakh pensioners, the labour ministry said on Friday. The CPPS is a paradigm shift

from the existing pension disbursement system that is decentralised, with each zonal/regional office of EPFO maintaining separate agreements with only 3-4 banks, the ministry explained in a statement.

Under CPPS, a beneficiary will be able to withdraw pension from any bank and there will be no need for to visit the bank for verification at the time of commencement of pension, and the amount will be immediately credited upon release, it stated.

The CPPS system January 2025 onwards will also ensure disbursement of pension throughout India without any need for transfer of pension payment orders (PPO) from one office to another even when the pensioner moves from one location to another or changes his bank or branch, it said.

This will be a great relief to pensioners who move to their hometown after retirement. The first pilot of CPPS was

completed in October last year in Karnal, Jammu, and Srinagar regional offices with the pension disbursement of about Rs 11 crore to more than 49,000 EPS pensioners, a ministry statement said. The second pilot was taken up

in November in 24 regional offices where about Rs 213 crore pension was disbursed to more than 9.3 lakh pensioners,

According to the statement, in a landmark move towards enhancing pension services, the EPFO completed full-scale rollout of the new CPPS under Employees' Pension Scheme

About Rs 1,570 crore pension was disbursed to more than 68 lakh pensioners pertaining to all 122 pension-disbursing regional offices of the EPFO for December 2024.

Announcing the successful rollout, Union minister

Mansukh Mandaviya said, implementation of the CPPS across all regional offices of EPFO is a historic milestone. This transformative initiative

empowers pensioners to access their pension seamlessly from any bank, any branch, anywhere in the country." The minister said the CPPS

eliminates the need for physical verification visits and simplifies the pension disbursement process.

"The CPPS is a testament to our commitment to

modernise EPFO services and ensuring convenience, ensuring convenience, transparency, and efficiency

for our pensioners.
"With this rollout, we are setting a new benchmark in pension service delivery, aligning with the vision of a tech-enabled and member-centric EPFO," he said.

Premium devices demand to push India smartphone market to over | Rural poverty declines sharply in USD 50 Billion in 2025: Counterpoint Technology Market Research

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $R_{\text{premium}}^{\text{ising}} \stackrel{\text{demand}}{\text{devices, led by}} \text{ for }$ Apple and Samsung, is expected to increase India's smartphone market size to over USD 50 billion (about Rs 4,28,900 crore) this year, market research firm Counterpoint Technology Market Research said on Friday.

Indian smartphone The market size was estimated at USD 37.9 billion (about Rs 3.25 lakh crore) in 2021, according to the research

"India's smartphone market is on track to achieve its on track to achieve its highest-ever value in 2025, crossing USD 50 billion. Brands like Apple and Samsung are leading this shift by offering competitive options in the premium and ultra-premium segments," the report said report said.

Apple India has registered a total income of Rs 67,121.6 crore, while Samsung reported revenue of Rs



Samsung's

mobile phone vertical in the

financial year 2024. According to the report, the retail average selling price of India's smartphone market is expected to cross the USD 300 mark (about Rs 25,700) for the first time in 2025.

"Apple is expected to see strong demand for its Pro models, driven by local manufacturing and recent price reductions across its

addressing Indian retailers' concerns related to display and motherboard, which had negatively impacted its performance earlier this year. Besides, the company's planned investment of Rs 6,000 crore (about USD 720 million) in local market expansion is expected to accelerate its recovery and growth," the report said.

value-focused

strategy is gaining traction, particularly with its flagship S

particularly with its hagsing's series," the report said.
Chinese brands like Vivo, Oppo, and OnePlus are attracting consumers by offering advanced camera systems etc. In the affordable

premium category, ranging between Rs 30,000-45,000

apiece. "Meanwhile, OnePlus

The premium segment (starting above Rs 30,000) is projected to exceed 20 per cent market share by 2025, the reports said. "The shift towards

premiumisation is also being driven by consumers increasingly opting for offline stores, where they can stores, experience smartphones premium first-hand before making a purchase. The growing interest in AI-powered features has further motivated consumers to seek hands-on demonstrations to better understand these innovations and make more informed decisions," it said.

FY24 at 4.86 per cent: SBI research

Rural poverty has declined Significantly to 4.86 per cent in the fiscal ending March 2024 from 25.7 per cent in 2011-12 mainly driven by government government support programmes, said a SBI

programmes, said a SBI research released on Friday. Urban poverty too is estimated at 4.09 per cent, down from 13.7 per cent in 2011-12.

