

### FAITH, CHARITY, BUSINESS, CONVERGE AT MAHAKUMBH 2 **CRORES OF BELIEVERS BATHE IN THE ETERNAL GLORY OF SANGAM** BISWAJEET BANERJEE

MAHAKUMBH NAGAR he sacred banks of the Ganga,

Yamuna, and the mystical Saraswati came alive with a sea of humanity as the Maha Kumbh commenced on the auspicious day of Paush Purnima with over 1.65 crore people took a dip at the holy river.

Pilgrims from every corner of the country, carrying faith in their hearts and offerings in their hands, gathered to take the first holy dip. The air was filled with reverberating chants of "Har Har Gange" and "Jai Shri Ram," creating an atmosphere of divine fervor.

The devotion of the pilgrims was palpable as they began arriving at the Sangam from midnight, braving the biting cold. Wrapped in woolens, they carried their belongings on their heads, the weight of which seemed insignificant before their unwavering faith. "It feels like a burden lifted from my soul when I take a dip here," said Savitri Devi, a 65-year-old pilgrim from Rajasthan, as she emerged from the water with a serene smile.

The banks of the Sangam turned into a kaleidoscope of colors as people dressed in traditional attire thronged the ghats. Children played in the shallow waters, their laughter mingling with the chants of mantras, while elders sat in prayer, their lips murmuring sacred hymns. The youthful enthusiasm was especially striking, with many capturing the moments on their phones and sharing them instantly. "It's a proud moment for us to be here and celebrate our culture with the world," said 22-year-old Aniket Mishra from Allahabad, holding a selfie stick as he stood at the edge of the waters.

The spiritual energy was matched by nature's grace, with a light drizzle the previous night followed



by a cool breeze enhancing the sanctity of the occasion. Pilgrims The were seen lighting diyas, offering flowers, and performing rituals on the ghats. "The cold water feels like the blessings of the goddess herself. This is not just a bath; it's a spiritual Drones rebirth," said Ramesh Gupta, a trader from Delhi who had traveled

with his family for the occasion. elaborate security arrangements ensured a smooth flow of devotees. Police personnel stood alert at every corner, guiding the crowds and maintaining order. hovered overhead, providing real-time monitoring from the Integrated Command and Control Center. "We feel safe and cared for. The arrangements this year are truly commendable," said Kavita Joshi, a teacher from Uttarakhand.

For many, the Maha Kumbh was not just an act of faith but also a celebration of cultural heritage. The ghats became a stage for

performances of impromptu bhajans and folk songs, as groups of devotees formed circles and sang in unison. The atmosphere was electric yet peaceful, a blend of human devotion and divine energy. Social media was abuzz with posts, photos, and videos from the event. "I shared a live video of the aarti,

and my friends back in Mumbai were amazed. This is a part of our culture we should all be proud of," said Prerna Mehta, a first-time visitor to the Kumbh.

As the sun rose over the horizon, casting a golden glow over the confluence, the Sangam appeared like a painting brought to life. The

sight of millions standing waist-deep in the water, hands folded in prayer, was both humbling and awe-inspiring. "This is the heart of India, where the soul of our nation resides," said Dr. Vinod Kumar, a

historian observing the event. The first day of Mahakumbh also saw a bustling market atmosphere, with devotees enthusiastically shopping for food, puja items, and other essentials from both established stores and small vendors.

Ramkumar, a food vendor from Hardoi who arrived two weeks ago, shared his experience: "Here, we are not only feeding devotees but also earning spiritual merit. We are not

overcharging anyone, and everything is running smoothly." Similarly, Sunil from Bhadohi, who is serving tea at the event, expressed gratitude for the opportunity. "I've come here for 45 days to earn a livelihood. On this chilly first day, tea is being served to the devotees without any extra charge," he added.

Mahakumbh 2025 is turning into a unique confluence of commerce and charity, as the first day witnessed both thriving business and widespread acts of generosity. Various organisations set up Bhandaras across the fairgrounds, distributing food and tea in abundance to the countless devotees present.

From piping hot Khichdi to Puri Sabzi, devotees were treated to a variety of meals, while tea was served at numerous stalls throughout the day.

Renowned saints, including Satua Baba, have also extended hospitality by organizing Bhandaras and making arrangements for devotees to stay in their camps, ensuring that no one leaves without being cared for. This seamless blend of spiritual service and economic activity highlights the inclusive spirit of Mahakumbh.

Also

**Available** Online\_

### **India summons Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

India on summoned Monday on Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner Nural Islam amid escalating border tensions between the nations. The two development comes a day after the Bangladesh Foreign

Ministry summoned Indian In High Commissioner to

Dhaka Pranay Verma. The border tensions between India and Bangladesh have escalated after Dhaka alleged that India was trying to construct fences at five locations along the India-Bangladesh border, violating a bilateral agreement.

Bangladeshi foreign ministry said, "Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Ambassador Md Jashim Uddin on Sunday expressed the deep concern of the Government of Bangladesh to the High Commissioner of India Pranay Verma at his office at the Ministry of Foreign

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statement, the Affairs over the recent activities of the Border Security Force (BSF) of India along the Bangladesh-India Border."

The conflicts have surfaced in including five areas, (northwestern) Chapainawabganj, Naogaon, Lalmonirhat, and the Tin Bigha Corridor.

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### FIIs exit, Sensex drops sharply PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI

The equity benchmark Sensex cracked over 1,000 points to dive below the 77,000 level on Monday, tracking heavy selling in global equities and a spike in international crude prices. A strong US jobs data, which dampened early rate cut expectations, the rupee logging its steepest single-day fall in nearly two years and unabated foreign fund outflows also dampened investors' sentiment.

#### MARKETS SENSEX 76,330.01 🕹 -1.36% 77,400 Prev close 77,378.9 77,200 77,000-76,800-76,600 76,400 76,200 12:00 pm 3:00 pm 1 US\$ = 86.62 INR

Falling for the fourth straight the session, 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 1,048.90 points or 1.36 et cent to finally settle at 76,330.01. During the day, it plunged 1,129.19 points or 1.45 per cent to 76,249.72.

The NSE Nifty dropped 345.55 points or 1.47 per cent to close at 23,085.95.

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, Zomato cracked nearly 7 per cent. Power Grid, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, NTPC, Tata Motors, Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints, Sun Pharma and UltraTech Cement were the other major laggards.

In contrast, Axis Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consultancy Services and IndusInd Bank were the gainers.



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# **PM Modi inaugurates Z-Morh Tunnel**

### MOHIT KANDHARI 🗖 JAMMU

On his maiden visit to Jammu and Kashmir after the Assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said he will keep the promises he made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and right things will happen at the right time.

Prime Minister Modi also described the union territory as India's "crown," and expressed his desire to see it as "beautiful and prosperous."

Addressing a large gathering soon after inaugurating the strategically important Z-Morh tunnel in the Sonamarg area, Prime Minister, without referring to the issue of restoration of 'statehood to Jammu and Kashmir', said, " You have to believe that this is Modi and he keeps his promises. There is a right time for everything and the right things will happen at the right time".

Welcoming Prime Minister in Sonamarg, Chief Minister Omar had earlier sought Abdullah restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir in his brief speech.

Omar also thanked Prime Minister Modi for visiting Kashmir in the cold weather and said, "We hope that you will come again and again, and join in our happiness.

Referring to the transformation happening across Jammu and Kashmir Modi said that the dream of a developed India will be realized when its crown, Kashmir, is adorned with the jewels of progress. He expressed his desire for Kashmir to become even more beautiful and prosperous.

He emphasized that numerous road and rail connectivity projects are set to be completed in Jammu and Kashmir in the coming days.

The prime minister also paid tribute to seven people, including labourers, who were killed in a terror attack in the area in October 2024.

"First of all, I would like to thank all the brothers who worked in the most difficult circumstances, risking their lives, for the progress of the country and Jammu and Kashmir. Also, seven of our labour colleagues lost their lives but completed this task by overcoming all challenges. Today, I would like to remember the 7 colleagues who have lost their lives," he said.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, MoS PMO Dr Jitendra Singh, MoS MoRTH Ajay Tamta were also present at the inauguration. In his inaugural speech, Nitin Gadkari listed out major infrastructural projects in It will also promote tourism by



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari, J&K Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah during the inauguration of the Z-Morh

the pipeline across Jammu and Kashmir.

After inaugurating the Rs 2,700 crore project, the prime minister went inside the tunnel and interacted with the project officials. He also met the construction workers who worked meticulously amid harsh conditions to complete the tunnel.

Announcing the inauguration of the Sonamarg Tunnel the Prime Minister highlighted that this tunnel will significantly ease the lives of people in Sonamarg, Kargil, and Leh. The 6.5km-long two-lane bi-directional road tunnel between Gagangir and Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district is equipped with a parallel 7.5-metre escape passage for emergencies.

Situated at an altitude of over 8,650 feet above sea level, the tunnel will enhance all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg en route to Leh, bypassing routes prone to landslides and avalanches.

Sonamarg. Emphasising the extensive infrastructure development from Iammu and Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh, the Prime Minister remarked

ensuring year-round connectivity to

that Jammu and Kashmir is becoming a hub of tunnels, high bridges, and ropeways, with some of the world's highest tunnels and highest rail-road bridges being constructed here. The Prime Minister noted the engineering marvel of the Chenab Bridge, where a passenger train trial was recently completed. He mentioned several key projects, including the cable bridge Kashmir's enhancing railway connectivity, the Zojila, Chenani Nashri, and Sonamarg tunnel projects, the

Udhampur-Srinagarand Baramulla rail link project. The Prime Minister also mentioned the schemes for the Shankaracharya Temple, Shivkhori, and Baltal-Amarnath ropeways, as well as the Katra-Delhi expressway. He emphasized that over ?42.000 crore worth of road

connectivity projects are underway in Jammu and Kashmir, including four national highway projects and two ring roads. The Prime Minister remarked that more than 14 tunnels like Sonamarg are being constructed, making Jammu and Kashmir one of the most connected regions in the country.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah stole the show while praising efforts made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in bridging the gap between "Dil (heart) and Delhi

Abdullah said the inauguration of projects like the 'Sonamarg Tunnel' tunnel would bridge the gap between Jammu and Kashmir's "dil' (heart)" and Delhi.

Omar said terrorism will be defeated to ensure peace and development besides safeguarding democracy in

Jammu and Kashmir. Referring to Modi's speech during his visit to Srinagar on International Yoga Day last year, the chief minister said, "My heart says that very soon, you will fulfill your promise to the people of Jammu and Kashmir which is the restoration of statehood to the Union Territory." The chief minister's statehood remark

in the presence of the prime minister was welcomed by the audience with a round of applause.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a "real paradise" and

eradicating terrorism from the region. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the 6.5-km-long Z-Morh tunnel in Central Kashmir, LG Sinha, highlighted the developmental strides J&K has achieved under PM Modi's leadership.

The government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has wiped out terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir and has turned it into a real paradise. Peace, progress, and prosperity have become the hallmarks of his regime," said LG Sinha.

LG Sinha termed the inauguration of the Z-Morh tunnel, built at a cost of Rs 2,700 crore, as a "game changer" for the region. He described the (Z-Morh) tunnel as a "Bhagya Rekha" (lifeline) for Jammu and Kashmir, enabling vear-round connectivity to the picturesque Sonamarg.

This is a day of immense pride. This tunnel will boost connectivity and usher in a new era of economic opportunities for the region," said LG



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration of the Z-Morh tunnel

# **PM Modi to launch Mission Mausa**

Mission

implement

atmospheric

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch 'Mission Mausam' on the occasion of Meteorological India Department 150th Foundation Day on Tuesday, the Prime Minister's Office said on Monday.

Mission Mausam aims to make India a 'weather-ready and climate-smart' nation by developing cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies and systems. He will also release the IMD Vision-2047 document for weather resilience and climate change adaptation. It includes plans for weather forecasting, weather management and climate change mitigation, said the PMO.

The PM will participate in 150th celebrations of Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department on January 14 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. He will

misinformation"

the Union information and

broadcasting minister said,

tagging Meta on X and other

social media platforms.

also address the gathering on Meteorological Department, the Indian Institute of Tropical the occasion," it said. will Meteorology, and the National Mausam high-resolution Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting. Mission Mausam will directly observations, next-generation radars and and benefit numerous sectors, such

to

agriculture,

making in areas such as urban

planning, road and rail transport, offshore operations,

and environmental monitoring

To celebrate the 150th Foundation Day of IMD, a

series of events, activities, and

workshops have been organised

achievements during the past

150 years, its role in making

India climate-resilient, and

demonstrate the role played by

government institutions in

providing various weather and

climate services.

showcase

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IMD's

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satellites, highperformance computers. as It will also focus on improving management, environment, aviation, water the understanding of weather and climate processes, and provide air quality data that will resources, power, tourism, shipping, transport, energy, and health, the communique said, adding that it would also help strategise weather management and intervention enhance data-driven decision-

in the long run. The mission was approved by the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in September 2024. It aimed to boost India's weather and climate-related science, research, and services and better equip stakeholders, including citizens and last-mile users, in tackling extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change.

The ambitious programme, with an outlay of Rs 2,000 crore over two years, will chiefly be implemented by the India

> "People of India reaffirmed their trust in the NDA led by PM Narendra Modi Ji's leadership," he added. Vaishnaw said Zuckerberg's remarks failed to recognise

these efforts and the strong

mandate secured by the Indian

government, and risked undermining the credibility of

"Mr Zuckerberg's claim that

most incumbent governments,

Meta's platforms.

### Soldiers at Siachen glacier now have high-speed internet

### PTI SRINAGAR

Soldiers posted at Siachen glacier, the highest Sglacier, the highest battlefield in the world, can now enjoy high-speed internet services, a telecom company said. In the run-up to Army Day on

January 15, Reliance Jio, in collaboration with the Indian

groundbreaking milestone by successfully deployed plug-extending its 4G and 5G and-play pre-configured network to the Siachen equipment at a forward post, glacier, the company said. leveraging its indigenous full-With support from the Army stack 5G technology. Signallers, Reliance Jio becomes the first telecom "This achievement was made possible in coordination with operator to deliver seamless Army connectivity in this harsh planning to multiple training region," a spokesperson for sessions, the telecom company said configure

Indian Army was pivotal in managing logistics, including airlifting Jio's equipment to Siachen glacier.

"This collaboration ensured connectivity at 16,000 feet in the Karakoram range, an area characterised by extreme conditions with temperatures plummeting to -50 degrees elsius the spokes

Vaishnaw's reality over Zuck's myths on Lok Sabha poll results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw hit back at Facebook founder Mark



he said.

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### CBI get approval to prosecute AAP leader Satyendar Jain

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The CBI on Monday informed a special court it has obtained requisite sanctions from Delhi LG to prosecute AAP leader and Delhi former minister in a Satyendar Jain disproportionate assets' case. The central bureau of investigation (CBI) informed special judge Jitendra Singh, who posted the matter on January 22, observing a supplementary chargesheet was filed against Jain in the case on January 3

under Section 19 of the POC (Prevention of Corruption) Act, has been filed by the IO (investigating officer). The same is taken on record... Be listed for consideration on January 22, 2025," the court said. In November 2024, the CBI in

a status report said the file seeking sanction to file the supplementary chargesheet investigation in the case was was sent to the offices of the complete and the file was sent chief secretary and the Lieutenant Governor (LG).

"Today, a sanction dated The court had noted the CBI's December 31, 2024 for sanction request and asked it sanction request and asked it prosecution of Satyendra Jain to "personally monitor the matter" for the completion of the process in reasonable time. Observing the agency did not maintain the case diary according to the rules, the judge sought a status report from the CBI's deputy inspector general concerned

on November 5, 2024. The judge was informed by the central probe agency that the to the appropriate authority for approval.

### **BSF** shoots Bangladeshi smuggler

### SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

A mid ongoing unease over the Indian efforts to build fence along the international border with Bangladesh the Border Security Force had to open fire reportedly injuring one Bangladeshi cattlesmuggler near the Mathabhanga outpost. The incident took place late on Sunday night. According to Bangladesh newspaper, "Shahidul Islam, 44, has been Bangladesh injured in firing by the BSF in Patgram.

for making a Monday "factually incorrect" statement incumbent that the government in India lost the election in 2024 due to its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zuckerberg, chairman and CEO of Meta Platforms, triggered a row by claiming in a podcast interview that the Indian government lost the election in 2024 due to its weak COVID-19 response. The issue spiralled from the social media platform 'X'. "From free food for 800 Vaishnaw opted for Meta's million, 2.2 billion free

"From free food for

vaccines, and aid to nations Zuckerberg for spreading worldwide during COVID, to leading India as the fastest-"It is disappointing to see growing major economy, PM misinformation from Mr Zuckerberg himself. Let's Modi's decisive 3rd-term victory is a testament to good uphold facts and credibility,' governance and public trust,"

> Vaishnaw said as the world's largest democracy, India conducted the 2024 general election involving more than 640 million (64 crore) voters.

including India in the 2024 elections, lost post-COVID is factually incorrect," the minister said. Appearing on the Joe Rogan podcast, Zuckerberg said 2024

was the big election year around the world and in a lot of countries like India, the incumbents lost the polls.

## Raut, Pawar discuss local polls, seatsharing possibility as INDIA bloc falters

800

#### TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Within days after he announced that his party would go it alone in the forthcoming local body polls, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut met NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar on Monday and discussed the issues relating to the forthcoming the issues relating to the forthcoming local body elections.

In a development that reflected its flexibility to explore the possibility of having seat-sharing for the forthcoming local body polls, Raut called on Sharad Pawar at the latter's residence "Silver Oak" in south Mumbai and their meeting lasted for 25 minutes.

There was official word from either Raut or Pawar as to what transpired at the meeting. However, informed sources in both the parties said that the two leaders deliberated on the issues relating to the local body polls, especially municipal corporation elections in major cities in Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Nagpur, Sambhaji Nagar and Nashik.

Though the Shiv Sena (UBT) has taken a stand that it will contest the local body polls in the state on its own strength, it is unlikely that the Uddhav Thackerayled party will do so, considering that such a move would affect its poll prospects in the municipal corporations in the major cities of the state.

Sharad Pawar has already gone on record saying that the Shiv Sena (UBT)'s

decision to go it alone in the local body polls would have a negative impact on the prospects of all three MVA partners in the polls.

On its part, the Congress' central leadership is expected to reach out to Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray after the Delhi Assembly polls, in which the Thackeray Sena is supporting the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP in its fight against the BJP and the Mallikarjun Kharge-led grand-old party.

The Shiv Sena (UBT)'s announcement that it would go it alone in the local body polls should be seen in the context of the fact that the Opposition MVA is in total disarray after its miserable performance in the recent Maharashtra Assembly polls – in which the Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress, and NCP won 20, 16, and 10 seats, respectively, as against the 230 seats out of the total 288 seats Collectively bagged by the ruling MahaYuti partners – comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) and NCP (Ajit Pawar).

Notwithstanding the Shiv Sena (UBT)'s posturing that it would contest the local body polls on its own strength, the Uddhav Thackeray-led party realises that its stakes are high in the municipal corporations, especially the ones in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Sambhaji Nagar and Nashik and it can ill-afford to take on the might of the ruling MahaYuti-

comprising the BJP, Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and NCP (Ajit Pawar).

In the normal course, the elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and other municipal corporations should have been held in February 2022.

The Shiv Sena, led by Uddhav Thackeray, was ruling the BMC for more than two decades. However, the political equation has changed after the split witness in the Shiv Sena in June last. There are now two Sena factions -one led by Uddhav and the other one by chief minister Eknath Shinde.

It may be recalled that the BMC polls held in 2017 had thrown up a hung house. The Shiv Sena had emerged as the single largest party with 84 seats in the 227-member BMC, followed by BJP-82, Congress- 31, NCP- 9, MNS- 7 and others-- 14. During the first two and a half years in power, the Shiv Sena increased its strength to 94, by inducting among others seven corporators from the Raj Thackeray-led MNS.

In the forthcoming BMC polls, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena will contest the polls in alliance with the NCP and Congress, while the Shindeled Sena will team up with the BJP to contest the crucial polls. The Raj Thackeray-led MNS may have an understanding with the BJP in the BMC polls.

### Delhi Police arrest Gogi-Karalia gang members for extortion operation in NCR

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Crime Branch claimed on Monday to have arrested a key member of the Gogi-Dinesh Karalia gang, who was wanted in three extortion cases lodged across Delhi-NCR.

According to the police on Monday, the gang made extortion calls from Malaysia and Dubai, targeting high-profile businessmen in the region. Acting on a tip-off, a Crime Branch team conducted a raid near Bhagwati Garden Extension and apprehended Sitender Kumar.

"He initially denied any involvement but later, during interrogation, confessed to orchestrating multiple extortion calls along with his associate Ajay, who is currently in Dubai," Special currently in Dubai," Special Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Special Devesh Chandra Srivastava said, adding that Kumar admitted to making extortion calls to prominent businessmen in Delhi's Rohini and Palam areas as well as in Ghaziabad,

demanding crores of rupees.

To intimidate its targets, the gang arranged for associates to fire shots at the residence of a relative of an NRI businessman in Ghaziabad," the officer added.

The gang relied on SIM cards and phones sourced from abroad to avoid detection and ensure anonymity, he said. The gang's activities were coordinated by Ajay and Kumar, who received instructions from associates based in foreign countries, including jailed members of the Gogi-Dinesh Karalia gang. Kumar told the interrogators that Ajay had persuaded him into joining the gang and expanding its extortion operations.

"With his arrest, police worked out three major extortion call-related cases registered at KN Katju Marg, Palam and Masuri in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. Legal provisions related to extortion have been added to these cases," the officer said.

The Gogi-Dinesh Karalia gang has a network, he added.

well-organised network operating both locally and internationally. Extortion calls were made from Malaysia and Dubai to evade law enforcement. Additionally, Additionally, the gang used sharpshooters to intimidate its targets, with logistical support provided by

associates in India. A resident of Haryana's Jhajjar, Kumar completed a polytechnic diploma in 2011 and worked with private firms, before venturing into the moneylending business. After meeting Ajay, a member of the gang, Kumar started indulging in criminal activities, leveraging his financial resources and connections. His involvement in extortion schemes escalated over time, making him a key member of the gang police said.

The officer said police arrested Naveen alias Sonu, the brother of Dinesh Karalia, in an extortion case in December. Further investigations are focused on dismantling the gang's



# **Rahul launches all out attack on Kejriwal at Seelampur rally**

### SAUMYA SHUKLA 📕 NEW DELHI

eader of Opposition (LOP) Leader of Opposition (2007) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday launched an all out attack on AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, even though there were speculations of top leadership avoiding a direct attack on him, questioning his silence on caste census and Indian businessman Gautam Adani in a rally organised in Northeast Delhi's Seelampur. This is notably the first time when the senior leader has directly attacked Kejriwal ahead of the Delhi assembly elections.

Calling caste census a 'revolutionary move, Lok Sabha MP said, "When I talk about caste census, neither Prime Minister Narendra Modi nor former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal

says anything. They both want (MNREGA), Right to Food people who are not privileged to not get involved while we want to ensure 'bhagidari' (participation) of everyone? "Ask Kejriwal if he is with the

caste census or not. I said to Modi ji in Parliament, you do it or not but the day Congress comes to power we will increase reservation and the caste census bill will be passed. We want equality and participation of everyone. We want people to dream big rather than a few businessmen to control everything," he added. Rahul, who has held his first

rally ahead of the Delhi polls, claimed that when it comes to participation, it is only Congress that will give it, be it Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee

and loan waiver for farmers among other welfare schemes. "We will ensure that caste census takes place in Delhi as soon as we form the government here," the senior Congress leader asserted.

He also attacked both the BJP and AAP on rising inflation and increasing divide between the rich and poor. "We do not want an India where the rich own everything be it ports, airports and roads and the poor die of hunger. We do not want such a country and will not let it happen also. While the rich own everything, there is no participation of the poor," he said. "I am asking you if inflation is rising or not? What did Modi and Kejriwal say about it? They assured they will bring it



down but haven't done any-

thing," he added. The LoP also claimed that Kejriwal has never uttered a word about Adani. "They do not utter a word while we clearly say that we don't want

a country of billionaires," he said.

He also attacked the ruling party on corruption, pollution and lack of sanitation in the city. "Do you remember the time when Kejriwal came to

power and said that he will clean Delhi, make it Paris but now see the condition? Pollution is rising. They said they will remove corruption. I am asking you what he did. Like Modi makes fall promises, similarly Kejriwal does and there is no difference," he said, comparing Kejriwal and PM Modi.

He asked the people to vote for Congress, stating that they will preserve the constitution. Taking a dig at BJP's perfor-mance in Lok Sabha elections, Gandhi remarked, "BJP was talking about '400 par' but you know what happened. Modi ji had to bend down to the constitution. This is what we have

Delhi Congress President and party's Badli candidate

Devendra Yadav hailed Rahul Gandhi for raising public's issues. He also alleged that despite the tall promises made by Arvind Kejriwal, he has failed to deliver any. "Above all, about 25 MLAs of the AAP have gone to jail in corruption related cases," he charged. Congress' Ballimaran candidate Harron Yusuf, who has repre-

sented the seat for 22 years, said, "Arvind Kejriwal and Narendra Modi are two sides of the same coin. His ideology is very similar to that of RSS. He has been accustomed to the lavish lifestyle and is intoxicated with power so much that he named Atishi as a temporary Chief Minister. He did not even once come to meet you during the Delhi riots when Rahul Gandhi was here with

you. He was sitting in his lavish 'sheeshmahal' when muslims were being targeted for spreading Covid.

capital 03

While there were talks about a post poll alliance between the Congress and AAP, especially since they were in one in the last Lok Śabha elections, both have however made clear that they are looking for no alliance in Delhi assembly elections. The voting for the polls is slat-ed to be held on February 5 and counting will take place on February 8.

Meanwhile, Kejriwal shared on X, "Today Rahul Gandhi came to Delhi. He abused me a lot. But I will not give any remarks on his statements. His fight is to save Congress and mine is to save the coun-

### HC slams AAP for delay in tabling CAG reports City polls: Cash, liquor, items worth ₹21 Crore seized within week of MCC implementation

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Slamming the AAP led Delhi government for delaying the tabling of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports in the assembly, the Delhi High Court on Monday questioned the government's intent, saying the state government is "dragging its feet" on the issue and this raised doubts about the government's bonafides.

'The way you have dragged your feet raises doubts about your bona fides. You should have promptly forwarded the reports to the Speaker and initiated a discussion in the House. The timeline is clear, you have dragged your feet to prevent the session from happening," a bench headed by Justice Sachin Datta said

He was hearing a petition by the opposition MLAs from BJP, asked if the court could direct the speaker, having the "prerogative", to call a sitting of the assembly when elections were around the corner.

Citing the Delhi High Court observations, the BJP slammed the AAP government and questioned AAP chief Arvind Řejriwal if he considers himself above the Constitution as it



CAG reports in the assembly. to table them in the assembly BJP national spokesperson claiming that there is no need for it. BJP's south Delhi MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said the constitutional scheme requires Ramvir Singh Bidhuri has a government to table reports demanded Chief Minister of the Comptroller and Auditor Atishi's resignation after the General (CAG), which scrutihigh court's observation while nises its revenue and expenses, Gupta said the Kejriwal govbut the AAP dispensation has ernment has been exposed. not done it. "Does he consider In a statement, the AÂP stated himself above the CAG reports have been sent the Constitution?" he posed. to the Delhi Assembly Speaker Trivedi alleged that the "anarfor tabling in the next session

chist character" of the Aam of the Assembly. Beyond this, Aadmi Party (AAP) is pervadwe have no role. ing the constitutional system. During the hearing, Senior Noting that there are almost a counsel for the government dozen reports of the CAG raised an objection over the related to the finances of the and alleged the LG office made Delhi government, he said the

the reports public and shared it with newspapers. "How does it matter?" asked the court.

In the pre-lunch session, Justice Datta also remarked that the Delhi Government should have promptly placed the reports before the Assembly for discussion. The Court also said that calling for a session was the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and questioned if a mandamus could be issued to the Speaker to do the same especially when the elections were around the corner. In the post-lunch session, Senior Advocate Mahesh Jethmalani appeared for the petitioners and took the Court through important dates as well as relevant Rules governing the issue. "We ask for the Delhi Government to comply with its statutory obligations with respect to two issues. CAG reports be forwarded to the LG and to convene a session of the House...," he said. As Jethmalani concluded his submissions, Senior Advocate Rahul Mehra appearing for the other side said that while the matter was sub judice, BJP referred to Court's "dragged its feet" remark in a press conference against the Delhi

Government. "They are using court as an instrument to play political games. Are we going to have a level playing field or is it the way we are going to have elections?" Mehra said. "They are holding a press conference when the matter is sub judice. Please ask them to have some restraint... have some respect for court atleast," he said. The senior counsel for the government accused the petitioners of using court as a "tool for political gain" and urged it to note that they held a press conference when the matter was sub judice. Justice Datta said the court couldn't "react" to the allegation as it was not

concerned with politics. However, the Court remarked that it cannot go into politics and listed the matter for hearing next on January 16. At the last hearing, the Delhi Assembly Secretariat told the court that tabling the CAG reports on city administration in the assembly wouldn't serve any purpose since the assembly's term ends in February. The CAG, in its reports, was critical of some of the AAP-led Delhi government's policies, including its now-scrapped

excise policy for reportedly causing losses to the exchequer.

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The office of the Delhi chief electoral officer (CEO) informed on Monday that in the run-up to the Assembly polls in the capital, cash and other items like liquor, worth more than Rs 21 crore, have been seized by various departments within a week of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) coming into effect.

The MCC was implemented on January 7, immediately after the announcement of the poll schedule. Voting for Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies is scheduled to take place on February 5, with the results set to be declared on February 8. The MCC is a set of guidelines issued by the Election Commission (EC) to ensure free and fair polls. It regulates the conduct of the political parties and candidates, covering areas such as meetings, processions, election manifestoes, polling and general behaviour during the electoral process. According to data provided by the Delhi CEO's office, the highest value of seized items was reported in East Delhi, amounting to Rs 6.83 crore.



South Delhi followed closely with Rs 6.81 crore, while the New Delhi area recorded the lowest seizures worth Rs 3.9 lakh.

In all, items worth Rs 21.89 crore have been confiscated across the capital. This includes Rs 9.8 crore in cash, precious metals worth Rs 6.1 crore, drugs worth Rs 5.05 crore, freebies worth more than Rs 47 lakh and liquor worth over Rs 45 lakh.

Earlier in the day, during an interaction with the media, Delhi Chief Electoral Officer Alice Vaz said preparations for the Assembly polls are pro-gressing smoothly.

Training programmes for the polling personnel have begun and critical data related to nominations, permissions and enforcement activities are being monitored daily, she added. The CEO emphasised the importance of mapping the vuÎnerable and critical polling stations to ensure smooth vot-

'We will follow all the instructions of the Election Commission of India for the mapping of the vulnerable polling stations," she said. Police deployments and security arrangements for the elections are yet to be finalised, Vaz noted

### BJP's Parvesh Verma accuses AAP of failing to fulfill pledge of providing homes to slum dwellers

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

attacked him over the Delhi

 $B^{\rm JP\ New\ Delhi's\ candidate}_{\rm Parvesh\ Verma\ on\ Monday}$ accused AAP of failing to fulfil its pledge of providing homes to slum dwellers and

who is building his own 'Sheesh elections. The remarks by the challenger Mahal by destroying the homes

asked.

of the poor, will he not provide to Kejriwal in his New Delhi homes to these people?" he Assembly seat came after the AAP chief challenged Union The BJP has been taking jibes Home Minister Amit Shah to at Kejriwal and his AAP over withdraw all cases against peonle living jhuggi tle those displaced within 24 hours, vowing not to contest the elections if the BJP complies. Verma also showed documents that purportedly indicated that demolition of slums had been carried out by the AAP-governed Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and slammed the party for "not being able" to resolve the issues facing slum dwellers while shifting blame onto the BJP. One of the slum dwellers, who belongs to the Scheduled Caste, said that they had to submit the money in 15 day. However, after submitting the documents and the money 13 years ago he has not been able to get the homes, he said. Despite not winning any of the 12 SC-reserved seats in 2015 and 2020, the BIP is optimistic about improving its performance in Dalit-dominated con-BJP's win in the upcoming stituencies in Delhi ahead of

'political" nature of the petition,

the February 5 assembly polls through a sustained outreach campaign.

The BJP has conducted extensive outreach in 30 constituencies with significant Dalit voters, deploying senior vorkers and engaging 18,000

Delegation of Jat leaders meets Kejriwal STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI The Jat community remains

**L** a key political force in

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had promised the Jat community of Delhi that they will be given OBC reservation the central level

promise remains unfulfilled,

He pointed out that BJP lead-

ers frequently abuse him, and

has no issue with their abuses.

they want. All I ask is one sim-

They can continue as much as

he added.

copie nave no got houses despite paying large sums of money to the Delhi government under its housing scheme for them. Verma, who has been pitted against AAP Convenor Arvind Kejriwal, was accompanied by affected slum dwellers, who narrated their ordeal.

Ahead of the Delhi assembly elections, the two time former BJP MP slammed the former Delhi chief minister for his repeated claims that the saffron party would demolish all slums in the city if it is voted to power. He also claimed that after the press conference, Kejriwal should declare not contesting the election following AAP chief challenging Union Minister Amit Shah on Sunday. "AAP has made a mockery of the system. They have been lying repeatedly, misguiding the people of Delhi, especially the poor living in jhuggis (slums). I want to ask Kejriwal,

once occupied by the former Delhi chief minister and has dubbed it a 'Sheesh Mahal' for the "lavish spending" on it. Verma alleged that many slum dwellers have paid up to Rs 1 lakh under the housing scheme for them but have not received the homes they were promised. The Delhi government failed to deliver on its commitment, he

claimed. At the press conference, also attended by several slum dwellers affected by the housing issue, Verma presented documents, which he said were obtained through RTI applications, showing that while the government had taken the money under the scheme, the promised flats were never handed over to the applicants. "If Kejriwal cannot keep his promise, I think he should not fight this election," he said, exuding confidence about the

volunteers. The campaign included direct voter contact, meetings with Dalit leaders, and "SC Swabhiman Sammelan" events. The BJP aims to highlight the Modi government's work for Dalits while criticizing the AAP's decadelong governance.

Meanwhile, hitting out at BJP, the AAP claimed that the party has rendered 3 lakh jhuggi' residents shelterless. In contrast, Arvind Kejriwal has tirelessly worked to ensure dignity for 'jhuggi' dwellers-laying sewer lines, providing water, and ensuring electricity in 1,800 unauthorized colonies. Just yesterday, Arvind Kejriwal visited Shakur Basti's Railway Jhuggi Camp, where BJP plans to demolish homes. Their double standards are clear-promising support while betraying the most vulnerable," the party said in a statement.

vying for their support. A delegation of Jat leaders met AAP Chief Arvind Kejriwal, following the party's push to include them in the OBC category, while BJP has fielded Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma to woo rural voters. The battle for Jat votes intensifies ahead of the upcoming elections.

At the meeting with community leaders, Kejriwal accused the BJP of "betraying" the Jats of Delhi over the issue of reservation, asking the party when they will be included in the Centre's list for the Other Backward Classes (OBC).

There are around 8 percent jat voters spread in rural areas bordering Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh and their prominence has been diluted as these regions are transformed into urban suburbs. The Jat community, once a dominant political force in Delhi, has seen its influence wane over time due

to urbanisation, demographic shifts, and changing political dynamics.

In a press conference, AAP Convenor stated, "Today, dozens of Jat leaders came to meet me to express their gratitude for the letter I wrote to the Prime Minister. In the letter, I reminded the Prime Minister of the assurance he gave in 2015 to the Delhi's Jat community. PM Modi had promised that while Delhi's Jat community is included in

Delhi's OBC list, it is not in the central OBC list, and that it would be added to the central

list as well." "Jats from Rajasthan can get admissions in the Delhi University and its colleges, jobs in the AIIMS, Safdarjung Hospital and all the central government organisations but not the Jats of Delhi," the former chief minister said.

"The top two leaders of the country including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and

ple question: When will Delhi's Jat community, already includ-ed in Delhi's OBC list, be added to the central OBC list?" he questioned. The AAP Chief noted that during the election period, the Prime Minister will visit Delhi from time to time, deliver speeches, and address rallies. "I request the Prime Minister to respond to this question: When will the promise he made in 2015 and the assur-

ances given by his Home Minister in 2017, 2019, and 2022 to Delhi's Jat communi-ty be fulfilled? When will they include Delhi's Jat community in the central OBC list?" asked Kejriwal.

## AAP, BJP coming up with memes, posters and spoof videos ahead of Delhi Assembly polls

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are locked in an interesting game online. Both parties are coming up with memes, posters and spoof videos to take a dig at each other ahead of Delhi Assembly Elections. The BJP on Monday posted an image that showed AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal in the attire of 'Mogambo', the iconic villain from the movie Mr India. In the post, BJP has claimed that Arvind Kejriwal has insulted people of Purvanchal region. Less than half an hour after

that, AAP posted a spoof video showing Amrish Puri (same actor who played Mogambo) telling Amit Shah that BJP will not win a single seat in the upcoming elections.

The BJP's social media post on X took a swipe at Kejriwal,

claiming that the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) stance against the Purvanchal region had been exposed. The poster, captioned "Purvanchaliyon se Nafrat ki Aag (fiery hatred against people from Purvanchal)," targets Kejriwal over his alleged insult to the Purvanchali community by terming some voters as "fake." The post read, "AAP's anti-Purvanchal face has been exposed before the whole country! People from UP-Bihar living in Delhi are fake for Arvind Kejriwal. But are Rohingya and Bangladeshi infiltrators his friends?" (AAP

ka purvanchal virodhi chehra poore desh ke saamne benkaab ho chuka hai! Dilli mein reh rahe UP-Bihar ke log Arvind Kejriwal ke liye farji. Rohingya aur Lekin



Bangladeshi ghuspaithiye inke yaar?) In a swift response, AAP fired back with a spoof video. ke haath-pair phool gaye) AAP also hit back with its The video, posted on X, par-odied the BJP's poster and included a fictional converown satirical take, spoofing a sation between Kejriwal and scene from the 1996 Ajay Union Minister Amit Shah. Devgn starrer Diljale.

The parody video posted on X featured a fictional conversation between Amrish Puri's character, Dara, and a deepfake of Union Minister Amit Shah. The spoof video featured the following dialogue: Kejriwal: "Lagta hai. Dilli mein phir aaj

haar saamne dikh raĥi hai. Amit Shah: "Haar ka to mujhe bhi poora darr hai. Lekin abhi mera focus khaata kholne mein hai." Amrish Puri: "Dulha kahaan hai, vision ka hai, sirf gaaliyan hain.