"The sharp decline in rural poverty ratio is on account of nigher consumption growth in lowest 0-5 per cent decile with significant government support and such support is important as we also find that change in food prices has a significant impact on not just food expenditures, but overall expenditure in general," said the SBI research on expenditure consumption

survey. latest Household The Consumption Expenditure Survey, released by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, showed that consumption



inequality in rural as well as urban areas declined during the August 2023-July 2024 period as compared to a year

ago. The SBI research said that the Consumption Expenditure Survey reveals a remarkable decline in rural poverty estimated at 4.86 per cent in 2023-24 (7.2 per cent in FY23 and 25.7 per cent in FY12) and urban poverty estimated at 4.09 per cent (4.6 per cent in FY23 and 13.7 per cent in 2011-12).

It is possible that these numbers could undergo minor revisions once the 2021 census is completed and the new

could decline even further. At an aggregate level, we believe poverty rates in India could now be in the range of 4-4.5 per cent with almost minima existence of extreme poverty," it said. Enhanced physical infrastructure is scripting a new story in rural mobility, it said and added that one of the reasons for the increasingly shrinking horizontal income

gap between rural and urban and the vertical income gap within rural income classes," SBI said. The difference between rural

and urban monthly per capita consumption expenditure/ Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) to rural MPCE is now at 69.7 per cent, a rapid decline from 88.2 per cent in 2009-10...Mostly due to the initiatives the government has taken in terms of DBT transfers, building rural infrastructures, augmenting farmer's income, improving the rural livelihood significantly," it said.

India's exports to cross USD 800 Billion this fiscal: Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said despite global economic uncertainties, India's exports of goods and services are expected to cross USD 800 billion this fiscal, which will be a record.
Last fiscal year, the exports stood at USD 778 billion.

He said though there will be stresses in the global system, but India's exports basket is

large. "My estimate is that we will cross USD 800 billion in exports, another record given the world situation," he told reporters here.

He added share in services exports is also growing at a rapid pace.

On exports to developing and least developed countries (LDCs), he said those nations have been stressed because of the forex crisis they are facing after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Forex reserves drop by USD 4.11 **Billion to USD 640.27** Billion

PTI MUMBAI

India's forex reserves dropped by USD 4.112 billion to USD 640.279 billion during the week ended December 27, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall kitty had week, the overall kitty had dropped by USD 8.478 billion to USD 644.391 billion. The reserves have been declining 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 December 27, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves. decreased by USD 4.641 billion to USD 551.921 billion, the data released on

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. Gold reserves increased by USD 541 million to USD 66.268 billion during the

week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 12 million to USD 17.873 billion, the apex bank said.

shift to marketplace model



PTI NEW DELHI

Quick commerce company Zepto has set up a new entity Zepto Marketplace to rejig its operations from a B2B model to a marketplace model, according to people in the know.

Zepto Marketplace was registered in October 2024, and the company's operations will soon switch to the new model once the operational sorted out, sources said.

A mail query sent to the company did not elicit any The shift, according to sources, will enable Zepto to

have a greater hold on quality control and service. Zepto is also set to soon launch "Thor"-a SaaS inventory management platform to further streamline operations, they

added. The development comes as Zepto prepares for a public listing within this year.
Zeptos peers like Blinkit and Swiggy Instamart already follow a marketplace model.

Under the current structure, Zepto licenses its brand name and operations to three Drogheria Convenience, Sellers and Commodum Groceries. These three

companies purchase their stock from Kiranakart Technologies Pvt Ltd and sell it to end consumers via the Zepto platform. In essence, Kiranakart Technologies is a B2B company that sources and

buys products directly from brands and sells them to Convenience, Drogheria Sellers and Commodum Gro Zepto's three licensee companies. These companies then sell to the end consumer. For every sale that the three companies make using Zepto's platform, they pay a licensing fee to the latter. Thus, under the present B2B model, Zepto is the technology platform, serving

as an intermediary between operators, sellers and delivery partners. Sellers list themselves on the platform while dark stores are franchise-managed and delivery partners are third-party rendering a gig.

Zepto reported a 120 per

cent increase in operating revenue to Rs 4,454 crore in FY24. The company also proposes to launch a separate app for Zepto Cafe, which is engaged in quick delivery of snacks and other food items. Zepto's valuation stands at USD 5 billion. In November 2024, it raised USD 350 million in a funding round that included investments from Indian HNIs, family offices, and leading financial

institutions. With business growing rapidly, Zepto is looking to expand to over 50 cities by next quarter from about two dozen cities right now.

Zepto sets up new entity to | ICAI seeks tax benefits to promote climate change mitigation strategies



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

hartered accountants' Chartered accountants
apex body ICAI has
sought tax benefits for
promoting climate change
mitigation strategies and a separate section for income from shares and securities in the income tax returns form. Besides, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has sought a special tax regime for partnership firms and limited liability partnership (LLPs) as well as simplification of income tax return forms.
The institute on Friday said

it has advocated for prudent tax reforms aimed at fostering economic growth and encouraging environmental sustainability in the pre-Budget Memorandum 2025.