Dilli mein Kejriwal ne kaam karke dikhaya hai aur tumne sirf gaaliyan di hain. Gaaliyan. Dilli ke chunaav mein kaam ki baat hoti hai.

hota hai. Chunaav CM chehre ka hota hai. Kabhi dekhi hai koi bin dulhe ki baraat. Nahi. Kyunki bin neta ke chunaav nahi ladte." Amit Shah: "Lekin

khata to khul sakta hai." Amrish Puri: "Are khata bhool ja, 1 bhi seat bhool ja. Ye mahila bhi tujhe kabhi vote nahi dene wali.

This new poster and video exchange is part of the ongoing "poster-video war" between AAP and BJP. Both parties have been actively posting Bollywood-inspired content, with spoof videos and movie posters taking center stage on their respective social media handles.

Meanwhile BJP shared another poster with a caption, "Arvind Kejriwal is the mastermind behind the Rs 2,026 crore liquor scam.

Both parties have been vying for the powerful Purvanchali vote bank in the national capital.

The BJP also accused the AAP of prioritising illegal settlements of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis in the city.

AAP releases campaign song on occasion of Lohri titled 'Dilli Da Putt Kejriwal' **STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI Delhi and emphasises his

The Aam Aadmi Party on Monday released a campaign song titled 'Dilli Da Putt Kejriwal,' on the occasion of Lohri, urging Delhiites to re-elect Arvind Kejriwal in the upcoming assembly polls. The 1.33 minute Punjabi song features the line, "Is Vaari Sun Lo, Phir Kejriwal Nu Chunn Lo," calling on voters to choose Kejriwal again to ensure the continuation of public welfare schemes and the fulfillment of his promises, a party statement said. The track, released on X has been widely shared by AAP supporters. It highlights Kejriwal's achievements in

vision for the city's development, reflecting the aspirations for progress under his leadership. It underscores key initiatives of the Kejriwal government, such as free electricity, water, and the teerth programs for senior citizens, the statement said.

The song also outlines new guarantees under the AAP's manifesto. These include the Mahila Samman Yojana, which promises Rs 2,100 per month to every woman directly in their bank accounts and the Sanjeevani Yojana, which aims to cover all medical expenses for senior citizens above the age of 60, it added.

CM face hota hai, CM chehra



# Situation along LAC 'sensitive but stable': Army Chief

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi said here on Monday the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is "sensitive but stable.

Addressing a press conference ahead of the Army Day on January 15, he said there is still a "degree" of standoff in the eastern Ladakh region and efforts are needed to restore said the corps commanders have now been delegated powers to resolve "trivial" matters or "minor frictions" relating to trust between the Indian and the Chinese militiaries. patrolling and grazing so that

The Army chief said patrolling and grazing in traditional areas have started in Depsang and Demchok, the two friction points from where the two sides have disengaged in October.

Our deployment is balanced and robust and we are capable of handling any situation, he said. We are focusing on boosting border infrastructure and capability development,

the Army chief said on the overall LAC situation. He said there is still a "degree"

constructions, made deployment of troops and resorted to stocking of military hardware. of standoff between the Indian Therefore, what it means is and Chinese militaries along that there is (still) a degree of the LAC in eastern Ladakh and standoff. Now as you have both sides need to sit down and changed the situation after firm up a broader understand-April 2020, so the trust between the two countries has to have ing on how to calm down the situation. General Dwivedi, a new definition," the Army describing the situation in the region as "sensitive but stable", chief said. "Therefore, there is a require-

ment for us to sit together and thereafter come to a broader understanding of how we want to calm down the situation and restore the trust," he said.

they do not become "big" issues General Dwivedi said the Army is looking forward to the The Army chief also said next meeting of the Special there was no such thing called Representatives on the boundbuffer zones as a temporary ary question of the two counmoratorium was put on tries as well as talks under the framework of WMCC (Working Mechanism for patrolling in certain areas to Delving into changes witness-Consultation and Coordination) on India-China ing the region since the face-off began in April 2020, General border affairs. "We will be moving forward based on the Dwivedi said both sides "docguidance emerging from the tored" the terrain, carried out



gins of the BRICS Summit in meetings," he said. Following an understanding reached on October 21 last year, 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 mar-

Russia on October 23 and agreed to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms, signalling an intention to normalise the relations. Last month, National Security Advisor(NSA)Ajit Doval trav-

elled to Beijing and held Special Representatives talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the boundary dis-

As you are aware, the situation is sensitive but stable. In October 2024, the situation in Depsang and Demchok in eastern Ladakh was resolved," General Dwivedi said.

"The patrolling to traditional areas in these two sub-sectors has commenced. Similarly, the traditional grazing has also commenced in these two areas," he added.

Calling India's military deploy-ment along the LAC as "bal-anced and robust", he said the Army is "well poised" to deal with any situation.

"A focused capability development for northern borders enabled infusion of niche technology into a war-fighting syshe said. tem,'

Asked about the creation of buffer zones as part of disengagement process at certain friction points, Dwivedi said the terminology was used for temporary moratorium on lvanmar

It means that both sides will remain back and will not go to progress on this," he said. the common areas because we still feel that if we meet at those places, the violence level may go high. The terminology was used for temporary moratori-

um," he explained. On the situation in Manipur, the Army chief said "synergised efforts" by security forces and "proactive" government initia-tives have brought the situation

patrolling.

in the state under control. "However, cyclic incidents of violence continue. We are working towards establishing peace in the region," he said. General Dwivedi said various NGOs and Army veterans are reaching out to the community leaders in an attempt to

nsure reconciliation. He said the Army has put in place "enhanced surveillance" and "domination" along the India-Myanmar border to insulate the areas from a "spillover of turbulence" taking place in said

"Fencing is a significant step and we have started new

nation 04

As regards Jammu and Kashmir, the Army chief said the situation is "firmly" under control and the 2021 "ceasefire" with the Pakistan military on the Line of Control (LoC) was holding up. At the same time he said: "The violence level is being orchestrated by the epicentre of terrorism that is

Pakistan." The Chief of Army Staff said infiltration attempts are continuing including at the IB (International Border) sector along with attempts to smuggle in war-like stores and narcotics.

"Last year, 60 per cent of ter-rorists eliminated were of Pakistan origin. As of today, whatever is a remnant in the Valley and Jammu area, we feel that around 80 per cent or more are of Pakistan origin," he

gibility to vote has an age fac-

tor and those below that age are

not entitled to reflect them-

selves. Therefore it is not very

idealistic, but it is very close to

idealism. So Parliament reflects

the will of the people," he said. One of Parliament's powers is

to hold the executive account-

able. He said the executive is held accountable only through

a parliamentary mechanism

which is based on dialogue,

debate, discussion and delib-

He said Parliament is not a

place for a free fall of informa-

tion and not a place to settle

scores with people or institu-

tions that cannot have their say

eration.

in Parliament.

### CDS urges youth of India to never give up in their journey of life

later.

avoid chances of violence.



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

Chief of Defence Staff(CDS)General Anil Chauhan on Monday urged the youth of India to never ever give up in their journey of life, underlining that "a bend in a road is not the end of the road". Addressing a gathering of cadets and officers during his visit to the ongoing National Cadet Corps (NCC) Republic Day Camp at Delhi Cantonment, he also said the country's youth will contribute towards reaching the goal of becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 and they will also be the largest beneficiary of it.

General Chauhan said January is a month of festivities and Tuesday is Veterans' Day fol-Army Day on January 15.

try will contribute towards reaching that goal and will also be the largest beneficiary

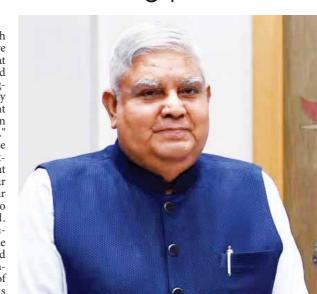
of it," he said. The CDS said he was sure that "as a nation we will be able to achieve this goal or dream of being a Viksit Bharat by 2047". The momentum will take it as the mass exists and the velocity is the vector which coupled with it, will help achieve the target, he added.

General Chauhan said the country's youth will provide the speed and the direction will be provided by the senior leader-

The CDS also offered some life lessons to the cadets and through them to the youth of the country. "Destiny and success is not preordained, you have to work for it. It is often chance, it is by choice. And, for success DTP GMDA R. S. Batth with you will have to work hard to his team including ATP Mange Raam with four earth achieve it," he asserted. "There will be ups and downs movers and 50 police persons in life. So, remember a bend in held the demolition drive. a road is not the end of the About 12 acres rea was road," the CDS said. In his cleared by GMDA by removaddress, he also quoted lines ing big nurseries and illegal from a poem 'If' by Rudyard parking and building mater-Kipling and recited poetry ial. Nurseries developed 'Koshish Karne Walon ki Haar across four acres and building Nahin Hoti' by Sohanlal materials spread across three Dwivedi. acres were cleared. "That is the message I want to In the drive DTP GMDA also leave with you, 'koshish karne got the building material that walon ki kabhi haar nahin was encroaching green belts mixed by earth movers and hoti'. So, never, never, ever give up," the CDS said. thereafter all concerned requested for one day time to General Chauhan during his visit to the NCC R-Day Camp remove all material. also visited the 'flag area', the Additionally, about five per-NCC Hall of Fame and also manent rooms and 10 teminteracted with a few cadets porary structures were also before being treated to some removed. GMDA looks after colourful cultural perforthe important stretches and mances by groups of cadets major sector dividing roads from different directorates of and green belts in gurugram. the Corps. Recently the Enforcement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE electronic voting machines. Addressing a book launch event, Dhankhar said "We have Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday here lauded the Election Commission(EC)for holding polls that have earned global accolades, saying there will always be an urge to criticise it to get the best of it. He also said the independence of the poll panel is never a casualty as the bureaucracy is so trained and the election machinery so greased and greased His remarks came against the backdrop of the opposition's attacks on the EC over alleged

an Election Commission that has worked. And it has worked in a fashion that global recognition is coming to it. Many countries in the world want their elections to be overseen by our Election Commission.' There will always be, the vice president said, an urge to criticise to get the best of it. "But we all are assured because our bureaucracy is so trained. Our election machinery is so and fuelled. Independence is never a casualty". Dhankhar, who is also the Rajya Sabha chairperson, said a functional Parliament is quintessential to the survival of democracy because it is



Ramesh's petition challenging tweaking of election rules to come up for hearing on Wednesday

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh's writ petition in the Supreme Court challenging the recent amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, will come up for hearing in the apex court on Wednesday. The matter will

Dhankhar lauds EC for conducting polls that earned global accolades tation of the people. "... Most possible because eli-Parliament that allows the

power of expression. "A power of expression where no one can question. What you say in Parliament, you are immunised from any other concern, you can't be taken to civil court, you can't be taken to civil court, you can't feel cul-pability in it. When you have that supreme authority, that no matter what you say in Parliament, no citizen of this country can take recourse to law if they are hurt," he said explaining parliamentary privileges. He said it puts a heavy obligation on Parliament itself. The privileges come with "heavy responsibility," he

explained. The vice president opined that Parliament is the "most possible" platform for the represen-

India signs Hajj agreement with Saudi Arabia, finalises quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims





allegations of fudges voter turnout data and the efficacy of GMDA Enforcement Wing acts heavily on

encroachment at SPR

STAFF REPORTER GURUGRAM

fuelled

The Enforcement Wing of the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) on Monday acted heavily on encroschment on SPR where encroachment on SPR wherein 12 acres of green belt area



Then comes the Republic Day on January 26 and immediately next day the prime minister's rally happens at the NCC R-Day Camp, he said, adding, "this is symbolic of the fact that future of a nation rests with the youth of the country' A total of 2,361 NCC cadets

from across the country are taking part in the month-long camp, which began on December 30. The annual event is also witnessing the participation of 917 girl cadets, the largest so far.

Out of the total number of cadets, 114 are from Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and 178 from the northeast region.

General Chauhan said youths are the microcosm of the society, a demographic truth, a statistical reality. "The nation desires to be a Viksit Bharat by 2047. The youth of the coun-

g of GMDA led by DTF GMĎA, R.S. Baath assured that entire SPR of about 12 km length from national highway to Ghata will be cleared by 31 st January.

Though efforts were made earlier however now strict enforcement drives will be conducted and systematic ways will be worked out to make the area greener.

Earlier Minister of Environment and Industry Minister Rao Narbir Singh also directed that SPR road must be made clean and green.

Furthermore, CEO GMDA also directed DTP GMDA to work on important roads and green belts on top priority to further enhance the development and infrastructure.

DTP R.S. Batth also visited surrounding area and directed all to remove the encroachment in 24 hours and drive will be continued.

bench headed by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna on January 15, according to the cause list uploaded on the Supreme Court website. The Congress had filed the

writ petition in the Supreme Court last month challenging the recent amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 and expressed hope that the apex court will help restore the "fast eroding" integrity of the electoral process.

The government has tweaked an election rule to prevent public inspection of certain electronic documents such as CCTV camera and webcasting footage as well as video recordings of candidates to prevent their misuse. AICC general sec-retary Jairam Ramesh, who has filed the petition, had said, "The integrity of the electoral process is fast eroding. Hopefully the Supreme Court will help restore it.

"A writ has just been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the recent amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961," he had said earlier in a post on X.

Ramesh had said the Election Commission, a Constitutional body charged with the conduct of free and fair elections cannot be allowed to unilaterally, and without public consultation, amend such a vital law in such a brazen manner.

"This is especially true when that amendment does away with public access to essential information that makes the electoral process more transparent and accountable," he had said.Based on the recommendation of the Election Commission of India, the Union law ministry in December amended Rule 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, to restrict the type of "papers" or documents open to public inspection.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ndia on Monday signed a Haj agreement with Saudi Arabia, finalising a quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims for itself. Ministry of Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju signed the agreement with Saudi Arabia's Minister for Hajj and Umrah Tawfiq Bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah in Jeddah. "Haj Agreement 2025 signed with Tawfiq Bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, Minister for Hajj and Umrah of Kindom of Saudi Arabia. Finalized a quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims from India for Haj 2025. We are committed to providing the best possible services to all our Haj pilgrims," Rijiju said in a social media post.

"In the meeting with Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al Rabiah, Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah,

we discussed important matters related to Hajj 2025 and explored steps to further improve the pilgrimage experience for Indian pilgrims. It will also strengthen our bilateral relation," the minister said. Reacting to the development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he welcomes this agreement, which is a "wonderful news" for Hajj pilgrims from India. He said, "Our Government is committed to ensuring improved pilgrimage experiences for devotees." In a written reply to a question

in the Raiva Sabha last month. Rijiju said that for the year 2025, the quota has been distributed within the same range between HCoI and HGOs, in the ratio of 70:30, which has been communicated vide the Haj Policy-2025 issued on August 5, 2024.

# Army Day Parade to see participation of all-girl marching contingent from NCC

### PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

The Army Day Parade this year will see participation of an all-girl marching contingent from the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and showcasing of four thematic tableaux, including one based on the force's Mission Olympics Wing. An all-women Agniveer contingent from the Corps of Military Police (CMP), Centre and School at Bengaluru, and a set of marching 'robotic mules' will also register their presence at the prestigious annual parade for the first time, defence sources said. The Army Day Parade will take place at Bombay Engineering Group (BEG) and Centre in Maharashtra's Pune on January 15 which comes under the Army's Southern Command. In the evening, a programme

called 'Gaurav Gatha' is

planned to be held showcasing

the evolution of welfare from ancient period to the contemthis event, the sources said. The theme for the 77th Army Day celebrations is 'Samarth Bharat, Saksham Sena', and the focus this time is to demon-Army contributing to a stronger nation.

porary era. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is likely to grace strate the capabilities of the Some of the platforms that will

be showcased during the parade include K9 Vajra selfpropelled howitzer, BMP-2 Sarath infantry combat vehicle. T-90 tanks, Swathi weapon locating radar, Sarvatra Bridging System, Multi-Barrel

Rocket System, ATOR N1200 all-terrain vehicle, drone jammer systems and mobile communication nodes, sources in the defence establishment said. "This year's parade will include an all-girl contingent of the

NCC and an all-women

Agniveer contingent from the Corps of Military Police centre in Bengaluru and both will be taking part in the Army Day Parade for the first time," a defence source said. Besides, "12 robotic mules'

standing in two equal rows followed by their handlers will also be taking part in the parade for the very first time. These mules were inducted last year and represent the Army's steps towards modernisation of the force. These nimble-footed machines can carry loads, go to inaccessible areas and engage militants also, they said.

"While marching, when they reach in front of the dais, the robotic mules will salute the dignitaries before carrying forward in the parade," the source added.

Also, in line with the the theme of the parade, four tableaux akin to the ones seen



at the Republic Day Parade will also be showcased depicting the Indian Army's prowess, green initiatives, the value of the veterans and the force's role in fostering the Olympic spirit to produce winners," the source told PTI.

As per the plan, the tableau depicting the Army's Mission Olympics Wing will be the leading tableau and one

themed on technology absorption in the last one decade will be the last in the series, an official said.

The Indian Army's Mission Olympics Wing was established in 2001 under which a large number of sportspersons are training at various different sports nodes in the country. Besides, there are total of many Boys Sports companies and

Girls Sports companies for nurturing the talent from young age (9-16 years).

Additionally, a Paralympic Node was earlier established to motivate and train soldiers with any disability for paralympic sports.

The Mission Olympics tableau will show moving depiction of athletes doing fencing, wrestling aboard it and some paralympic athletes who have brought laurels for the country, while some members of the Army Sports Institute, Pune, will be walking on ground alongside the tableau," the source said.

The next in line will be the veterans' tableau depicting their contribution to nation-building even after they have hung their boots.

Paralympic athlete and Army veteran Murlikant Petkar, who had earned a gold medal in swimming (in 1972) and on

whose life the film 'Chandu Champion' was based, will also be part of the parade through the tableau, he added

Another tableau will portray the Army's efforts in adopting green measures to contribute towards achieving net-zero emission, including the achievement by Pune's College of Military Engineering in this field, officials said.

The fourth tableau's theme is on technology absorption, the cutting-edge technology inducted by the Army in the last decade such as drones, nano technology, UAVs and tethered drones will be showcased in it, they said.

The Army has declared 2024-25 as the 'year of technology absorption'.

In the run-up to the Army Day Parade, several events such as display by a dog squad, exhibition of weapons and equipments, and defence companies area

putting up stalls were held at various locations falling with the Southern Command area. The Southern Command traces its origin to the erstwhile Bombay Command established on April 1, 1895, the day which marks the raising of the command in Pune (then called Poona).

The Southern Command encompasses 11 states and four Union Territories covering nearly 41 per cent of the country's landmass, according to its official website.

Traditionally, the annual Army Day Parade had been held in Deĺhi. This long-standing practice saw a shift in January 2023 when the parade was conducted in Bengaluru, which comes in the Southern Command area.

The Army Day Parade 2024 was hosted in Lucknow, which falls in the Central Command



## nation 05

# **MAHAKUMBH 2025: SPECIAL COVERAGE**



# **PM Modi welcomes Maha Kumbh 2025**

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

As Maha Kumbh began in the holy City of Prayagraj on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described it as a very special day for

those who cherish Indian values and culture, saying the massive religious event embodies India's timeless spiritual heritage.

"A very special day for crores of people who cherish Bharatiya values and culture! Maha Kumbh

2025 commences in Prayagraj, bringing together countless people in a sacred confluence of faith, devotion and culture. The Maha Kumbh embodies India's timeless

social media post.