"Provision of tax benefits for

promoting climate change

mitigation strategies, which

will not only contribute to India's climate change goals

but also drive economic sustainable practices is a suggestion in this direction," it said in a release.

Among other suggestions, ICAI has proposed a new head to show income from shares and securities that will have provisions relating to taxability of income by way of dividend, interest or capital gains. Rationalising conditions for

treating a return of income as defective in the e-filing regime and provision of opportunity of being heard before treating a defective return as invalid is another suggestion by the institute. ICAI has also pitched for simplifying the capital gains provisions under sections 54 to 54F of the Act, extending 10 per cent tolerance band to cases where value is

unexplained investments. Further, the institute has proposed obtaining report of a chartered accountant in the prescribed form certifying the sum chargeable to tax instead of going through the process of getting the certificate of lower deduction of tax from the assessing officer, where non-resident transfers immovable property to a resident. As per the release, another

respect of cash credits and

recommendation is to exempt the transferee responsible for paying to a non-resident transferor from the requirement of obtaining

Meanwhile, ICAI has submitted its final recommendations regarding simplifying the I-T Act, including introduction of special tax regime for partnership firms/LLPs, simplification of the simplification of the registration and taxation regime of charitable trusts as well as provisions for determining residential status of individuals.

Other suggestions include simplification of income tax return forms, alignment of TDS/TCS rates with the objective of serving as an audit trail, periodic review of disposal of cases by assessing officer, mandatory time limit for disposal of appeals, and effective grievance redressal mechanism.

Another recommendation is determined by the valuation the extension of time limit for filing belated return to March 31 of the assessment officer under Section for fi 50C(2), rationalising rate of March tax under Section 115BBE in year.



Gold prices almost flat at ₹79,700 per 10 grams, Silver slips ₹230

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices traded almost flat at Rs 79,700 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal closed at Rs 79,720 per 10 grams on

Thursday.
Silver slipped Rs 230 to Rs 90,400 per kg on Friday. The white metal settled at Rs 90,630 per kg in the previous trading session. However, the price of gold with 99.5 per cent purity rose Rs 130 to Rs 79,300 per 10 grams on

Friday. Meanwhile, in futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for February delivery increased Rs 6 to trade at Rs 77,723 per 10 grams. Gold traded with minor

gains in the domestic market, while Comex gold maintained a sideways trend around USD 2,655 per ounce," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst of market hou Commodity and Currency at per ounce.

LKP Securities, said.

The market remains steady with limited movements as participants await further global cues to determine the next direction, Trivedi said. Silver climbed Rs 517 or 0.58 per cent to Rs 89,690 per kg in futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

Globally, Comex gold futures rose USD 2.10 per ounce or 0.08 per cent to USD 2,671.10 per ounce. "Gold extended gains on Friday buoyed by safe-haven demand after news reports ame that US President Joe Biden discussed contingency plans to strike Iran's nuclear facilities if it made progress towards developing a nuclear bomb before Trump's inauguration on January 20," said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities. Comex silver futures quoted 1.05 per cent higher in the Asian market hours at USD 30.22

t every turn, the museum tells a story - one not just of artifacts, but of ideas that have lasted through time. thought comes to my mind as I walk through the calm halls of the Abhay Prabhavana Museum in Pune. As I move through the calm, serene halls, it's as if the museum itself transports me into the heart of India's spiritual history, inviting me to reflect on values that have stood the test of time. Located near the peaceful Indrayani River, the museum is not just a collection of objects, but a deep journey into Indian values, brought to life through Jain philosophy. The Abhay Prabhavana Museum, hailed

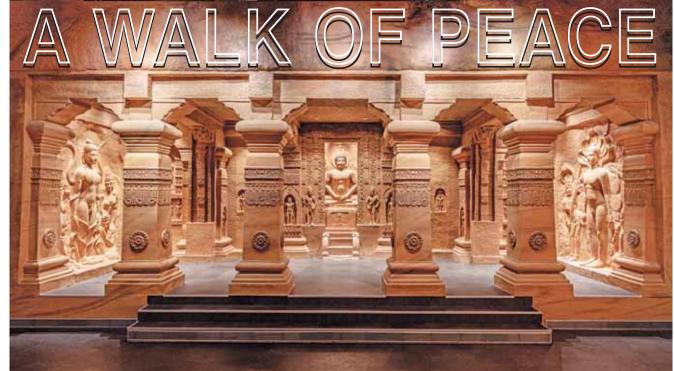
as one of the largest "Museums of Ideas," offers a unique experience. With its perfect blend of ancient wisdom and modern technology, it brings the teachings of Jainism to life. The museum stands as a tribute to the timeless values of compassion, non-violence and tolerance, which form the core of Jainism. Spearheaded by Mr. Abhay Firodia and the Amar Prerana Trust, the museum captures the essence of these principles, making them accessible to everyone.
As I journey from Pune to the museum,

the road winds through hills and the city fades away. It feels like entering another world, one where nature, history and spirituality come together. The moment I set eyes on the museum, I am drawn to its striking modern architecture, set against the backdrop of tranquil nature. It's a visual representation of the museum's core: a living tribute to India's spiritual and cultural roots.