The prime minister said he was happy to see Prayagraj abuzz, with countless people coming there, taking the holy dip and seeking spiritual heritage and celebrates blessings. He wished the pilgrims faith and harmony," he said in a and tourists a wonderful stay.





Unique themed entry

gates captivate devotees

BISWAJEET BANERJEE MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Akhara area at Mahakumbh 2025 is a sight to behold. Camps for various organisations, including the Akharas, Khak Chowk, Dandiwada, Acharyawada, and Prayagwal, are fully set up and adorned with vibrant decorations

While the camps are beautifully designed as always, this year, the entry gates are stealing the spotlight with their unique and

thematic designs. Themed entry gates across the Mela area go beyond being visually stunning, serving as markers of identity, helping pilgrims locate and reach specific

organisations. CM Yogi Adityanath's vision of making Mahakumbh more grand and divine than ever is clearly visible in the Akhara area. Various Akharas and organizations have not only enriched their camps spiritually, but have also designed their entry gates with distinctive themes. Located near Jhunsi, these gates come in various designs,

and Shivlings, crowns the enhancing overall grandeur of the camps. The artisans behind these gates have come from all across India, including Kolkata, Varanasi, and South India. According to the artists, it took them 10 to 15 days to construct these gates, with costs running into lakhs of rupees. These gates serve a dual purpose: they enhance the aesthetic appeal of the camps and act as identifiers, helping pilgrims locate specific camps in the sprawling Mela area.

including airplane models,



**UP Police ensure robust security** 

## Dome city promises hill-station experience for visitors

BISWAJEET BANERJEE MAHAKUMBH NAGAF

This year's Maha Kumbh has an L extraordinary addition: the stateof-the-art Dome City in Arail. Designed to provide an unparalleled blend of luxury and spirituality, this ambitious project by Evo Life Space in collaboration with the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department promises visitors an experience reminiscent of a hill station.

'For the first time, pilgrims will have access to accommodations that combine modern comfort with the serene spirituality of the Kumbh. Dome City is not just a facility; it is at will experience lasting impression," said Amit Johari, Director of Evo Life Space.



Government's vision

During a visit to Prayagraj on December 23, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inspected the Dome City and lauded its potential. "This initiative is a testament to our efforts to make the Maha Kumbh a globally renowned event. It sets a new benchmark for hospitality and spiritual tourism,' he said.

Shishir Singh, a government spokesperson, highlighted the broader vision. "The Dome City is an example of how we are elevating the Maha Kumbh experience. It is not just about accommodations but about redefining tourism standards

#### BISWAJEET BANERJEE MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

On Monday, the Uttar Pradesh Police intensified security and crowd management measures at the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, one of the world's largest human congregations. Police personnel, including mounted units, patrolled the grounds to ensure a seamless and secure experience for devotees flocking to the Triveni Sangam for the auspicious Paush Purnima Snan. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Vaibhav Krishna said over 10,000 personnel from local police stations, paramilitary forces, and specialized units have been deployed for the event. Speaking to ANI, he noted

that approximately 60 lakh devotees had already taken the holy dip, and final figures said. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rajesh Dwivedi would be released later. added

continued to arrive in large "The arrangements made by the police are functioning well. Crowd regulations, traffic diversions, and parking accommodations are being efficiently managed. We are fully prepared to address any challenges," DIG Krishna stated. Additional Director General (ADG) Bhanu Bhaskar these sentiments, echoed emphasizing the preparedness of the police preparedness of the police force. "The fair administration is fully alert, with all forces deployed since an additional layer of security at the sprevide 3 a.m. Bathing ghats are under constant surveillance,

numbers throughout the day. "The ghats are fully occupied, and the first day of the Maha Kumbh is peacefully. monitoring the influx and ensuring a safe environment for all," he said. In a notable upgrade, five American Warmblood horses

worth ?1.5 crore have been deployed for mounted police patrols. Known for their at the and there have been no reported issues so far," he

grounds. Prime Minister Modi Lauds Maha Kumbh 2025

devotees

proceeding We are

sprawling Mela

that

A Unique concept Elevated 15 to 18 feet above ground, Dome City comprises 44 uniquely designed domes, each measuring 32x32 feet. Constructed with 360degree polycarbonate sheets, these domes are bulletproof and fireproof, ensuring safety and comfort.

"Visitors can enjoy the panoramic views of the Kumbh from the domes while feeling as if they're in a hill station," Johari explained. "It's an effort to redefine how people experience the Maha Kumbh.

Mukesh Meshram, Secretary of the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department, emphasized the innovative vision behind Dome City. "The Maha Kumbh is not just a religious event; it is a global gathering.

This Dome City concept adds a modern dimension to its timeless spiritual framework is very appeal, making it accessible to a appealing to international visitors."



broader audience, inclu international tourists," he said. including The domes city will feature 176 airconditioned cottages equipped with amenities like geysers and provisions for satvik (pure vegetarian) meals. These 16x16-foot cottages are priced at ?1.1 lakh per day during peak bathing days and ?81,000 on other days.

Travel agents are already witnessing interest in the bookings. "We have received numerous inquiries, especially from NRIs and tourists looking for a unique way to experience the Kumbh," said Pankaj Sharma, a Prayagraj-based tour operator.

"This concept of luxury within a

Online bookings for both domes and cottages have commenced. "We encourage early reservations as demand is expected to peak closer to the event," added Sharma. The Dome City will also host cultural and spiritual programs, including religious discourses, yoga sessions, and live musical performances. "Our goal is to enhance the spiritual environment

while ensuring visitors have an engaging cultural experience," said Iohari.

Meshram echoed this sentiment, stating, "Dome City reflects our commitment to combining tradition with innovation. Visitors can immerse themselves in the spiritual energy of the Kumbh while enjoying modern conveniences."

Tour operators believe this initiative will place Prayagraj firmly on the global tourism map. "Dome City offers a chance for visitors to experience the Kumbh in a way that has never been done before. It will attract both pilgrims and leisure tourists looking for a unique spiritual getaway," said Sunita Verma, a Delhi-based travel consultant.

With its innovative design and luxurious amenities, Dome City is poised to revolutionize the Maha Kumbh experience.

'This is not just about luxury; it is about creating memories that resonate with the soul," concluded Johari.

As the countdown to Maha Kumbh 2025 begins, Prayagraj is ready to welcome the world to an unforgettable journey of faith, culture, and comfort.

# Kumbh becomes a global spiritual hub and symbol of world unity

#### BISWAJEET BANERJEE MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Maha Kumbh has emerged as a global epi-center of faith and a symbol of world unity.

Pilgrims from across India and countries like the United States, Russia, Germany, Italy, and Ecuador were captivated by the grandeur of Sanatan culture. They took holy dips at the Sangam, donned tilaks, and strolled along the sacred sands.

The atmosphere was charged with chants of "Jai Shri Ram" and "Har Har Gange," echoing in Spanish, Russian, German, and French.

This year, the Sangam Ghat has transformed into a major spiritual and cultural attraction for the world. Visitors, both Indian and international, described it as a center for profound experiences. Christina from

Germany shared, "Being here brings immense peace to my soul.

I had heard about the Maha Kumbh, but experiencing it is unforgettable." Christina, born in Ecuador, later moved to Germany with her

parents. Her companions from Ecuador also expressed admiration for India's spirituality, saying, "Taking a dip in the Ganga feels like washing away all sins.'

### New Yorker Coby Halperin Discovers India's Cultural Depth

Fashion designer Coby Halperin from New York called the Maha Kumbh a life-changing experience. "Witnessing India's culture and traditions in such a grand form is entirely new for me.

The Maha Kumbh has given me an opportunity to understand Indian culture deeply. This event is not just



spiritual but also culturally inspiring," he said.

#### Life-Changing Experience for Russia's Miĥhail

Mikhail and his friends from Russia chanted "Har Har Gange" after taking a holy dip at the Sangam.

"I had read about the Maha Kumbh, but witnessing its scale and divinity is the most beautiful experience of my life," said Mikhail. "It's a moment we will never forget.'

### Pilgrims from Italy and Australia Hail the World's Largest Gathering

Paulo from Italy, along with his 12-member group, bathed at the Sangam and praised the Uttar Pradesh government's arrangements. An event of this scale is unimaginable anywhere else in the world. It showcases India's greatness. leadership The

(referring to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath) deserves appreciation," Paulo said. Similarly, Alex from Australia, inspired by his friends in Germany friends in Germany, attended the Maha Kumbh and described it as the most memorable experience of his life.

This year's Maha Kumbh has not only drawn Indian devotees but also attracted thousands of international tourists and spiritual seekers.

Visitors from around the world came to experience Indian culture, spirituality, and the sacred significance

of the Ganga. The event stands as a testament to India's rich traditions and also serves as a convergence point for global unity and spirituality. The Maha Kumbh has captivated the world, firmly establishing itself as a symbol of India's cultural here and spiritual heritage.



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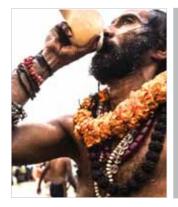
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### -PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Confluence of faith**

Truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience, the Maha Kumbh celebrates India's unity, diversity and enduring spiritual heritage

here are fairs and festivals but none like Maha Kumbh, a once-in-a-lifetime event that is as spiritual as it is eventful, showcasing tenacity, modernity, culture and human will to endure-all at the same time. The Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, the world's largest religious congregation, began on January 13 in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, drawing millions of devotees to the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers. This event is expected to host over 45 crore pilgrims, including 15 lakh from foreign nations, over its 45-day span. The Maha Kumbh is a deeply spiritual event, rooted in ancient Hindu traditions. The ritual of taking a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam is believed to cleanse one of sins and pave the way for salvation (moksha). This grand gathering is a testament to India's enduring spiritual heritage and celebrates the unity and diversity of its cultural fabric. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi noted, the Maha Kumbh is a "sacred confluence of faith, devotion, and culture." The Uttar Pradesh



government, in collaboration with central agencies, has made extensive preparations to accommodate the unprecedented number of pilgrims. The state has allocated a budget of Rs 7,000 crore for the event, focusing on sanitation, security, and technological integra-

tion. Like any mega event Maha Kumbh is also not free from fear of mishaps especially stampedes which have happened in the past. To avoid that, there have to be elaborate security arrangements especially on the designated bathing days. The State government has deployed Al-enabled cameras, underwater drones for 24/7 monitoring, and teams from PAC, NDRF, and SDRF for

crowd and water safety are on the watch. A first-of-its-kind initiative featuring digital monitoring systems to streamline crowd management and enhance safety has also been put in place. Besides, this time expansion of ghats, installation of remote life-saving buoys, and a fleet of 700 flagged boats have been made to ensure smooth movement and safety of devotees. Maha Kumbh's appeal lies in its fusion of ancient spirituality with modern infrastructure. This year's 'mela' exemplifies this synergy, blending cutting-edge technology with age-old rituals. The congregation serves as a melting pot for devotees, saints, and tourists, creating a vibrant tapestry of faith and culture. On Paush Purnima, the first 'Shahi Snan' witnessed more than 40 lakh devotees taking a holy dip at the Sangam. The ceremonial bath marks the beginning of the 'mela,' symbolising the purification of body and soul. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath welcomed devotees, emphasizing the event as a celebration of 'unity in diversity' and the blending of faith with modernity. With meticulous planning and unwavering commitment, Maha Kumbh 2025 stands as a shining example of India's ability to honour its spiritual roots while embracing technological advancements. As the Maha Kumbh unfolds, it offers a transformative experience to millions who seek spiritual solace and cultural enrichment.



# The calculus behind global invitations



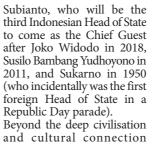
BHOPINDER SINGH

The guest list of Republic day, over the years has reflected India's growing global aspirations, balancing diplomacy with pragmatism

eyond the obvious suggestions of bilateral bonhomie and relationship, there is an invisible calculus of cold strategy in inviting foreign Heads of State to events like the Republic Day, in the Indian context. This year, the President of Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto, graces the occasion. Last year it was the French President, Emmanuel Macron, who heads what the Hudson Institute has described as "India's new best friend". This is unsurprising, given that France was one of the rare countries to avoid condemning India's nuclear test (later emerged as amongst the foremost nuclear fuel and reactor suppliers), supports Delhi's bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations, besides offering strategic defence platforms like Rafale fighters, Scorpène submarines etc.

Before Macron it was the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (reviving memories of Nehru-Nasser era) whose visit signified India's increased leverage within Ummah (Islamic world), negating Pakistan's ageold rhetoric. Still earlier were stal-warts from BRICS comity i.e., Brazil and South Africa, which was reflective of India's expanded outreach and ambition to assert its strategic independence, beyond superpower-led 'Blocs'. But one region that has increasingly concerned India in terms of the duality of opportunities and threats, is from the East feeding its 'Act East' (evolved from prior 'Look East') policy.

Part of the opportunities is to stitch alliances and further the latent opportunities of the prosperous ASEAN region, and part of its security concern is the shared fear of China's expansionism which makes these Eastern countries, natural allies with India. Therefore the 2018 guest list for the Republic Day parade was a virtual who's who of Heads of State under the commemorative theme 'Shared Values, Common Destiny' from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos,



between the two Asian countries, Indonesia as the world's largest Muslim population country with institutionalised tenets of religious tolerance and diversities, has much in common with India. But perhaps the most significant commonality is the wounded history with China as the purge unleashed by Indonesian dictator and strongman, Suharto (killing between 0.5 to 1 million communists, also banning Chinese literature, culture and diplomatic relations) took decades for the Sino-Indonesian diplomatic rela-

tions to reopen in 1990. But it is the brazen Chinese claims of territorial usurpation in the South China Seas that affect Indonesia the most, especially with its sovereignty over the Natuna Islands getting repeatedly punctured by Chinese transgressions. China's infamous nine-dash line formulation has consumed the waters of the Natuna Islands from a cartographical sense, even though the Permanent Court of Arbitration Kuling validated Indonesian claims. But it is an issue that remains testy with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto

recently signing a memorandum of understanding with the Chinese for "joint maritime development" whilst acknowledging an "overlapping claim" – it was a move of acknowledgement that was slammed by many international commentators who believe it gave credence and support to Chinese claims.

That said, the usually unconcerned Indonesians who had warmed up to the Chinese with its Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) largesse and other investments are gradually becoming more Sino-wary and concerned. The visit of the Indonesian President to India will be carefully watched in Beijing for what is said or suggested during the visit. Besides the Chinese angularity, there are enough commercial and diplomatic stakes to be tapped bilaterally, which chooses the Indonesian Head of State, very apt and strategic.

UNDER THE However, across the oceans, it is the guest list of invitees for COMMEMORATIVE the swearing-in of the 47th THEME President of the United States (20th Jan) that is raising eye-'SHARED VALUES. brows, about the unpredictability of the Trump 1.0.2 COMMON DESTINY' tenure, that it signifies. Reportedly the Trump-Vance Inaugural Committee has raised an unbelievable \$170 million (compared to \$107 in 2016) from the deep-pocketed donors and corporations

avoidance of Head of State to US Presidential swearing-in) that is extremely disconcerting, for it includes ideological hard right-wingers like Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Argentinian President Javier Milei, El Salvador President Nayib Bukele, Hungarian President Viktor Orban, ousted Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and French farright leader Eric Zemmour! But the strangest invite was to the Chinese President Xi Jinping, onto whom his Presidential campaign diatribe and threats were ostensibly directed. Xi tellingly declined and may instead send some other official.

The much-believed invite to the Indian Prime Minister never came, and it will be left to the External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar, to represent the Indian government, as per the invite received. Another notable omission has been the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky who went public in expressing interest to attend the same but hasn't received the invite. Trump's unsaid 'frenemy' Vladimir Putin would be smiling at emerging signals from Washington DC. US Ambassador to India's reassurance given the "crowded swearing-in ceremony" doesn't seem too convincing or

reassuring.

vialaysia, Niyanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. This year's guest is yet again the

who presumably seek to curry favour with him at the jamboree. But it is the personal invite list of Trump (doing away with the traditional

(Ine writer, a military veter an, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

Devotees take a holy dip at Sangam on the first day of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, in Prayag

# How to give a golden touch to the silver years



Old age often conjures images of frailty, dependence and withdrawal. But it can be a second bloom—a chance to embrace life with renewed vigour

ohn and Hazel are a couple in their eighties. They were our neighbours at a mountain resort in Germany and were on a two-week holiday. They had come from the UK, driving nonstop for hours. They went hiking in the woods, drove to nearby places of interest even on snowy and rainy days without cursing the weather, made their own breakfast in their room instead of indulging in the buffet, and seemed to be having the best of their times. When I spoke to them, I saw how enthused they were about their retired lives, looking forward to travelling more, seeing more places on earth, and not once did they mention any discomfort that might be commonplace at their age: creaking knees, waning memory, shivering hands, feeble limbs. This is the kind of old age I

wish for myself and my spouse. Though, truth be told, 'wish' feels more honest than 'envisage' because I am unsure if I will see the world that far ahead. Pushing my mid-fifties, I am already troubled by the thought of a frail old age where my body might fail me, denying me the equated with quietude, protein intake and essential



chance to drink life to the lees. Health issues have started giving me early warnings. And every time I travel to the West and see people older than me by a few decades living with independence, engagement, and joy, I am overcome not with envy but with wonder-and a quiet determination.

Why do we, in India, not envision such a golden old age for ourselves? Why do we resign ourselves so early to physical decline, social withdrawal, and the weight of ailments? Somewhere along the way, we have been conditioned to expect aging as a slow retreat from life rather than an opportunity for a sec-

ond bloom. Part of it lies in

our cultural mindset, per-

haps-where old age is often

dependence, and spiritual pursuits.

> În contrast, many Western cultures emphasise personal fulfillment and activity well into the later years of life. Retirees continue to travel, explore hobbies, and stay physically active, seeing old age as a continuation of life rather than its decline. We Indians often embrace a more

sedentary old age, citing health issues, familial obligations, or even spirituality as reasons to wind down. But does spirituality have to mean withdrawal?

The narrative around aging needs to shift-from enduring to embracing, from retiring to thriving. Perhaps, if we break free from the cultural mould of passive aging and take cues from people like John and Hazel, we can look forward to a life where the sunset years are not just endured but truly, deeply lived.

To achieve this, we must adopt a proactive approach. Regular physical activity tailored to our abilities can significantly enhance mobility and reduce age-related health issues. Prioritising balanced nutrition with a focus on

vitamins is key to maintaining strength and mental clarity. Beyond physical wellness, fostering emotional wellbeing by staying connected with friends, family, and community can counter isolation and loneliness, which often accompany aging.

Moreover, financial planning cannot be overlooked. A secure financial base can empower older adults to pursue passions, travel, and stay engaged in life. Ultimately, aging is a privilege-a phase of life that can be as vibrant and fulfilling as any other if approached with the right mindset.

Let us not merely aspire for longer lives but richer ones, where we continue to explore, learn, and inspire generations that follow. The golden vears can truly be golden if we choose to make them so. To John, Hazel and dozens others that I come across on my jaunts to the other side of the globe, thank you. For making me see life in a whole new perspective.