Covering 3.5 lakh square feet, the

museum is divided into 30 galleries, each offering a deep dive into different aspects of Jain philosophy and culture. The exhibits go beyond showcasing objects; they tell immersive stories using modern technology. Audio-visuals, interactive kiosks and even virtual reality are used to engage visitors in a multi-sensory experience, making it feel like I am experiencing the teachings of Jainism firsthand.

One of the most wonder-inspiring Rishabhdev, the first Tirthankar. Standing in a meditative pose, the statue symbolises the foundation of Indian civilisation. Murals at its base explore the contributions Rishabhdev made to Indian society, such as introducing agriculture, trade and professional skills. The statue is not just an artistic marvel but also a visual journey that connects the ancient wisdom of Jainism to the modern world. As I explore the galleries, the museum's message becomes clearer: Jainism's core principles - Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigrah (non-possessiveness) and Anekantvad (acceptance of multiple perspectives) hold immense relevance today. These values have the potential to



EXPLORE THE RICH HERITAGE AND SPIRITUAL LEGACY OF JAINISM AT THE *ABHAY PRABHAVANA MUSEUM* IN PUNE, WRITES **SAKSHI PRIYA**



address contemporary issues like environmental sustainability and social harmony. Walking through the exhibits, I find myself reflecting on how these teachings can guide us in our daily lives, encouraging me to adopt a mindset rooted in compassion, non-violence and

understanding. A visit to the *Abhay Prabhavana Museum* is incomplete without experiencing its

serene outdoor spaces. The museum offers a tranquil nature walk along the Indrayani River, spanning 8 hectares of beautifully landscaped grounds. As I walk, I'm surrounded by monumental modern sculptures and replicas of Jain monuments that blend seamlessly with nature. This open-air heritage walk is a perfect example of how the museum connects Jain philosophy with the natural

world, offering visitors opportunity to witness India's spiritual geography.
The 320-metre heritage walk showcases

miniatures of Jain monuments from across India, offering a cultural journey through Jainism's rich legacy. The Plaza of Equanimity, with a 57-feet tall Sarvatobhadra statue, brings a modern interpretation to the traditional

Chaturmukh Temple. The calm and spiritual atmosphere of this space encourages introspection and peace. In the tranquil Garden of the Revered, miniature trees dedicated to the 24 Tirthankars create a serene and contemplative environment. This peaceful setting adds another layer to the museum's ability to connect visitors with the timeless values of Jainism.





The Abhay Prabhavana Museum is a place for everyone, not just those with an interest in Jain philosophy. It's a destination for anyone looking to understand the spiritual and cultural roots of India. The museum offers a rare chance to connect with the wisdom that has shaped Indian society for centuries, reminding us of the values of compassion, non-violence, and tolerance. The museum is a tribute to compassion, their dedication to preserving Jain teachings. After over ten years of research and collaboration, the museum has become a unique cultural landmark, continuing to inspire visitors with its

powerful message. Walking through the museum takes time and to fully understand its meaning, you need to immerse yourself in every path. The more time you spend here, the more you realise how much thought and care have gone into every detail. The lessons I've learned are more than just intellectual; they are deeply personal. As I leave, I feel a sense of peace that stays long after I've walked through the museum's doors. The Abhay Prabhavana Museum is not just a place to visit, it's a journey into India's spiritual heart, a living reflection of the values that unite us



By SAKSHI PRIYA

'सुरदास जी के भक्ति में जो रंग है वही रंग जीवन में बस जाता है।' (Just like the devotion in Surdas Ji's poetry, it fills our lives with love and meaning)

n the soft glow of the spotlight, where music casts its magic and dance flows with the rhythm of devotion, the Sant Shiromani Surdas Mahotsav unfolded as a rare gem, shimmering with the glow of India's classical arts and spiritual heritage. It was an invitation to step into a world where time slows and the sacred words of Sant Surdas meet the expressions of dance and music. The Geetanjali International Foundation proudly presented the 5th edition of the Sant Shiromani Surdas Mahotsav. This grand celebration paid tribute to the 16th-century Bhakti poet Sant Surdas, alloying Indian classical dance and music to

showcase the spiritual and artistic heritage of the revered saint. As the opening notes of the tabla reverberated through the C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, it was clear that the evening was destined to be something extraordinary. There's something deeply moving about watching dancers embody poetry, not just through their steps, but in their very being. This was evident from the moment Diksha Rawat and Karthika Unnikrishnan, disciples of the esteemed Vidushi Uma Dogra, took the stage. Kathak, often described as a dance of storytelling, was brought to life in the most vibrant and energetic



manner. With each swirl, each beat of the ghungroo, they seemed to move beyond just physical steps, offering a glimpse into the soul of Surdas's poetry, which itself was steeped in devotion and longing.

And then came *Rani Khanam*, whose Kathak solo performance was nothing short of enchanting. The bhajan she performed, "सुंदर बदन सुख सदन श्याम को," translated into a visual display of grace, passion and beauty. One could almost see the words of Surdas materialise as her feet danced in rhythm, each step echoing the love and longing of a devotee gazing at Krishna. What struck the audience the most was the emotional charge she brought to her performance. It was as though she wasn't simply dancing, she was telling a story that resonated deeply with everyone present. Equally captivating was Rama Vaidyanathan's

Bharatanatyam performance. There's something inherently powerful about the way Bharatanatyam

Nayika's yearning for Lord Vishnu, Vaidyanathan's expressions were a masterclass in silent storytelling. Her eyes, her hands, every angle of her body spoke volumes, capturing the delicate interplay of longing and love in a way that words could scarcely do justice. True dance is never just about physical movement, it's about the silent dialogue between the dancer and the audience, a dialogue that connects deeply and unspoken.

But what truly made the evening unforgettable was the duet between Rani Khanam and Rama Vaidvanathan. As they danced together, interpreting a playful poem by Sant Surdas, it was as if the very essence of Krishna's mischievous nature danced through them. Watching these two talented artists, each representing a different classical tradition, merge their energies was a moment of pure magic The chemistry between them was visible and the playful interaction between Krishna and his devotees came to life through their expressions, perfectly capturing Surdas's wit and deep devotion. The performance left the audience reminded once again of the power of classical arts to evoke deep emotions and connect people to something greater than themselves. The Sant Shiromani Surdas Mahotsav was a celebration of a poet's legacy, of India's soul and its arts, an experience that connected everyone in attendance to something much larger than themselves

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

anvas of Emotions

By TEAM VIVA

Art has a way of speaking to the parts of us that words often cannot reach.

Open Palm Court, India Habitat Centre, is a vivid reminder of this power. From the moment you step inside, the space transforms into a sanctuary of colours, textures, and emotions, inviting visitors to pause and truly feel. Organised by Happy Strokes and curated by Dr Mandakini Devi, the exhibition presents 30 pieces that are as diverse in medium as they are in message. The works, ranging from the vivid energy of Flame of Himalaya to the intricate lines of Focus Series, are not just to be seen, they are to be experienced. Each artwork is an intimate exploration of identity, resilience, and emotional growth, speaking volumes about the deeply personal journeys of the artists. Highlights include the delicate *Blooming Innocence*, which captures the essence of youthful wonder and Joy in Her tender portraval of maternal love The bold strokes of Grace in Motion convey the elegance of movement, while the subtle details in The Portrait of an Elderly evoke a quiet dignity. Pieces like Gulabo, with its vibrant palette and Beauty Within Series, rendered in acrylic, further showcase the versatility of artistic expression. Each work invites viewers into a different narrative, offering a fresh perspective with

What makes this exhibition stand out is its human touch. It doesn't aim to overwhelm with grandeur but instead creates an inviting atmosphere for quiet reflection. The curation reflects a keen understanding of art's ability to connect with its audience on an emotional level. Pieces like Dehleez and The Blue Ivv capture life's fleeting, fragile moments with raw honesty, making them especially striking.Interactive sessions, including art talks and workshops, add another layer to the experience. These events break down the often-intimidating barriers of the art world, encouraging visitors to engage directly with the themes on display. It's a refreshing approach, one that turns spectators into participants and deepens their connection to the art.

This exhibition isn't about showcasing perfection but about embracing the imperfect beauty of human experience. It's a poignant reminder that art is more than just decoration, it's a bridge to understanding and introspection. Every







brushstroke, every line and every shadow carries the weight of stories untold and emotions unspoken. Visions Unveiled doesn't just leave an impression, it leaves you thinking about how art mirrors life in all its complexity. It's a show that resonates long after you've left the gallery, reminding us why creativity matters in an increasingly chaotic world. Through its thoughtfully curated works and sincere execution, it becomes a celebration of art as a reflection of humanity's most meaningful truths

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

India all out for 185 on day one of fifth Test against Australia

Rohit Sharma "opted to rest" in the team's interest but the same old script unfolded on a new day for Indian batters as they surrendered meekly for a paltry 185 in the face of some hostile seam bowling from Australia on the opening day of the fifth and final

Virat Kohli (17 off 69 balls), whose form and technical weaknesses are also under the scanner, was for the seventh time dismissed in the corridor of uncertainty in the tour, a problem that seems incurable at the moment.