(The author is a Dubaibased columnist and children's writing coach. She has published six books. View are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THEREFORE

**GUEST LIST** 

**REPUBLIC DAY** 

PARADE WAS A

HEADS OF STATE

THE 2018

FOR THE

VIRTUAL

OF

WHO'S WHO

### **DECODING ANCIENT LANGUAGES**

Madam — The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu MK Stalin has announced a prize of \$1 million for deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC), or Harappan Civilisation, aka Dravidian Civilisation, the Bronze Age culture that originated in the Indus River valley around 6000 BCE. For over a century, "the pictographic and logo-syllabic script, probably standing for one or two languages, has been the most vexing problem for epigraphists and archaeologists. However, "Indus script scholars John Marshall, Yuri Knorozov, Nikita Gurov, Kamil Zvelebil, Asko Parpola, Iravatham Mahadevan and Bryan Wells agree that the language underlying the Indus script is Dravidian." A science paper pointed out that the Indus Valley people spoke a Dravidian language, while the Vedic people spoke an Indo-European language, Sanskrit.

The paper argues, "A possible scenario combining genetic data with archaeology and linguistics is that proto-Dravidian was spread by people of the Indus Valley Civilisation." At an event in Chennai to mark the centenary of the IVC, Stalin said that the discovery of Sir John Marshall, the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, completely changed the understanding of India's past. Stalin added that the discovery debunked the claim that Aryans and Sanskrit originated in India. Marshall's argument that the IVC predated Aryan (Vedic) civilisation and that the language in the Indus Valley could be Dravidian was a turning point in history. Ironically, his statue is being installed in Tamil Nadu, though he is credited with discovering IVC through excavations in Harappa and Mohenjodaro, now in Pakistan.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

### END POST-RETIREMENT POSTINGS

Madam — The suggestions of the Vice President to go on merit while deciding postings are welcome. His suggestion to activities meant for Puritans is like

### India a developed nation by 2047



he ambition of transforming India into a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 demands bold and innovative economic strategies. The recent proposal to create an 'Amrit Kaal Fund,' inspired by Singapore's GIC model, appears to be a highly promising approach to achieve the financial goals necessary for sustainable growth. India's public sector enterprises have demonstrated significant improvement in earnings and the market value of public sector stocks has nearly tripled

do away with post-retirement rehabilitations is also a valid one to avoid decisions being incentivised and inductive to grab posts. But these are happening as policy of the ruling party. The top executives of public service commissions do not decide such political policies. Therefore, he should use his good office and prevail upon the ruling dispensation to do away with the system of taking their favourable judgements to decide their post-retirement rehabilitations

A blanket ban avoiding posting after retirement for five years may be thought of. Postings lack logic. The governor is selected based on political lenience, and he is expected to appoint apolitical academicians as vice chancellors of universities. It cannot happen so. As such, postings are made on merit, but the merit here means normally the speed and commitment with which the line of the ruling party is toed up. In a system where caste, cash and commitment to policies are predominant, expecting

in recent years. By transferring PSU holdings in excess of 51 per cent into this fund, the government can effectively leverage these assets to raise resources, reduce fiscal deficits, retire public debt and improve India's sovereign credit ratings.

The strategic shift away from traditional privatisation toward shared public ownership addresses valid concerns about the concentration of wealth and political sensitivities. Furthermore, listing the fund as an exchange-traded vehicle would allow domestic and international investors to participate in India's growth story, thereby unlocking additional capital. It is imperative that the 2025 budget prioritises this visionary initiative to propel India towards 8+ GDP growth to achieve the goal of a developed nation by 2047. Vishal Mayur | Tumakuru

searching for fuel sticks in a desert land. A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

### **EMPOWERING WOMEN INVESTORS**

Madam — The participation of women in India's equity markets is steadily growing, marking a significant shift in financial dynamics. Factors like increased financial independence, digital accessibility through investment platforms, and rising financial literacy have empowered women to actively invest in stocks. Women are adopting a research-driven, long-term approach, contributing to a more balanced and stable market environment.

Despite challenges like cultural biases and limited confidence in some cases, the trend is gaining momentum. This rise not only promotes gender inclusivity but also strengthens retail participation in India's equity landscape, heralding a more diverse financial future.

Anushka Bohra | Ujjain

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### **FIRSTCOLUMN AN ODE TO MY MOTHER**

A woman of immense strength and boundless compassion, she dedicated her life to healing



### RAVI VALLURI

lways be associated with people who are good at heart, said Swami Vivekananda. My mother shared her birthday with Swami Vivekananda (12th January). She nurtured strong bonding with spiritually inclined stalwarts. I recall her association with Sathya Sai Baba, Ganapathi Sachchidanda Swamiji, Raghavendra Swami Mutt, Swami Chinmayananda, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Mahesh Yogi and Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. She wanted to pursue medicine but life did not take that trajectory. So, she upended the pyramid and became a gualified medical social worker and worked diligently at the Rajan Babu TB (RBTB) Hospital, in Delhi.

Gurudev says, "Open your hands and sky is in your hands." To combat and challenge the disease of tuberculosis she initiated several rehabilitation projects. This included a creche for the children of those afflicted with this malady, a Stitching Centre, candle and match-making units.She used to tell patients and their children that "Fear is only as deep as the mind allows." Thus, patients afflicted with TB, but not bedridden participated in the projects. This was what she called "Diversionary Therapy". Climate changes, civilisations collapse, governments change, political affiliations alter and even the best possible model collapses

This is inevitable. It was extremely traumatic for my mother and she became a patient of Paroxysmal Atrial Tachycardia (PAT). This is a type of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat). Paroxysmal means that the episode of arrhythmia originates and terminates abruptly. Atrial implies the arrhythmia starts with atria or in the upper chambers of the heart. The tachycardia results in a significant increase in the heartbeat per minute. It is accompanied by severe sweating, dizziness, palpitations, angina, and



acute breathlessness. Normally a patient suffers from such a condition owing to emotional upheavals, physical exhaustion, deep anxiety, and consumption of caffeine or alcohol. She was administered medication but it worked only to an extent. The real help came in the form of a pentagon-shaped talisman. That is through Siddha Healing, Pranic Healing, the 10-day Vipassana Course and the Part 1 and Part 2 Art of Living courses

Indisputably it is the infinitesimal and scientific power of breath. Breathing techniques, meditation, medication and proper diet changed the trajectory of the life of the patient and brought back the mojo in her life. The year 2020 A virulent virus that is assumed to have originated in the dragon land of China assumed monstrous proportions and spread like a pandemic across the swathes of the globe. The robust lady, a woman of substance contracted the disease on the 23rd of December that year, a day after I was detected positive with the pestilence. Six days before when she would have celebrated her eighty-fourth birthday, and despite testing negative for COVID, life was snuffed out and she entered the empyrean. She was on the ventilator, something my mother would have abhorred as the lethal virus had entered her lungs. Strangely at 7:30 a.m. that morning, though enfeebled by the pernicious disease, I was performing Sudarshan Kriya and had a premonition that my mother had entered Vaikuntha. A few minutes later my wife knocked on the door and with misty eyes and a choked voice conveyed the news. We are yet to recover from the body blow. My mother used to get up at twelve in the night and followed a strict regimen that included Vipassana meditation, Pranic Healing, Siddha Healing, Mudra Pranayama and then Sudarshan Kriva. This lasted for almost six hours. She was also religious in taking her short walks... how did she contract the disease and leave for her heavenly abode? Destiny or Karma?

# Deciphering the concerns in State of Forests Report 2023



analys \$ 07

While the total forest and tree cover rose by 1,445.81 sq km since 2021, the findings reveal deeper concerns about the health and sustainability of India's natural forests



he Forest Survey of India (FSI) has a few weeks ago released its 2023 state of Forest report which shows an increasing trend in forest and tree cover in the country. The current assessment has shown a very meagre increase in forest cover by 156.41 sq km compared to the past assessment of 2021. However, the total forest and tree cover of the country has increased by 1445.81 sq km compared to the last assessment of 2021.

The results are good to show to the nation that its forest machinery is doing a good job in maintaining and also increasing the resources it is managing and controlling. This also is a good political tool in the hands of the Central government to show its success in conserving the forest resources and the overall environment. However, as the saying goes 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The benchmark of any such professionally well-prepared report can be judged only if it shows the correct picture

THE CONDITION **OF FORESTS** SHOULD NOT BE ASSESSED BY CARBON GROWTH OR TREE NUMBERS BUT BY THE CONDITION OF RESERVE AND PROTECTED FORESTS WHICH ARE THE SOURCE OF MORE THAN 450 RIVERS AND RIVULETS OF OUR COUNTRY AND SOURCE OF **RECHARGING THE** AQUIFERS. **BINDING THE** SOIL AND CONTROLLING THE HYDROLOGY

overall scenario demand a serious rethink on the way we manage our forest bio-diversity, even though India is ranked 3rd in top ten countries for an average net gain in the forest area. Let us discuss some of the points for action by the professionals/ administrators as well as the political leaders.

Before I flag the issues let us accept the fact that Trees outside the recorded forests are to the tune of 30.7 million ha which is 37.11 per cent of the total forest and tree cover of the country. All kinds of plantations like rubber, coconut, palm, areca nut etc are also included in it have saved the foresters from criticism with around 1289.40 sq km increase in tree cover between 2021 and 2023 and 20,286.57 sq km almost a 20 per cent increase since 2013. On Paris's commitment to carbon stock India had compared to 2005 had already reached 2.29 billion tonnes of carbon capture. One of the issues of serious concern is the fact that the canopy density of over 40,709.28 sq km has shifted from high-density (70 per cent) and medium (40 per cent and above) density forests to open-category forests (10 per cent or less canopy density). A major portion of this must be in recorded forests and catchments of major rivers and the habitat of Tigers. Apart from this 5573 sq km of good or open forest forests have become scrub and refractive wastelands. Thus almost 46707 sq km of forests have become nonforest inside the recorded forests as per page 73 of the report. Apart from this glaring forest /tree cover losses are in major forested states like Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra

Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Tripura, Telangana, Ladakh and Nagaland, North-eastern states and Himalayas.

However, some states reported an increase also and among them are Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh but the question today is how healthy is our forests. Now let us take the condition of regeneration. Only 48 per cent of the recorded forests have adequate natural regeneration 24 per cent have inadequate regeneration and another 9 per cent have no regeneration at all and for the last 10 years, there has been a severe loss of regeneration.

The condition of forests should not be assessed by carbon growth or tree numbers but by the condition of reserve and protected forests Prime Minister Manmohan Singh which are the source of more than when he asked him to make 450 rivers and rivulets of our country and source of recharging the aquifers, binding the soil and controlling the hydrology so vital for sustaining the food, nutritional, climate, livelihoods and water security of millions of people of the country. So in a nutshell, we may feel happy to have a figure of 82 million ha of forest and tree cover (25.17 per cent of geographic area) which covers 71 million ha of forest cover (21.76 per cent) and 3.4 per cent Tree cover. But the fact is we have only 9 million ha of very dense forests with 70 per cent canopy density and 24. 35 million ha of forest with 40 per cent and above density. Another 18.5 million ha is with 10 per cent density or above and this includes the Green Wash area outside the recorded forests on private lands adjacent to recorded forests. Thus only 33 million ha of forest

cover is worth good density in the recorded forests compared to 30 million ha of trees outside the forests. Thus the real good forest is only around 10 to 11 per cent of the geographic area and it must give a wakeup call to foresters and political leaders. One of the reasons is the poor implementation of the Forest Right Act 2006 which has become an apolitical tool in the hands of competitive politics.

The Director General of Forests who is the Chief Technical Advisor of the government of India must tell the Prime Minister and Forest minister of the real situation in natural forest management as a professional like the then Army Chief Gen Vij told adjustments in Siachin area and do not be hawkish. He told him firmly that being a professional he would never agree and after his presentation the Prime Minister supported him. The IFS lobby should propose immediate remedial measures and one of the measures should be to change the format of the future State of Forest Report of FSI. The first part should only deal with the assessment of forests in recorded forests, the second part should deal with Trees outside forests and the third part should deal with fire management, carbon and change matrix etc. Hope the powers that be will notice the suggestion given here and stop the hotchpotch reporting. (The writer is former Director-General of ICFRE in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; views are personal)

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

This year the team of the FSI brought out several key features like decadal changes in the various forest parameters and tree cover/ agro-forestry by preparing a change matrix, growing stock calculations both inside and outside the forest cover, information on canopy density of different classes of forests, carbon stock calculation, changes in western ghat ecosensitive zone, fires and grazing status and status of natural regeneration, division wise forest cover for 16 states etc. The FSI officers have put up the data collected and analysed in the public domain and it is necessary that as professional administrators people like me bring some of the urgent issues that need the attention of the Prime Minister who is keen to see the success of conservation in the country, because the health of the forest of the country is not good rather the natural forests are in bad shape and

India and Afghanistan: Navigating a complex diplomatic landscape The Taliban's return to power and Pakistan's enduring influence have created a multifaceted challenge for India

he evolving relationship

between India and Afghanistan presents a multifaceted diplomatic challenge. India's engagement with Afghanistan, particularly after the Taliban's return to power, is closely linked to its broader strategic interests in the region, especially its rivalry with Pakistan.

The Taliban's close ties with Pakistan and its association with terrorism pose a serious security threat, making India's diplomatic engagement a complex but necessary endeavor. While seeking to safeguard its regional influence and counter Pakistan's dominance in Afghanistan, India must carefully navigate the Taliban's authoritarian rule, human rights concerns, and the risk of further destabilizing the



K S TOMAR

region. India's Diplomatic and Developmental Footprint India's involvement with

Afghanistan extends beyond diplomatic posturing and is driven by long-term strategic and developmental goals. Through substantial investments in infrastructure, education, and humanitarian aid, India has positioned itself as an Afghanistan. Projects such as the construction of the Afghan Parliament, the Salma Dam, and educational scholarships for Afghan students have sigenhanced nificantly Afghanistan's infrastructure while fostering goodwill between the two nations. India's developmental efforts have had a direct positive impact on Afghanistan's stabil-

ity and growth, providing a counterbalance to Pakistan's attempts to exert control over Afghan affairs.Strengthening ties with Afghanistan offers India significant strategic benefits, including access to Central Asia.

By bypassing Pakistan, India secures a direct route to Central Asia's markets and resources, reducing Pakistan's important partner to monopoly over Afghanistan's

trade routes. This economic advantage is coupled with enhanced counterterrorism cooperation, as both nations share concerns about the proliferation of extremist groups. This collaboration not only bolsters India's position as a responsible regional power but also contributes to regional stability.

Pakistan's Strategic Setback: India's strengthened relation-ship with Afghanistan poses a significant challenge to Pakistan's strategic objectives. Historically, Pakistan has viewed Afghanistan as a strategic depth, crucial for its security and regional influence. Any shift in Afghanistan's alliances toward India directly undermines this narrative. The development of an India-Afghanistan trade corridor,



particularly through Iran's Chabahar Port, bypasses Pakistan entirely, diminishits leverage over ing Afghanistan's trade routes. This economic shift erodes Pakistan's ability to influence Afghan policy, further isolating it in the region.Security concerns compound Pakistan's challenges. The increasing Indian presence in Afghanistan is perceived as a potential avenue for intelligence-gathering and support structive engagement.

for nationalist movements within Pakistan, particularly in its Pashtun and Baloch regions. The Taliban's Role:

Despite Pakistan's close ties with the Taliban, India's diplomatic engagement with Afghanistan has the potential to empower elements within the country that resist Pakistan's control. This could shift power dynamics within the Taliban or exacerbate internal divisions.

The Taliban's governance and its approach to extremism remain critical factors in shaping the future of India-Afghanistan relations. India's diplomatic strategy hinges on the Taliban's willingness to adopt inclusive governance and curb extremism, which could open avenues for con**Regional Stability** Regional stability remains precarious as tensions between India and Pakistan persist, coupled with the Taliban's uncertain governance. Proxy conflicts could spill over into Afghanistan, exacerbating instability

### The Road Ahead:

India's long-standing commitment to Afghanistan's reconstruction, particularly through investments in infrastructure and humanitarian aid, has been central to its regional strategy. India has invested over \$3 billion in Afghanistan, supporting projects such as the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, the Afghan Parliament building, and the Salma Dam. These initiatives have directly contributed to Afghanistan's economic and social develop-

ment. Other contributions include power transmission lines, healthcare programs, educational scholarships, and food aid, reflecting India's commitment to Afghanistan's well-being and stability. The Taliban's return to power in 2021 cast uncertainty over the future of these projects. Despite the political upheaval, India has maintained a humanitarian approach, continuing to provide support where possible. However, the Taliban's restrictive policies and authoritarian rule complicate the these initiatives. India's cautious engagement seeks to balance its strategic interests with the need to uphold humanitarian values. (Writer is a senior political analyst and strategic affairs colum*nist; views are personal)* 



# Los Angeles wildfire death toll surges to 24

#### PTI LOS ANGELES

fter a weekend spent block-Aing the explosive growth of fires that destroyed thousands of homes and killed at least 24 people in the Los Angeles area, firefighters got a slight break with calmer weather but cast a wary eye on a forecast for yet more wind.

Should that happen, already burned homes and valleys could flare anew, sending embers to unburned territory miles downwind. New fires could add to the complication. The death toll surged late Sunday with an update from the Los Angeles County medical examiner. At least 16 people were missing, a number authorities said was also likely to rise.

The relative calm Sunday allowed some people to return to previously evacuated areas, however.

The National Weather Service issued red flag warnings for severe fire conditions through Wednesday, with sustained winds of 50 mph and gusts in the mountains reaching 70



A car drives past homes and vehicles destroyed by the Palisades Fire at the Pacific Palisades Bowl Mobile Estates on Sunday, in Los Angeles AP/PT

mph. The most dangerous day will be Tuesday, warned fire it will really ramp up." behaviour analyst Dennis Spotting - new fires caused by Burns at a community meeting Sunday night. bÌowing embers - could happen "It will kind of ebb and flow as much as 2 miles (3.2 km) or

over the next couple days," Burns said. "Tomorrow night, more downwind of areas that have already burned, Burns said. Despite their recent losses, stress, and uncertainty, the crowd in a Pasadena City College gym was mostly

harsh criticism elsewhere for Los Angeles and California leaders. Äpplause followed each of the experts, police, firefighters and community leaders who spoke. Los Angeles County Fire Chief

Anthony C Marrone said 70 additional water trucks arrived to help firefighters fend off flames spread by renewed gusts. "We are prepared for the upcoming wind event," Marrone said. Fire retardant dropped by air-

craft will act as a barrier along hillsides, officials said. Fierce Santa Ana winds have been largely blamed for turning the wildfires sparked last week into infernos that levelled entire neighbourhoods around the city where there has been no significant rainfall in more

than eight months. Twelve people were missing within the Eaton Fire zone and four were missing from the Palisades Fire, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said. Investigators were reconciling whether some of the missing might be among the tures?

respectful, in contrast with dead but so far no children were among those reported missing, he said.

Meanwhile, the death toll rose to 24 over the weekend. Eight deaths were attributed to the Palisades Fire and 16 to the Eaton Fire, according to the Los Angeles County coroner's office.

The toll could rise still more as cadaver dogs conducted systematic searches in levelled neighbourhoods. Authorities established a centre where people could report the missing. Officials also were building an online database to allow evacuated residents to see if their homes were damaged or destroyed. In the meantime, LA city Fire Chief Kristin Crowley urged people to stay away from scorched neighbourhoods.

'There are still active fires that are burning within the Palisades area, making it extremely, extremely dangerous for the public," Crowley said at Sunday morning briefing. 'There's no power, there's no water, there's broken gas lines, and we have unstable struc-

## Gaza ceasefire talks press on in Qatar

PTI JERUSALEM

srael and Hamas appear to be Linching closer to a phased ceasfire agreement, officials said Monday.