At stumps, Australia were 9 for 1 with stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah sending the woefully out-of-form Usman Khawaja (2) back in

Teenage sensation Sam Konstas was unbeaten at 7 after hitting Bumrah for a first-ball four. The 19-year-old also had an animated exchange with the Indian star.

Bumrah opted to bat under overcast conditions and the ultra-defensive

approach by Indian batters only compounded their problems with Scott Boland's (20-8-31-4) immaculate length and tremendous discipline leaving them in a

Mitchell Starc (18-5-49-3) and Pat Cummins (15.2-4-37-2) were equally relentless giving the Indians no room for release shots.

Rishabh Pant top-scored for the visitors with a 98-ball 40, going against his grain to battle it out, taking painful blows to his body in the process.

If Rohit's decision to "rest" was a forward thinking move, the persistence with Kohli is proving to be detrimental and the celebrated batter might just have one more Test innings left to save his place in the traditional format.

"I wouldn't say it's a par score but still a competitive score," said Pant, admitting that the pitch is not easy

to bat on.

If one takes away the second innings hundred at Perth out of his last 20 Test innings, Kohli has managed an average of 17.57.



first delivery but tried to battle hard. However, it has always been that one moment in which his hands and the willow magnetically follow a delivery in the corridor of

Pant curbs natural instincts for a

Having copped criticism from all quarters for his bizarre shot selection in Melbourne, Pant, for a change, copped body blows, trying to curb his natural game.

The big-hitter in him came out only the complete force in the page.

on a couple of occasions with one of them fetching him a straight six off Beau Webster

Pant put his head down and endured nasty blows on his bicep, helmet and twice in the sensitive abdominal area. He and the dogged Ravindra Jadeja (26 off 95 balls) defended dourly as they added 48 off 151 deliveries for the fifth

wicket. Only 50 runs were scored in the second session and trying not to be adventurous proved counter-productive with most batters retreating in a shell letting Boland and company dictate the terms of play. Finally, Pant's patience ran out

and one pull shot too many became his undoing. India realised they haven't scored enough runs and lost a lot of wickets. The defensive tactic in the

second session when the ball got old ended up costing them dearly. There wasn't much swing on offer despite cloudy conditions but a decent grass cover ensured that Boland's back-of-length deliveries proved enough.

As far as Pant was concerned, the "honest conversations" with head coach Gautam Gambhir seemed to have worked with the southpaw respecting the game situation for

most part.

If Pant was disciplined, Shubman Gill's judgement on the last delivery before lunch did cause trouble for India.

Gill (20 off 64 balls) did all the hard work for close to couple of hours before stepping out to Nathan Lyon on the last ball of the session only to be caught at first slip.



Facing Jasprit Bumrah will be challenging on this track: Beau Webster

Debutant all-rounder Beau Webster feels facing ace India pacer Jasprit Bumrah will be an enormous challenge on the SCG pitch which is helping seamers, and the Australian did not place his finger on an ideal first innings

India were all out for 185 and then Australia lost Usman Khawaja off the last ball of the day to Bumrah to end at 9 for

one. "Think there's definitely a method to go about batting on this wicket. But Jasprit is a world class bowler and no doubt he's going to challenge our whole batting group. He's phenomenal with his lengths and lines, it is going to be tough on a wicket that will offer a fair bit for him," Webster said in the post day

one press conference. He said getting India out for a total less than 200 on a seamer friendly track was a commendable effort.

"It was a pretty seamer-friendly track and most of the day the ball stayed pretty new with the grass coverage. It is not an abrasive square either. So, the plan was to bowl a little bit fuller and entice those front foot defences and front foot

"Thought Scotty (Boland) was excellent, he's been unbelievable since he came back into the team and saw why he's a world class bowler. Thought all the bowlers were really good today to bowl

them out for 200? Webster said the degree of seam movement for a few deliveries was way more pronounced and hence they

beat the bat regularly.

"There were a couple of unplayable balls, when it seams that much it can be hard to get a wicket at times. We saw a nice-ish partnership (Jadeja-Pant), where we struggled to get a struggled to get a breakthrough through the sheer seam movement. We beat the bat a lot but couldn't find the edge."

The 31-year-old was all praise for Boland and said the pacer can find a way to get wickets on any surface and when there is help on offer, he is on par with the best in business.

"If there's anything in the wicket he finds it and if there's nothing in the wicket he still manages to find a way through," the lanky Tasmanian

"He's been fantastic this whole series when he's got his chance, he's relentless. I think it's his line and length and his natural angle that makes it really hard for right-handers, but when we see him go round the wicket to left-handers it's

impressive stuff."
Webster caught the great Virat Kohli at third slip and he found Boland's bowling enjoyable.

"It's great to watch from the third slip today, the amount of movement he gets and how accurate he is and how challenging he is for both left and right handers.

We have probably seen Rohit Sharma for last time in Test cricket: Gavaskar, Shastri

Former India cricketers Sunil Gavaskar and Ravi Shastri feel that the Boxing Test might have been it Sharma's final appearance in Test cricket, following his bold call to rest himself for the series finale that began here on Friday. The 37-year-old chose to sit

out with the series on the line, having scored only 31 runs in five innings across three Tests. "I think it probably means that (if) India don't qualify for the WTC final, the Melbourne Test will be Rohit Sharma's last game." Gavaskar said during the lunch break on day one. "The WTC cycle will start with the England series, and the selectors would likely want someone available for the 2027 final. Whether India gets there or not is another matter, but that's is what the selection committee is likely to do. "We have probably seen Rohit



Sharma for the last time in Test cricket," he added. Shastri echoed the sentiment

predicting that Rohit would "pull the plug" on his Test career after the series. "At the toss, Jasprit [Bumrah] mentioned it before I could ask," Shastri said during

commentary.
"He said the captain opted to sit out and said the team

would be stronger if Shubman

Gill plays.
"It can happen when you're out of sorts, you're mentally not there, you don't have the runs under vour belt. It still is a brave call for a captain to own up and say, 'I'm prepared to take the bench in this game,'' he added.

Rohit has struggled in Test cricket recently, breaching the 20-run mark only twice in his

series, they must win the final Test to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, which they've held for a decade, and they've held for a decade, and remain in contention for a spot in the World Test Championship (WTC) final against South Africa. If India fail to qualify, their next Test series will be a tour of England starting mid-June.

"If there was a home season coming up he might've thought of carrying on, but I think he might just pull the plug at the end of this Test," Shastri said.

"He's not getting younger ... it's not that India don't have youngsters. There are very, very good players in the wings and it's time to build.

Tough decisions, but there is a time for everything," Shasti

At the toss, stand in skipper Jasprit Bumrah said our captain has shown leadership by opting to rest in this game.



to take charge because of nature of wicket: Pant

PTI SYDNEY

India wicketkeeper batter Rishabh Pant said he batted with restraint on the opening day of the fifth Test against Australia because character of the SCG pitch and the game situation did not allow him to be his customary aggressive

Pant, who copped severe criticism from all corners for his callous approach to batting during the previous Test at Melbourne, made a 98-ball 40 in India's 185 all out here on

Friday.
"I think in this innings, I was not in a frame of mind where I wanted to take charge of the game because the wicket was doing too much and the kind of situation we were in," Pant said in the post-day press

"I would say there might be a 50-50 chance which I could have taken early on in this innings but sometimes you have to play more secure cricket especially the way, wicket was behaving. "We knew that if we lost one

more wicket here, we might lose 2-3 in quick succession. So that was the idea behind the way I was playing," he added.

Pant's falling pull in Melbourne had prompted legendary Sunil Gavaskar to call the shot "stupid" and in the second innings, he slogged a half-tracker from Travis Head to find the only fielder in the deep when the Test match could have been saved.

Yes, there is a time to attack. but when you have to feel that from inside. I can't just premeditate that I'm going to play this way. Whatever the game asked me to do on a given day, that's what I tried to do and that is the mindset." For Pant, the equation is simple - everyone has learnt

their own way to skin a cat but also need to learn the other "It is a natural habit to back whatever the way you have played the game. But eventually you got to keep on

evolving and, that is, I feel there is not one way to play cricket. "But whatever comes more naturally is always better but

you got to find that balance you got to find that balance between playing aggressive cricket and having that balance when you play all those shots. That's what I'm trying to do," he explained his rationale

rationale. "Just trying to make the most out of whatever the way I'm playing and just keep it simple, and not to overthink because you know when you're not having the best of the tours you might overthink."

He agreed that blows that he received, one on the left bicep and few in the abdominal area, were painful but that was the need of the hour.

"I mean definitely it's painful but you know sometimes you have to do the hard work for the team and that's okay. Not thinking about where I got hit but just playing the ball to the best of my abilities."

Biggest achievement of life but plenty more to come: Harmanpreet on Khel Ratna award including wins and losses. But I think you only learn from those experiences. From day one, my mindset has been how to improve myself," said the star player who was born into a family of

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $E_{\text{Ratna awardee after his}}^{\text{lated to become a Khel}}$ career-defining Olympic performance, Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh said the honour is a recognition of his "fascinating" journey in which he still has plenty more to achieve.