But a deal hasn't been reached yet, and there are a number of obstacles that could still scupper the talks in Oatar. The war in Gaza has ground on for more than 15 months, starting on Oct 7, 2023, when Hamas militants stormed into southern Israel and killed about 1,200 people, and abducted around 250. A third of the 100 hostages still held in Gaza are believed to be dead.

More than 46,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, according to Gaza health authorities, which don't distinguish between fighters and civilians.

Israel and Hamas have been holding indirect talks for more than a year aimed at ending the war in Gaza and returning scores of militant-held hostages in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

There has been intensive mediation by the United States, Qatar and Egypt. But the talks have repeatedly stalled over several key issues. They include details of the exchange, whether the ceasefire would be permanent and the withdrawal of Israeli forces. The war has ground on as each side has accused the other of backtracking. US and Arab mediators made significant progress overnight toward brokering a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war and the release of scores of hostages held in the Gaza Strip, but a deal hasn't been reached

world 08

vet, officials said Monday. Three officials acknowledged that progress has been made and said the coming days would be critical for ending more than 15 months of fighting that has destabilised the Middle East. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to discuss the talks. One of the three officials and a Hamas official said that there were still a number of hurdles to clear.

includes various components"

in normalising ties with the

He said it was important to establish a "balance between

the expectations of the inter-

national community and the

realities faced by the new

He pledged Turkish support to

administration in Syria".

international community.

### UK PM Starmer lays out plan to EU ministers to consider easing sanctions on Syria make Britain 'world leader' in Al

### PTI 📕 LONDON

Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday laid out his plans to unleash the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the help of billions of pounds of investment and dedicated AI Growth Zones to speed up infrastructure to make the UK a "world leader" in the sector. Unveiling details of the Labour government's 'AI Opportunities Action Plan, Starmer said he believes AI can transform the lives of working people and has the potential to speed up planning consultations to get Britain building, help drive down admin for teachers and even help improve roads through cameras to spot potholes.

It comes as three major tech companies - Vantage Data Centres, Nscale and Kyndryl -have committed to GBP 14 billion investment to build the AI infrastructure the UK needs to harness the potential of this technology and deliver 13,250 jobs across the UK.

"Artificial Intelligence will drive er "better, faster, and smarter" incredible change in our country. From teachers personalis-

care - spotting pain levels for people who can't speak, diaging lessons, to supporting small nosing breast cancer quicker, and getting people discharged quicker. This is already helping businesses with their recordkeeping, to speeding up plandeliver the government's mis-sion to build an NHS fit for the ning applications, it has the potential to transform the lives future, it noted. According to IMF estimates, AI of working people," said

Rachel Reeves.

PTI WASHINGTON

Starmer But the AI industry needs a government that is on their side, one that won't sit back and let opportunities slip through its fingers; and in a world of fierce competition, we cannot stand a decade. by. We must move fast and take action to win the global race," he said

"Our plan will make Britain the world leader. It will give the industry the foundation it needs and will turbocharge the Plan for Change. That means more jobs and investment in the UK, more money in people's pockets, and transformed public services," he added. Downing Street pointed out that AI is already being used in hospitals up and down the UK to deliv-

ernment, the aim is to "mainline AI into the veins of this enterprising nation", introducing a raft of new measures learning from the US and European Union (EU) approach to deliver "dynamism, flexibility and long-term stabil-

ity" for businesses. "This government is deter-mined that the UK is not left can boost productivity by as behind in the global race for AI much as 1.5 percentage points a year, which is estimated to be that's why the actions we commit to will ensure that the benworth up to an average GBP 47 billion to the UK each year over efits are spread throughout the UK so all citizens will reap the "AI is a powerful tool that will rewards of the bet we make today," said Peter Kyle, UK's help grow our economy, make our public services more effi-Science, Innovation, and cient and open up new oppor-Technology Secretary. "This is tunities to help improve living standards," said UK Chancellor a plan which puts us all-in backing the potential of AI to grow our economy, improve This action plan is the governlives for citizens, and make us ment's modern industrial strata global hub for AI investment egy in action... This means betand innovation," added Matt Clifford, a British entrepreter living standards in every part of the United Kingdom neur who drafted the 'AI Opportunities Action Plan' and working people have more money in their pocket," she said. According to the British govbeing followed by the government

### PTI 📕 RIYADH

European Union foreign ministers will meet in late January to discuss easing sanctions imposed on Syria, the bloc's foreign policy chief said on Sunday. However, she said the move would depend on Syria's new rulers carrying out an inclusive political transition after last month's overthrow of

president Bashar Assad. Kaja Kallas' comments came at a gathering of top European and Middle Eastern diplomats in the Saudi capital of Riyadh to discuss Syria's future.

Saudi Arabia called for the lifting of sanctions, which threaten to undermine Syria's recovery from nearly 14 years of civil war that killed an estimated 5,00,000 people and displaced half the country's prewar population of 23 million. European countries and the US have been wary over the Islamist roots of the former insurgents who drove Assad out of power and who now lead an interim government. The former rebels have promised to hold a national dialogue summit that includes different groups across Syria to agree upon a new political road map leading to a new constitution and an election. Kallas said EU foreign ministers will look at how to ease sanctions during a January 27

'But this must follow tangible progress in a political transition that reflects Syria in all its diversity," she said in a post on the social media platform X. She also posted a photo of herself meeting the new Syrian foreign minister, Asaad al-Shibani at Sunday's gathering. The US, the EU and some Arab nations began imposing sanctions on Syria after Assad's brutal crackdown on the 2011 uprising against his rule and tightened them as the conflict spiralled into war.

ment or trade in some sectors, crippling the wider Syrian economy

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said sanctions against "Assad's henchmen who committed serious crimes" must remain in place. But she called for "a smart approach to sanctions, providing rapid relief for the Syrian population.

Syrians now need a quick dividend from the transition of power". Baerbock did not elaborate but announced an additional USD 51.2 million in German aid for food, emergency shelters and medical care.

At the gathering, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said international and unilateral sanctions on Syria should be lifted.

Continuing them "will hinder the aspirations of the brotherly Syrian people to achieve development and reconstruction", he said.

He praised steps taken so far by the interim Syrian government, including promises to start a political process "that

the new government, especially in combating threats from the Islamic State group. "As Turkey, we are ready to do our part to ease the difficult path ahead for the Syrian people," he said in comments carried by Turkey's state-run

Anadolu Agency. Last week, Washington eased some of its restrictions on Syria, with the US Treasury issuing a general licence, lasting six months, that authorises certain transactions with the Syrian government, including some energy sales and incidental transactions.

### **Nigerian military airstrike** mistakenly kills civilians

Abuja (**PTI**: A Nigerian military However Salisu Maradun

rity adviser, Florida Rep Mike tion to hold over career gov- the NSC and who had weeks everybody their clearances and

around. There are dozens of now," Waltz said. "Our folks know who we want out in the civil servants at the directorate agencies, we're putting those level at the NSC who had anticipated remaining at the requests in, and in terms of the detailees they're all going to go back." A Trump transition offi-White House in the new administration. A second US official told the cial, speaking on condition of AP that he was informed weeks anonymity to discuss personago by incoming Trump administration officials that nel matters, said the incoming administration felt it was they planned on raising ques-"entirely appropriate" to seek tions with career appointees that work at the White House, officials who share the incoming president's vision and would be focused on common goals. The NSC was launched as an arm of the White House including those at the NSC, about their political leanings. The official, who was not authorized to comment pubduring the Truman administration, tasked with advising licly, however, had not yet been formally vetted.Waltz and assisting the president on told Breitbart News last week national security and foreign that "everybody is going to policy and coordinating resign at 12:01 on January 20." among various government He added that he wanted the agencies. It is common for experts detailed to the NSC to NSC to be staffed by personnel who are "100 percent aligned with the president's agenda." "We're working carry over from one administration to the next, even when the White House changes par-

ties.

Trudeau urges consumers to consider harm

meeting in Brussels.

Some of the measures are against individuals in Assad's government, including freezing of assets. But many target the government in general, including bans on many financial and banking dealings, on oil purchases and on investof the Syrian people. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said his country, which was a strong supporter of the Syrian opposition to Assad, would try to help Syria

airstrike targeting armed groups in the conflict-battered northwest mistakenly killed a number of civilians working in community security outfits, authorities and residents said This is the third misfire by the

military in a little over a year during aerial bombardments of extremists and rebel groups. The Nigeria Air Force was tar-geting rebels in the hard-hit Zurmi and Maradun areas of Zamfara state, Sulaiman Bala Idris, the state governor's spokesman, said on Sunday. 'Regrettably, some members of the Civilian Joint Task Force and local vigilantes were also affected during the operation in Tungar Kara, resulting in the loss of lives," Idris said in a statement, saying they were "mistakenly identified as bandits flee-

ing<sup>\*</sup> from the area. Officials did not say how many civilians were killed and the air force has not issued a statement.

local resident, said they counted up to 20 bodies while 10 others were being treated for injuries.

Meanwhile, the Zamfara government called the weekend airstrike "successful" as it "decisively targeted bandits" in a "renewed onslaught" by the military. "We will continue to offer support to enhance intelligence sharing, provide logistics, and strengthen communi-ty engagement," the statement said. Nigeria's military often conducts air raids to battel ter. extremist violence that has destabilised the country's north. These air raids have ended up killing some 400 civilians since 2017, according to the Lagos-based SBM Intelligence research firm.

In December 2023, more than 80 civilians were mistakenly killed during a religious gathering in the northern Kaduna state

signalled his intention to get Incoming senior Trump Ladministration officials have rid of all nonpolitical begun questioning career civil appointees and career intelligence officials serving on the servants who work on the White House National Security NSC by Inauguration Day to Council about who they voted ensure the council is staffed with those who support for in the 2024 election, their political contributions and Trump's agenda. A wholesale removal of foreign whether they have made social media posts that could be considered incriminating by

policy and national security experts from the NSC on Day President-elect Donald 1 of the new administration Trump's team, according to a U could deprive Trump's team of considerable expertise and institutional knowledge at a official familiar with the mat-At least some of these nonpotime when the US is grappling with difficult policy challenges litical employees have begun packing up their belongings in Ukraine, the Mideast and since being asked about their loyalty to Trump — after they

beyond. Such questioning could also make new policy experts brought in to the NSC less likehad earlier been given indications that they would be asked to stay on at the NSC in the ly to speak up about policy difnew administration, the official ferences and concerns.

White House national securisaid, speaking on the condition tv adviser Jake Sullivan is makof anonymity to discuss sensiing a robust case for the Trump's pick for national secuincoming Trump administra-

the NSC at least through the early going of the new administration.

Trump team questions NSC staff loyalty, plans overhaul

"Given everything going on in the world, making sure you have in place a team that is up to speed, and, you know, ready to continue serving at 12:01, 12:02, 12:03 pm on the 20th is really important," Sullivan said on Friday. The NSC staff members being questioned about their loyalty are largely subject matter experts who have been loaned to the White House by federal agencies - the State Department, FBI and CIA, for example — for temporary duty that typically lasts one to two years. If removed from the NSC, they would be returned to their home agencies.

Vetting of the civil servants began in the last week, the official said. Some of them have been questioned about their politics by Trump appointees who will serve as directors on through our process to get

### of tariff threats

Vancouver (PTI): Canada's out going Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Sunday suggested that US President-elect Donald Trump's remarks about Canada becoming America's "51st state" has distracted attention from the harm that steep tariffs would inflict on US consumers.

Trump has threatened to impose 25 per cent tariffs on all Canadian imports.

'The 51st state, that's not going to happen," Trudeau said in an interview with MSNBC. "But people are talking about that, as opposed to talking about what impact 25 per cent tariffs (has) on steel and aluminium coming

into the United States." Trudeau told MSNBC, "No American wants to pay 25 per cent more for electricity or oil and gas coming in from Canada. That's something I think people need to pay a little more attention to?

Trump has also said that if Canada merged with the US, taxes would decrease and there would be no tariffs.

"I know that as a successful negotiator he likes to keep people off balance," Trudeau said of Trump's threats to use econom ic force to turn Canada into the 51st state. Trump has also erro-neously cast the US trade deficit with Canada - a natural resource-rich nation that provides the US with commodities

like oil — as a subsidy. Canadian officials say that if Trump follows through with his threat of punishing tariffs, Canada would consider slapping retaliatory tariffs on American orange juice, toilets and some steel products. Already during Trump's first term in the White House, Canada responded to Trump's tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminium with its own on American products like bourbon, Harley Davidson motorcycles and playing cards. "He got elected to try and make life easier for all Americans, to support American workers," Trudeau said of Trump.

AP/PTI

### Biden speaks with relatives of Americans held by Taliban but deal to bring them home still elusive

### PTI WASHINGTON

 $P^{\text{resident Joe Biden spoke on}}_{\text{with relatives of three}}$ ment is looking to bring home from Afghanistan but no agreement has been reached on a deal to get them back, family members said. Biden's call with family mem bers of Ryan Corbett, George Glezmann and Mahmood Habibi took place in the waning days of his administration as officials try to negotiate a deal that could bring them home in exchange for Muhammad Rahim, one of the remaining detainees at Guantanamo Bay Corbett, who had lived in

Afghanistan with his family at the time of the 2021 collapse of the US-backed government, was abducted by the Taliban in

August 2022 while on a business trip and Glezmann, an airline mechanic from Atlanta, was taken by the Taliban's intelligence services in December 2022 while travelling through the country. Officials believe the Taliban is

still holding both men as well as Habibi, an Afghan American businessman who worked as a contractor for a Kabul-based telecommunications company and also went missing in 2022. The FBI has said that Habibi and his driver were taken along with 29 other employees of the company but that all except for Habibi and another person have since been freed

The Taliban has denied that it has Habibi, complicating talks with the US government and the prospect of finalising a deal

On the call, Biden told the families that his administration would not trade Rahim, who has been held at Guantanamo since 2008, unless the Taliban releases Habibi, according to a statement from Habibi's brother, Ahmad Habibi.

tive personnel matters.

'President Biden was very clear in telling us that he would not trade Rahim if the Taliban do not let my brother go," the statement said. "He said he would not leave him behind. My family is very grateful that he is standing up for my brother."

Dennis Fitzpatrick, a lawyer acting on behalf of Glezmann's family, expressed dismay at the lack of progress, saying in a statement, "President Biden and his national security adviser are choosing to leave George Glezmann in Afghanistan. A deal is available to bring him

home. The White House's inaction in this case is inhumane? Ryan Fayhee, a lawyer acting on behalf of Corbett's relatives, said the family was grateful to Biden for the call but also implored him to act on the deal.

"A deal is now on the table and the decision to accept it — as imperfect as it may be resides exclusively with the president," Fayhee said in a statement. "Hard decisions make great presidents, and we hope and believe that President Biden will not let perfection be the enemy of the good when American lives are at stake." The White House confirmed the call with the families in a statement in which it said they "discussed the US government's continuing efforts to reunite these three Americans with their families.





### 40 farmers killed by Boko **Haram militants**

Dakar (Senegal) (PTI): At least 40 farmers were killed in an attack by Islamic militants in northeast Nigeria's Borno state, a government official said Monday. The attack Sunday was suspect ed to have been carried out by extremists from the Boko Haram group and its breakaway faction that is loyal to the Islamic State group in Borno's Dumba community, said Borno state Gov

Babagana Umara Zulum. He warned civilians to stay within designated "safe zones" that have been cleared by the army of both extremists and munitions. Zulum also called for an investigation into the attack by the armed forces.

"Let me assure the citizens of Borno that this matter will be thoroughly investigated for further necessary action. Let me use this opportuni-

ty to call on the armed forces to track and deal decisively with the perpetrators of this heinous act of violence against our innocent citizens," he said.

Boko Haram, Nigeria's homegrown jihadis, took up arms in 2009 to fight Western education and impose their radical version of Islamic law.

The conflict, now Africa's longest struggle with militancy, has spilled into Nigeria's northern neighbors. Some 35,000 civilians have

been killed and more than 2 million have been displaced in the northeastern region, according to the UN.

The 2014 kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls by Boko Haram in the village of Chibok in Borno state - the epicentre of the conflict - captured the attention of the world.

## **Verdict in AI-Qadir** case against Imran delayed again

been held and another is

PTI ISALAMABAD

expected this week. It was not Pakistani court on Monday clear if the judgment would Apostponed for the third time impact the talks. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) the announcement of the verdict in the 190 million pounds Alin December 2023 filed the case against Khan (72), Bibi (50) and Qadir Trust corruption case against former prime minister six others, accusing them of causing a loss to the tune of 190 Imran Khan and his wife, Bushra million pounds (PRs50 bil-Bibi. The Anti-Corruption Court in Islamabad has now set January lion) to the national kitty. 17 as the date for announcing the However, Khan and Bibi have verdict.ATC Judge Nasir Javed Rana completed the hearing in been prosecuted as all others, including a property tycoon, were out of the country. the case on December 18 but Both Khan and Bibi are reserved the judgment until accused in the case, which December 23. Later, he fixed January 6 as the date for revolves around allegations that PRs50 billion, returned to announcing the verdict, Geo News reported. Judge Rana was Pakistan by the UK's National on leave on January 6 so the ver-Crime Agency as part of a setdict was postponed until January tlement with a property tycoon 13. Today, the judge once again was misused. The funds were postponed the announcement of reportedly intended for the the verdict until January 17, citnational treasury but were allegedly redirected for the ing the absence of the accused in personal benefit of the busithe court. The development comes amidst the ongoing negonessman who helped Bibi and tiation between the government Khan to set up a university.Bibi, and Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-eas a trustee of the Al-Qadir Trust, is accused of benefiting Insaf (PTI) party to address the from this settlement, including political instability in the counacquiring 458 kanals of land for try due to the imprisonment of the former premier and several Al-Oadir University in Jhelum.

other leaders of the party. So far two rounds of talks have

### PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE Information is given to the general public at large by my client Mrs. Shakila Bano who is the owner of Built-up. Property bearing No. B-11/74, Old No. 8-736, built on Plot No. 76-A, measuring 100 sq. yds., Khasra No. 20 & 21, situated in Village-Babarpur, abadi of Gail No. 6, B-Block, Kabir Nagar, Shahdrar, Dehih-110094, by virtue of Gift Deed dated 27.01.2020 executed by Mohd. Mansur (Doc. No. 431), they do not have Regd. tille documents in the name of Kanhaiya Lai and regd. tille documents in the name of Mohd. Mansur, and this is a BT case from Messer. Jana Small finance hank limited any rom Messer Jana Small finance bank Limited a person(s), institution(s) having any claim and/ objection/or litigation in respect of the said propert shall communicate the same to the undersigned a our address within 07 days from the publication this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person( nstitution(s) shall not be binding upon the sai roperty or purchaser. Viksha Legal Ram Prakash Pandey, (Advocate), 2E/23, 3<sup>er</sup> Floor, Jhandewalan Extn., N. D. 110055, Mob. 9871308962

ई<u>-निविदा सूचना</u>

ई-निविदा सूचना www.bazpursugar.com तथा विस्तृत

निविदा प्रपत्र www.uktenders.gov.in से डाउनलोड की ज

तक ई—निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

सकती है ।

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Ram Das Gupta S/o Late Mr. Raghuvar Dayal Gupta aged 84 years, (Aadhar No 255870397282, PAN No. AFCPB80340) Hindu by religion, presently radiding of 0.00 Amountan Junya Karabarat

esiding at 202, Annapurna Tower, Kaushar

Shaziabad-201010 Permanent Resident of HI-147

Harmoo Housing Colony, Harmoo, Ranchi do he

by inform to the general public that Ms. Meer Bhowmik is not living with me and is living with he daughter Ms. Suja Roy at Kolkata. I don't want to

keep any relations with my wife Ms. Meera Bhowmi or any of her daughters Ms. Suja Roy and Ms. Neel Bhowmik so I am disinheriting my wife Ms. Meer

howmik and her two daughters Suja Roy and Nee



Notice is h

I, Bidyut Kumar Dey alias Bipul Chandra Dey S/o- Manindra Chandra Dey, R/o-Plot No. 37,

2nd Floor, Pocket-3, Bindapur DDA Flats, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059, declare that Bidyut Kumar Dey & Bipul Chandra Dey are one & same person i.e. myself. PD(1244)C

I, Surgayan W/o- No.2896580H Hav/PTR Ram Lal Jat, R/o- Vill-Chitta Khera, Post- Kucheel, Teh- Kishangarh, Distt- Aimer

Karawal Nagar, Delhi-110094

Nand Nougai R/o W-84, Sector-

name same & one Person. In

future know as me Saha Devi

PD(1248)C

Nougai for all Purpose.

LUIIICNOTICE I, Jitendra Singh 5/o Lt. Col.Surinder Singh R/o DDA SFS Flat No. 557, Third Floor, Pocket-A, Category-II, Sarita VIHAR, DELHI-110076, owner of DDA SFS FLAT NO. 557, Third Floor, Pocket-A, Category-II situated at Sarita Vihar, Delhi, vide DDA File no.F127(3260)83/SF5/SV/II. The original document i.e. Possession Letter of the above said property have been lost or misplaced by us and not traccable inspite of his best efforts. An FLR./NCR to this effect has been lodged in the Police Station Crime Branch, Delhi (LR No.2485108/2025 dated 11.01.2025.

(LR No.2485108/2025 dated 11.01.2025. Any person(s) claiming any rights, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No.9810307272 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to beputy Director LAB (SFS Housing) or Director (Housing), D Block, Vikas Sadan, New Dehli.

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my client Mr. Vinod Kumar S/o Roshan Lal and his Wife Savita Jindal both are R/o-159, 3rd floor, Vivekanand Puri, Sarai Rohilla, Malka Ganj, North Delhi, Delhi-110007, declares that their Son Rachit Jindal and his 110007, declares that their Son Rachit Jindal and his wife Charu Jindal are not co-operating well & showing selfish attitude towards my client. They are living separately and they both keep on fighting with my client and creating hurdles, mental tortures and agonies for my client and do not let him live peacefully. So my client hereby severe all his relations, ties and knots with their above named son and his wife. They are therefore debarred and disentitled to claim any right or concern in any of movable or immovable properties of my client. Any person dealing with them, will do so at his/her own risk and cost & my client will not be responsible for the same.

PARVEEN KUMAR (Advocate) J-1/105, Main Road JJ Colony Wazirpur, Ashok Vihar, Delhi-110052 M. No- 9211830045, 8802035883.

### NORTHERN RAILWAY

Lt.

**Procurement of Snow Blower/Cutter** 

Tender No. 15245170 for procurement of 02 Nos. of Snow Blower/Cutter has been published by this office. The pre-bid meeting is scheduled for dated 05.02.2025 in PCMM Conference Room, Stores Branch, Baroda House from 11:00 hrs. onwards & tender is due to open on dated 26.03.2025. Plase make it convenient to attend the same

No. 15245170/Snow Blower/Cutter Dt. 13.01.2025 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

#### Public Notice

Public Notice This is to inform the general public that **Mrs. Deepa Jain & Mrs.** Rakhi Jain are the GPA Holders of Flat bearing Pvt. No. 202, area measuring 900 sq. ft., in back portion on Second Floor "Sald Flat" built on Property bearing no. G-3A, out of Khasra no. 76 situated at Block-G Extn., in the abadi of Lawmi Nagar Subhash Chowk, in the village Shakarpur Khas. Illaqa Shahdara, Delhi-110092. They are in possession through Regd. GPA data Or 12.2005 as doc. No. 23703 executed by Mr. Ashish Bansal in frayour of Mrs. Deepa Jain & Mrs. Rakhi Jain in respect of said flat and Notarized ATS & Will dated 07.12.2005 executed by Mr. Ashish Bansal in favour of Mrs. Deepa Jain & Mrs. Rakhi Jain in respect of Flat. PUBLIC NOTICE stice is hereby given that my client Arun Mittal is process to purchase the Plot bearing no. 81, area easuring 6-2/3 marla out of Khasra no. 32/20/2(6-In process 62.3 marks out of Khasra no. 32/20/2(6 2) situated in the area of village Uncha Gao, Tehsil Ballabgah, District Fardabad Haryana (availing Ioan from PCHFL) from Shyam Singh, Shyam Lal and Sunder Lal, having acquired the said property by virtue WILL dated 23/11/1990 Doc no. 173 executed by their Father Nathi Singh, Later on he was expired on 5/5/1992 and Nathi Singh was acquired the said property by virtue Sale Deed dated 7/7/1982 Doc no. 4253 All personis having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage leguitable/registered or otherwisel, gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, Interna. Deepa Jain & Mrs. Rakhi Jain in respect of Flat Mrs. Deepa Jain & Mrs. Rakhi Jain intends Mrs. Deepa Jain & Mrs. Rakhi Jain intends to transfer the ownership of aforementioned flat by way of Sale Deed to Mr. Rajan Kumar Jha. Subsequently, Mr. Rajan Kumar Jha is in the process of mortgaging the said properly with SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.). Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections or submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to espect to the said property or the interests

affe filterup requested or mound to assume in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. our client. f anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-days period by contacting Law Verilas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-2016921 ereil.com.utta@humath is 3101683, e-mail: accounts@lvnorth.ir

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE Plot No.145, Sec-38, IIDC, Phase-I, Rai. I.E. Sonepat, measuring 312.50 sg mtr was allotted by the Corporation to Sh. Shree Chand Talreja resident of House No.240, Kohat Enclave, PitamPura, Delhi-110034 also Proprietor of M/S Marton Polymers vide Allotment Letter No: 19002 Dated 20/02/2001. The Corporation has been informed that Sh. Shree Chand Talreja to a 20/01. The Corporation has been informed that Sh. Shree Chand Talreja, has expired on 23/11/2024. The legal heirs of the deceased allotte namely (a) Smi. Indra Talreja (Wife) (b) Sh. Rishi Talreja (Son) (c) Sh. Kapil Taireja (Son) (c) Mrs. Ritk Keshwain (Daughter) have approached the Corporation for the transfer of the plot in question in favour of (1) Mr. Rishi Talreja and (2) Mr. Kapil Talreja both are the sons of the deceased. The Corporation is in the process of considering their request and transferring the said plot in favour of (1) Mr. Rishi Talreja and (2) Mr. Kapil Talreja his/her objection in writing before the undersigned along with an atfidavit within a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice. In case no response within the aforesaid period, it will be presumed that no one has any objection to transfer of the captioned plot in favour of (1) Mr. Rishi Talreja and (2) Mr. Kapil Talreja and the Corporation shall go ahead with the transfer of plot in favour (1) Mr. Rishi Talreja and (2) Mr. Kapil Talreja both are the sons of deceased allottee Late Shree Chand Talreja. **Asst. General Manager (Estate)** 

PUBLIC NOTICE ly Clients Varinder Singh (having Aadhar no 48231981438) S/o Late Sh. Pyara Singh { ilwant Kaur Ŵ/o Varinder Singh both R/o50A (ulwant Kaur W/o Varinder Singh both R/o50A, .st. Floor, Front Side Khasra no. 33/6 Vikas Vihar ullothi Extension, New Deihi-110041 have evered/terminated all relations from his son SATPAL SINGH SABHARWAL & his wife Baljinder (aur including their children and disinherit/ tisown them from their all moveable and immo-rable properties including current residence due o their misbehaviour, cruelty etc. In future any

to their misbehaviour, cruelty etc. In future an person deal with the aforesaid debarred persor that shall be his/her own risks and cost and my ients will not be responsible for the same ay manner SANTOSH KUMAR (ADVOCATE) WZ-64A, Mukheriee Park, Tilak Nagar, N.Delhi-18

**PUBLIC NOTICE** 

My client, Mrs Sunita Sharma, w/o Mr Vinod Kumar, r/o HA-95 Sector 144, Noida, 201304, has disowned her son, Mr. Mayank Sharma, and his wife, Mrs Nancy Sharma, due to misconduct & conflicts They are debarred from any rights or claims to my client's movable and

Adv. Richa Chauhan

Enrol. D/3078/2009

immovable assets/properties. Any dealings with them will be at your own risk, as my client will not be liable for their actions. Sd/

### Pre-Bid Meeting for

142/2025

### THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. mmunity Centre Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New De Phone: 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044 E-mail: legal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com,

APPENDIX IV [See rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)

#### Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorised officer of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29,Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, under The curitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interes Act, 2002, (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule [3] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Bank had issued a demand notice or dated 06-08-2024, calling upon the Borrower & Mortgagor Sh. Rakesh Kumar S/o. Sh.Ra Kumar R/o, B-27, 1st.Floor, Gali No.12,Indira Marg, Gurdwara Road, Mandawali Fazalpur Delhi-110092 also at Sh. Rakesh Kumar Sio. Sh.Raj Kumar Cio. M/s. Anad Trading Co. Jawer Road Sikamdrabad, Uttar Pradesh., to repay the amount mentioned in the notice Rs.11.55.329/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Three Hundred & Twenty Nine Only together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

The above mentioned Borrower & mortgagor having failed to repay the amount, notice is her given to the above named borrower, Mortgagor and the public in general that the Bank has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4) of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial ets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [8] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this 10thday of January 2025.

The borrower & Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to dea with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs.11,55,329/- together with further terest, penal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from time to me, from the date of notice till the date of realization together with all the costs incurred by the Bank in realizing the said amount.

The borrower & Mortgagors attention is also been invited towards provisions of Sub-Section (8 of Section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mentione mortgaged property/Secured Asset.

#### DISCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of the BUILT-UP FIRST FLOOR PORTION WITHOUT The property ROOF/TERRACE RIGHTS (i.e. upto the extent of ceiling level) AREA under consideration MEASURING 75 SQ. YDS. i.e. PLOT AND PLINTH AREA MEASURING 62.71 SO, MITS, ALONGWITH ITS WHOLE OF THE STRUCTURE OF THREE ROOM SET CONSTRUCTED THEREON, WITH COMMON PASSAGE is a Entire Built up First ENTRANCE & STAIRCASE AND ALSO SHALL HAVE RIGHT TO USE THE Floor without ROOF OF TOP FLOOR FOR THE INSTALLATION/MAINTENANCE OF roof rights VANTENA & WATER TANK THEREON, FITTED WITH ELECETRICITY 8 area WATER TAP CONNECTIONS WITH THIER METERS INSTALLED measuring 75 THEREON, A PART OF BUILTUP PROPERTY BEARING PROPERTY NO.B-27, OUT OF KHASRA NO.848, SITUATED AT ABADI OF BLOCK-B, INDIRA sq. yrds. GALI, MANDAWALI, IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE MANDAWALI FAZALPUR.

#### BSES BSES Raidhani Power Limited, New Delhi **TENDER NOTICE** Date: 14.01.2025 Sealed tenders under two Bid System (Un-priced & Priced) is invited for following jobs from all bidders Date & Time of Opening Estimated Cost Cost of EMD Brief Item Description Due Date & Time of Submissio (₹) (₹) RATE CONTRACT FOR 1PHASE & 3 PHASE BUS BAP CMC/BR/25-26/ 3.40 14.01.2025 04.02.2025 Crores FK/PR/MS/1233 IN BRPL Lacs 15:30 HRS 16:00 HRS CMC/BR/25-26/ RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF 3 PHASE METER 5.84 5.85 14.01.2025 04.02.2025 FK/PR/MS/1234 LTCT METER, HT METER, GRID METER, PRODIGY Crores Lacs 15:30 HRS 16:15 HRS METER & ABT METER CMC/BB/25-26/ RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF POLYCARBONATI 1.63 3.26 Lacs 14.01.2025 05.02.2025 Crores METER SEAL FK/PR/MS/1235

1.31

Cost of each Tender Document : :₹ 1180/

CUBICLES (11 KV)

RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF METERING

NIT No.

CMC/BR/25-26/

FK/PR/MS/1236

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submiss of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Head (Contracts & Materials) Read, Off. : BSES Raidhani Power Limited, BSES I ation No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 4910 7235 | Website : w



Advt. No.04/2025

world 09

15:30 HRS

14 01 2025

15:30 HRS

2.64 Lacs

16:30 HRS

05 02 2025

16:45 HRS

### Walk-In-Interview

National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra requires qualified and experienced persons for engagement as Counsellor on contract basis. Interested candidates may appear for Walk-in-Interview on 21-01-2025 in the Board Room, Golden Jubilee Administrative Building of the Institute along with application, all originals certificates and one set of self-attested copies of certificates, a recent Passport size photograph and an original identity proof for verification.

For more details, please visit our website: www.nitkkr.ac.in.

Registrar Incharge

### THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. Head Office At, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Roa Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, Phone : 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044 @kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com, Website : www.kangraban

APPENDIX IV [See rule 8(1)]

#### **POSSESSION NOTICE** (For immovable property)

igned being the Authorised officer of "The Kangra Cooperative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Bank had issued a demand notice on dated: 03-09-2024, calling upon the borrower Sh. Narinder Sharma S/o. Sh.M.R.Sharma R/o. 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032. also at Sh.Narinder Sharma S/o. Sh. M.R.Sharma A-104, Oxy Home, Bhopra, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh and calling upon the Mortgagor/Surety Smt. Nisha Sharma W/o. Sh. Narinder Sharma, R/o. 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032 also at Smt.Nisha Sharma W/o. Sh. A-104, Oxy Home, Bhopra, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 30,84,150/- (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Eighty Four Thousand One Hundred Fifty Only), together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from me to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days rom the date of receipt of the notice. The above mentioned borrower, mortgagor & surety having failed to repay the

amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, mortgagor, surety and the public in general that the Bank has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4) of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [8] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this 07°day of January 2025. The borrower, mortgagor & surety in particular and the public in general is

hereby cautioned not to deal with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs.30,84,150/- together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of notice till the date of realization together with all the costs incurred by the Bank in realizing the said amount.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety attention is also been invited towards provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mentioned mortgaged property/Secured Asset

### **DISCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

The property All that part and parcel of the ) One Built-UP Hall with u n d e r boundary walls, having area of 75 sq. yds. On the consideration is Ground Floor upto ceiling level and without built-up Hall vithout boundary without boundary measuring 150 sq.yds. plots No.283 to 296 and 290/1, floor, upto ceiling out of Khasra No.1068/511, Situated at Village in the abadi of Bhola Nath Nagar, alling Under the

Bhowmik from all my moveable and immovabl right, title or interest in any of my death, i.e. they will not have an right, title or interest in any of my moveable an immovable properties after my death. I am and wi not be responsible for any act, promise /undertakin iven either by Ms. Meera Bhowmik or Suja Roy ar Neela Bhowmik. All the public at large is informed to this notice to deal with aforesaid persons at the own wish and I will not be responsible for any of the ast/future act/promise

Ram Das Gupta S/o Late Mr. Raghuvar Dava Gupta Presently Residing at 202, Annapura Tower, Kaushambi, Ghaziabad Permanent Resident Of Hi-147, Harmoo Housing Colon Harmoo, Ranchi-834002

### <u>सार्वजनिक</u> सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सचित किया जाता है वि श्रीमती रंजना वाष्णेय पत्नी श्री विवेक कुमार गुप्ता निवासी बी–55, द्वितीय तल, रामदत्त इँन्कलेव, उत्तम नगर वेस्ट, नई दिल्ली 110059 एवं श्री ओम प्रकाश पत्र गंगा सहार निवासी बहजोई देहात, गोलागॅंज विद्यालय व सामने. संभल. उत्तर प्रदेश– 202410 उक्त दोनो साझेदारों द्वारा एक फ्लैट नं. 09156 टॉवर— मारवेला, महागुन मायवुड्स, प्लॉट नंबर GH-04. सैक्टर—16C. ग्रेटर नौएडा वेस्ट उत्तर प्रदेश में बक कराया था लेकिन दुर्भाग्यवश श्रीमती रंजना वार्ष्णेय की दिनांक तथा आपसी सहमति के आधार पर उक्त फ्लेट नं .09156 का हस्तांतरण ओम प्रकाश पुत्र गंग सहाय के नाम दर्ज कराने हेत महागन डंडिय प्रा. लिमिटेड के समक्ष आवेदन किया है। यदि श्री विवेक कमार गप्ता के अलावा अन्य कोई व्यक्ति मतक श्रीमती रजना वार्ष्णेय का विधिक प्रतिनिधिँ हो तो वह अपनी आपत्ति महागुन डंडिया पा लिमिटेड के कार्यालय ए−1<sup>9</sup> . सैक्टर–63, नौएडा में लिखित रूप में विज्ञापन काशित करने की तिथि से 15 दिन के अन्दर दर्ज करा सकते हैं. अन्यथा की स्थिति में ओम प्रकाश पत्र गंगा सहाय के पक्ष में उक्त फ्लैट नंबर 09156 को दर्ज करा दिया जायेगा। नियत तिथि के बाद किसी भी व्यक्ति की कोई गपत्ति स्वीकार नहीं की जायेगी।

3<sup>rd</sup> FLOOR, ROHINI COURTS, DELHI-85 HLMAD/ CIVIL NAZIR/SHO DATE OF ORDER 25.09.2024 NAME OF PROCESS SERVER DATE OF FILING OF PE DATE OF ISSUE 04.12.2024 NUMBER O NO. OF DOCUMENTS PROCESS ANNEXED 20.01.2025 DATE OF NEXT DATE OF HEARING RETURN J. (Civil)-1 PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT (Order 5, R 20 of the Code of Civil F Case No. Title CS DJ- 19/2023 KULBHUSHAN MALIK VS TILAK RAJ TILAK RAJ S/O NOT KNOWN R/O A-2, BLOCK C, KHASRA NO. 25/1 RAMA VIHAR, DELHI-110081

and determined Ex-Parte. this <u>04.12.2024</u>

YEUDA/RRPS02-(2019)/ Allotment/2019/330 dated D6/03/2019, issued by Yamuan Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEUDA) in favour of Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Sheo Singh and Smt. Manju Kumar W/o Sh. Lokesh Kumar A Lost Article Information Report Registered by e-thana dated 27/11/2024, vide LA R. No. 2024000933960 had also been registered by Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Sheo Singh for the same. If anyone has any right / title / interest/claims over the under-mentioned romovth two are advised tha anornach Rajasthanuniform rules any right y fully interested bits over your uniform method property, they are advised to approach the unifersigned within 10 days along with necessary proof to substantiate the claim. If on response is received within 10 days, it is presumed that the property is free from any charge/ claim/encumbrance, and they shall proceed with the mortgage.

कार्यकारी प्रबन्धक

Public Notice Lost & Found

PUDIIC NOTICE LOST & POUND This is to inform the general public that Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Sheo Singh and Smt. Manju Kumari W/o Sh. Lokesh Kumar, K/o A/7/151, Rajveer Colony, Ghardi Leasehold nghts of vacant Residential Plot No. 539, Measuring area 300 Sq. Mts., at Block-5A, Stutated at Sector-18, Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), Distf. Gautam Budh Nagar, (U.P), They have lost the original Allotment Letter No. YEIDA/RRPS02-(2019), 'Allottment/2019/330 devisital 05/03/2019, issued by Yamuna Expressway Industrial

Details / Contact: Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Shec Singh, Contact: 8700670517. IN THE COURT OF MS. RUCHIKA SINGLA, LD DJ-3, N/W ROOM NO. 31

and my wife Manju Devi have severed relations and debarred our daughter Ivoti from her movable-immovable properties due to her misconduct. I and my wife will not be responsible for her any acts. Mother's name of Vidushi

Pandey in her School records is Shivani Pandey. Whereas Shivani's name in her official documents is Shivani Mishra. So we want to change Mother's name of Vidushi Pandey in her school records to Shivani Mishra.