Double Olympic-medallist shooter Manu Bhaker, chess world champion D Gukesh Harmanpreet and

Paralympic high jump gold-winner Praveen Kumar were finalised for the 2024 Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award by the sports ministry on Thursday.

on I hursday.

"(It's the) biggest recognition
of my life. It's a big
achievement for me. I am
really very happy. It think it's
the best part of my life that I
am getting such a huge award



and recognition," the 28year-old Harmanpreet, who was India's top goal-scorer in the Paris Games with 10 strikes, told PTI in an interview.

The ace drag-flicker has won most of the prominent awards and accolades in his career, including back-to-back Olympic bronze bronze back medals, a junior World Cup

silver, an Asian Games gold and bronze besides two silver medals in the Champions Trophy.

Harmanpreet has also claimed the FIH Player of the Year award three times, including the year gone by. But he is far from satiated. "Throughout my journey I have learnt a lot, I have seen a lot of ups and downs

Harmanpreet credited his fellow players for making it possible for him to shine individually. 'Whatever we are achieving we are achieving as a team. The journey has been very fascinating, I am getting individual recognitions and

who was born into a family of

farmers in Amritsar's Timmowal village and whose

international career began in

A team-man to the core.

my teammates. "Í have enjoyed my journey a lot till date. I have put on a lot of hard work and I am happy with what I have achieved till date," he said.

awards but only because of

the end of road for Rohit in Kohli's blade was a clean

take.

Kohli edged a length delivery from Scott Boland to second slip, where Smith was positioned. Smith dived low to his right, seemingly catching the ball near the ground before flicking it

referred to the TV umpire. who ultimately ruled Kohli

"I was in the back of the (commentary) box as it happened and from what I saw, and what I believe to be the interpretation of the

"The ball may have touched the ground. It may not have

touched the ground, but the fact that his right index finger was still underneath the ball, I thought it was a clear catch" The incident took place in

ball Kohli faced and Ponting admitted the limited angles available did not help.
"It might be one of those

the eighth over, off the first

ones that depends which dressing room he's (Kohli) sitting in as well.

"Every Indian fan and Indian player will say that's not out as it clearly touched the ground, but you could tell by the reaction of the Australians when it happened and even when they saw the replay on the big screen that they were all pretty confident that it was

I was very surprised when I heard the term 'opting out': Ponting says of Rohit's absence

PTI SYDNEY

Australian batting great Ricky Ponting on Friday said he was "surprised" by the Indian camp's wording around Rohit Sharma's around Rohit Sharma's absence from the fifth and final Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy but Trophy but admitted that the move was on expected lines.

The match started here on Friday with the visitors eyeing a win to level the series and retain the trophy. However, Jasprit Bumrah, who walked out for the toss, said Rohit has "opted to rest' from the Sydney

I think the reaction has been that they all sort of expected that it might happen," Ponting told The ICC

"The chat's been for the last couple of days that everyone expected that Rohit would not play this game, that Shubman Gill would come back in and that (Jasprit) Bumrah would probably take over the captaincy again and that's the way it's turned out." Given the circumstances, Ponting was totally in agreement with the woefully out-of-form Rohit skipping the decider at SCG but the former Australia captain was surprised by the wording of the news that came from the India camp.

"I was very surprised when I heard the term 'opting out' coming into such an important game," Ponting

said. "We know he's been a great stalwart for Indian cricket over a long period of time. So the way that they've actually worded it, you can only take it on face value.

"We've got to believe what we're hearing coming out of the Indian camp, but being such a big game, knowing that they have to win this one to retain the trophy, it was an interesting time for one of their more experienced players to opt out."
The 37-year-old white-ball

great looked like a pale shadow of himself in the ongoing series Down Under, struggling to execute even his bread and butter shots including the trademark front foot pull.

During the customary prematch warm-up session, Rohit was seen playing football with Virat Kohli,



Rishabh Pant and Sarfaraz Khan, who along with Abhimanyu Easwaran will end the series without getting

an international game. Ponting did not say it in as many words but he very well

the game," Ponting said.
"India don't play a Test
match, I believe, until the middle or late June, which is a long way away when you're sort of coming to the back end of your career. "I think he's been a terrific

the game's traditional format.

"You'd think it's probably a long way back for Rohit

Sharma now in this format of

player for India so with those sort of guys, you wish them all the best and hope to see them back out there again, but as I said, I think it will be a long - and probably difficult road - back for him." Catch off Kohli's bat was clean

Ponting had no doubt that the attempt made by Steve Smith at second slip off

upward toward gully, where Marnus Labuschagne completed the catch.
However, the decision was

not out.

rules, that seemed to be out to me," Ponting said.

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