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons it is hereby notified that if shall not defend the case on dt <u>20.01-2025</u> the

day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard Given under my hand & seal of the court of District Judge-03, (N/W) Rohini Courts, Delhi-85

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

i Talreja 305811, have Asst. General Manager ( Est changed my name from cum-estate Man Surgayan to Surgyan, vide affidavit dated 13/01/2025 State Industri Infrastructure Dev. Corpn. before Notary Public Delhi. Branch office, I.E PD(1245)C District Sonepat, Harvana-131 I, Brahma Shankar S/o Asharfi Email: hsiidcrai@gmail.c Lal R/o A-274, Gali No.-2G, estate.rai@hsiidc.or Ambika Vihar, Shiv Vihar,

PD(1246)C

**Commander Realtors** Pvt. Ltd. Business Address: IREO Campus Archview Drive, Ireo City, Golf Cour

Extension Road, Gurugram -122001, Haryana; Ph: 0124 - 4795000 Email id: commander.realtors@gmail

CIN # U70101DL2005PTC139529 PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS, Commander Realtors Pvt. L Dberoi Realty Limited (collectively "Comm & Ors.") have applied to the Office of Dir Town & Country Planning, Harvana (in short "DTCP") for grant of license for setting up of Mix Land Use Colony (95% residential and 5% commercial) under TOD Policy dt. 9 February 2016 over an area measuring 14.81875 Acres after migration of part area measuring 0.3375 Acres from License No.63 of 2009, 14.25625 Acres from License No.107 of 2010 and 0.225 Acres from License No.60 of 2012 in the Revenu Estate of Village Ghata in Sector-58 Gurugram. WHEREAS, the Letter of Intent (LOI) for the same s granted by the DTCP vide memo no. LC-5281-

PD(1247)C JE/(RK)/2025/707 dated 07.01.2025. I, Saha Devi Nougai W/o Basba AND WHEREAS, certain persons were earlie allotted units / flats by IREO Residences Co. Pv Ltd. in the Group Housing Colony known as "Iree 12, Noida Gautam Budh Nagar, Residences" that was proposed on the Land hereinafter such persons referred as "Existing UP-201301 declare that Saha Devi & Saha Devi Nougai both

Allottees). AND WHEREAS, undersigned also wants to nform the allottees of already developed plotted colony on 29.794 acres at sector 60 Gurugram (Ireo City Plots, Sector 60 Gurugram) about the issuance of LOI dated 07.01.2025.

Now in compliance of Condition No.13 of the LOI, objections/suggestion are hereby invited from the general public, Existing Allottees and Allottees of Ireo City Plots- limited to adverse effect on their rights (if any) in respect of the grant of license for atting up of Mix Land Use Colony (95% sidential and 5% commercial) under TOD over the Land after f publication of this be presumed that and/or any such to have been waived objections must be ed at their office at rive, Ireo City, Golf ugram-122001. DI dated 07.01.2025 on: (a) website m; (b) in the office of us, Archview Drive on Road, Gurugran he office of ORL at onal Business Park, Highway, Goregaon (d) in the office o ctor – 14, HUDA 13.01.2025 For Commander Realtors Pvt. Ltd. Rampal Authorized Signatory

1) Mr. Rishi Talreja he Corporation shall	ILLAQA SHAHDARA, DELHI-110092. Falling Under the Registration of Sub- Registrar-VIII, Delhi/New Delhi.	level, area Chandrawali Alias Shahdara in the abadi of measuring 75 sq. residential colony known as Bhola Nath Nagar,		
plot in favour (1) Mr. Talreja both are the Late Shree Chand	Bounded as : - EAST : GALI 15 FT. WIDE. (BELOW) WEST : PROPERTY OF OTHERS, NORTH : PROPERTY OF OTHERS, SOUTH : ROAD 80 FT WIDE (BELOW).	yds. Shahdara, Delhi-110032. Falling Under the Registration of Sub-Registrar-VIII, Delhi.		
anager (Estate) estate Manager For & behalf of tate Industrial & Dev. Corpn. Ltd 1 office,I.E, Rai,	(HARISH SHARMA) AUTHORISED OFFICER DATED: 10-01-2025 HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58. Phone No.9013568418,9013568419	(HARISH SHARMA) AUTHORISED OFFICER THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. PLACE : DELHI HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE. DATED : 07.01.2025 PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58.		
laryana-131029 'ai@gmail.com/ ii@hsiidc.org.in Realtors	THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. Head Office At, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, Phone : 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044 E-mail: legal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com	THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD Head Office At, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, Phone : 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044 E-mail: legal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com, Websile : www.kangrabank.com		
REO Campus, ity, Golf Course load, I, Haryana; 95000 Iltors@gmail.com 9FTC139529 FICE ealtors Pvt. Ltd. & ctively "Commander o Office of Director,	APPENDIX IV [See rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised officer of "The Kangra Co- operative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Gany, New Delhi-110055, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the Securitic Interest (Enforcement) Pales	APPENDIX IV [See rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised officer of "The Kangra Co- operative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pathar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, under the Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Bank had issued a		

mand notice on dated: 03-09-2024, calling upon the borrower Sh. Narinde Sharma S/o. Sh.M.R.Sharma R/o. 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara Delhi-110032, also at Sh Narinder Sharma S/o. Sh. M.R. Sharma A-104 Oxy Home, Bhopra, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh and calling upon the Mortgagor/Surety Smt. Nisha Sharma W/o. Sh. Narinder Sharma, R/o 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032 also at Smt.Nisht Sharma W/o. Sh. A-104, Oxy Home, Bhopra, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 30,84,150/- ( Rupee: Thirty Lakhs Eighty Four Thousand One Hundred Fifty Only ), together with further interest, penal interest, and other charges as are apolicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

The above mentioned borrower, mortgagor & surety having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, mortgagor, surety and the public in general that the Bank has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4 of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [8] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this 07"day of January' 2025.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs.30,84,150/- together with further interest penal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from me to time, from the date of notice till the date of realization together with al the costs incurred by the Bank in realizing the said amount.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety attention is also been invited towards provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mention ed mortgage property/SecuredAsset

### **DISCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

The property under All that part and parcel of the Built-UP flat bearing consideration is part of property No.283 to 298 and 290/1 on the built-up flat on Ground Floor portion, only upto the ceiling level ground floor, area without roof & upper storey rights, common rights o sq. main entrance passage & stair, area measuring 75 sq yds. Only at Ground Floor, alongwith proportionate measuring 75 yds. share in land underneath out of khasra no.1068/511 fitted with elect & water tap connection, Situated a Village Chandrawali Alia Shahdara in the abadi of Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032. Falling Under the Registration of Sub-Registrar-VIII-Delhi. (MEENAKSHI VATS AUTHORISED OFFICER

PLACE : DELHI

DATED : 07.01.2025

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58 PHONE NO.9013568418, 9013568419

ACE : DELHI TED : 07.01.2025	HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58.
Head Office Phon	IGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. At, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, Ie: 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044 om, legal1@kangrabank.com, Websile: www.kangrabank.com
	APPENDIX IV [See rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)
ereas, the undersignerative Bank Ltd.", I hak Puri, New Delhi ndi, Pahar Ganj, construction of the Fi )2, and in exercise of	ed being the Authorised officer of "The Kangra Co- lead office at,C-29,Community Centre, Pankha Road, - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna New Delhi-110055, under the Securitisation and nancial Assets & Enforcement of Security InterestAct, powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule

he Bank had issued d: 03-09-2024, calling ver Sh. Narinde Sharma S/o. Sh.M.R.Sharma A/o. 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, also at Sh.Narinder Sharma S/o. Sh. M.R.Sharma A-104, Oxy Home, Bhopra, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh and calling upon the Mortgagor/Surety Smt. Nisha Sharma W/o. Sh. Narinder Sharma, R/o. 284, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032 also at Smt. Nisha Sharma N/o. Sh. A-104, Oxy Home, Bhoora, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, to repay the imount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 30,84,150/- (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Eighty Four Thousand One Hundred Fifty Only), together with further interest, benal interest and other charges as are applicable to this Loan account from ime to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days rom the date of receipt of the notice.

The above mentioned borrower, mortgagor & surety having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, mortgagor, surety and the public in general that the Bank has taken Symbolic Possession of the property escribed here in below in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4) of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [8] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this **07° day of January' 2025**.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs.30,84,150/- together with further interest. Bank Etc., to an another charges as are applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of notice till the date of realization together with all the costs incurred by the Bank in realizing the said amount. The borrower, mortgagor & surety attention is also been invited towards provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of The Securitisation and

construction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 12, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mentioned mortgaged 002, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mentio property/Secured Asset

#### **DISCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

The property All that part and parcel of the built-up shop/ground u n d e r floor portion extent up to ceiling level only, along with consideration is ventilation, having its plinth covered area measuring built-up Shop/ 41.14 Square Meters i.e.49.20 Square Yards, without round floor, upto further roof and terrace rights with common deciling level only, passage, common rights to use bathroom/toilet area measuring which is constructed under the staircase at ground floor and common entrance, out of the mention property bearing Nos. 283 to 298 and 290/1, known as 49.20 sq.yds.

286 to 289 & 290 to 298 Situated at Village Chandrawali alias Shahdara, in the abadi of Bhola Nath Nagar, illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110032, Falling Under the Registration of Sub-Registrar-VIII, Delhi.

Which is bounded as

PLACE : DELHI

East : Common Passage and Remaining Portion, West: Property of the Vendee, North : Property of Others, South : Property of Other.

(HARISH SHARMA) AUTHORISED OFFICER THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD. HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58. DATED : 07.01.2025

	OFFICE O	rights (if any) in respect of the setting up of Mix Land U residential and 5% commen						
	/Date.10. 		lotice	for Building Wor	<u>k</u>		Policy dt. 9 February 2016 o migration, within 30 days of notice, failing which, it shall	
rk		:	Building work	there are no objections a objections shall be deemed to and/or abandoned. Any such o addressed to the undersigned				
ks:		1:	01 Nos. of Build					
of the work:		:	Rs.109.25 lakh					
or		:				IREO Campus, Archview Dri		
t more than Rs. 20.00 lakhs rores.			B Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities			Course Extension Road, Gurug For this purpose, a copy of LOI		
ion		:	As mentioned i	is available for perusal				
idder		:	The offered rate by the contractor shall be excluding GST.			http://www.iplcompliances.com		
			:				undersigned at IREO Campu Ireo City, Golf Course Extensio	
	Bid	Availabilit for biddin	lity of Tender on-line		Date & Time of opening of tender		-122001, Haryana, ) (c) at th Commerz, 3rd Floor, Internatio	
No.		From		То	Technical Bid	Financial Bid	Oberoi Garden City, Off W.E.	
	2	3		4	5	6	(E), Mumbai – 400063 and ( Senior Town Planner Sect	
	Tender- Online-C.C.01 of 2025	17.01.202 11.00 A		04.02.2025 up to 5.00 P.M.	05.02.2025 at 11.00 A.M.	To be intimated lateron	Complex, Gurugram. Place: Gurugram, Date: 1	
						Commander Re		

Chief Construction Engineer tral Rural Works Circle, Bhuba

महागुन इंडिया प्रा. लिमिटेड

Name of the Work

Total No. of works

**Class of Contracto** 

up to Rs. 3.00 Crores

Period of completion

Other details

Chief Construction Engineer, Central Rural Works Circle Bhubaneswar

DIPR-25194/11/0022/2425

Offered rates by bidde

Estimated Cost of the work:

Estimated cost more than

Further details can be seen from the web site www.tendersodisha.gov.in

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Procur Officer



# **Growing complexity widening cyber** inequity: World Economic Forum report

### PTI NEW DELH

rowing complexity in the Gcyber landscape is further exacerbating cyber inequity, deepening the divide between developed and emerging economies, and widening the gap between large and small organisations, the World Economic Forum said on Monday. In its Global Cybersecurity

Outlook 2025, the WEF said nearly 54 per cent of large organisations have identified supply chain interdependencies as the greatest barrier to achieving cyber resilience.

About 45 per cent of cyber leaders were also found to be concerned about disruption of operations and business processes. It further found

that geopolitical turmoil has or intellectual property theft affected the perception of as their top concern. risks, with one in three CEOs The WEF report said that the citing cyber espionage and rising complexity in cyber loss of sensitive information space arises from the rapid

WØRLD ECONOMIC FØRUM

growth emerging of technologies, prevailing geopolitical uncertainty, the evolution of threats, challenges, regulatory

vulnerabilities in supply chain interdependencies and the growing cyber skills gap. Cyberspace is more complex and challenging than ever due to rapid technological advancements, growing cybercriminal sophistication and deeply interconnected supply chains," WEF Managing Director Jeremy Jurgens said calling for Jurgens said, calling for collaborations between public private and sector stakeholders to secure the benefits of digitalisation for all. The study found that 66 per

cent of organisations expect AI to have a major impact on cybersecurity in 2025, but only 37 per cent reported having processes in place to assess the security of AI tools before deployment.

Retail inflation eases to four month low of 5.22 per cent in December



PTI NEW DELHI The inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) Retail inflation slowed to a four-month low of 5.22 per cent in December was 5.48 per cent in November and 5.69 per cent in December 2023. According to CPI data released by the National compared to 5.48 pc in November, mainly due to Statistics Office (NSO), the easing of prices in food inflation in the food basked according to government data released on reduced to 8.39 per cent in Monday December. It was 9.04 per

cent in November and 9.53 per cent in December 2023. The CPI (General) and food inflation in December 2024 is the lowest in the last four months," the NSO said.

Last month, the Reserve Bank of India raised the inflation projection for the current fiscal year to 4.8 per cent from 4.5 per cent.

### Infra development imperative to achieve Viksit Bahrat goal: Gadkari



PTI SONAMARG

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said infrastructure development is imperative to achieve the goal of Viksit Bahrat, as the economy depends on good transport and communication facilities.

"The Prime Minister has given us a mission of developed and prosperous India. If we have to achieve a Viksit Bharat, we will have to improve the country's infrastructure. power,

and

"Until water, transport,

communication do not develop, industry, business, Gadkari boost," said, addressing a rally after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sonamarg tunnel here.

The Union Minister said Modi has taken a pledge to develop J-K along with the country.

"He has given us the task of developing this infrastructure. Good roads make a country developed and prosperous. We are working on a mission to make J-K developed and prosperous so that industries are established here, tourism increases, employment opportunities are created for the youth and poverty is eradicated. With that view, nearby Zojila tunnel was we are developing the infrastructure in J-K," he added. Gadkari said the inauguration of the the Sonamarg tunnel, which was

previously known as the Z-Morh tunnel, was historic and tourism will not get a and would provide allweather connectivity to the tourist resort town.

> "Today is a historic day that the Sonamarg tunnel is being inaugurated by the Prime Minister. Due to the closure of this road (due to heavy snowfall), some areas remained closed for five to six months per year.

"It was started in 2012, but there were several difficulties. Today, I am happy that the work has been completed. By the opening of this tunnel -- Srinagar to Ladakh, Leh highway will especially be connected, which used to remain shut for 5-6 months," he noted.

He said the work on the going on and once open, it will reduce the travel time from Srinagar to Leh by 3.5 hours and keep the road open throughout the year.

PTI NEW DELHI

Gold prices rallied for a fifth straight session, rising Rs 110 to Rs 80,660 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal had settled at Rs 80,550 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday.

In the past five trading sessions, gold prices



per cent, to Rs 80,660 per 10 grams

The price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity rose Rs 110 to Rs 80,260 per 10 grams against the previous close of Rs 80,150 per 10 grams on

Friday. "Gold prices advanced as the rupee weakened by touching 86.61, driven by elevated crude oil prices. The rise in crude prices came on the back of fresh sanctions imposed on

Russia by US President Joe Biden, escalating geopolitical tensions," Jateen Trivedi, VP Analyst Research of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

The rupee logged its steepest single-day fall in nearly two years and ended the session 58 paise down at its historic low of 86.62 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, weighed down by a stronger American currency and surging crude oil prices. "This rupee depreciation supported gold prices in the domestic market, amplifying the impact of global cues, Trivedi added.

However, silver traded flat in the second straight session at Rs 93,000 per kg on Monday. Meanwhile, gold contracts for February delivery on the MCX increased Rs 227, or 0.29 per cent, to Rs 78,650 per 10 grams in futures trade on Monday.

the report said the mutual

### Rupee sinks to record low, settles 58 paise down at 86.62 against US Dollar



### PTI MUMBAI

in nearly two years and ended the session 58 paise down at its historic low of 86.62 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, weighed down by a stronger American currency and surging crude oil prices. At the interbank foreign

exchange, the rupee opened at 86.12, and moved 1 paisa during intraday to 86.11 before closing the session with a loss of a staggering 58 paise at its lowest-ever level of 86.62 (provisional)

against the greenback. The fall of 58 paise, or 0.67 per cent, in one session was the steepest since February 6, 2023 when the unit had lost 68 paise.

lian

emerging currencies

### Mutual funds collect ₹1.18 Lakh Crore via NFO in 2024; thematic funds dominates space

### PTI NEW DELHI

Asset management companies launched 239 new fund offerings (NFOs) mobilising Rs 1.18 lakh crore in 2024, with sectoral or thematic equity funds emerging as t



were floated to capitalise on the mood of investors and attract their investment as they were willing to invest at Tailored to specific sectors fund industry is likely to that time

Industry experts said the thematic equity funds after the strong gains of stock market performance resonated with investors for recent years. along with the positive their focused approach and "While sentimen led to

emerged as the top choice marking a strong year-end momentum. Going ahead, said.

or themes, sectoral or face a recalibration in 2025 alignment market

extraordinary returns not sustain tl trends. Notable examples focus will shift to ensuring stability, maintaining liquidity, and achieving reasonable returns in line with market trends. Investors must adapt to a more balanced approach, safeguarding capital while managing expectations. This calls for strategies that April 2024. In terms of align with changing market month, the highest number dynamics and ensure a of NFO launches was steady performance even in recorded in December, uncertain times," it added.

"Bengaluru maintained

LetsVenture, and Y

Combinator emerged as

the top contributors

Combinator, and Antler

led in seed investments,

while Elevation Capital,

GMO Venture Partners,

and Peak XV Partners

dominated early-stage funding," the report

Late-stage investments

were spearheaded by Creaegis, The Rise Fund, and Amara

The Investment Tech

segment garnered USD

320 million in funding

in 2024, reflecting an 11

per cent decline from the USD 358 million

The Payments segment,

however, experienced a

attracting USD 194

decline,

raised in 2023.

sharper

overall.

said.

Partners.

Catalysts,

Partners,

Venture

preceding sessions on Tuesday and The rupee logged its Wednesday, it had plunged 6 L steepest single-day fall paise and respectively.

paise, The unprecedented fall was attributed to the relentless chase of the US dollar by investors, which also led to a massive withdrawal of foreign capital from Indian

back-to-back

17

equities. Institutional Foreign Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,254.68 crore on Friday. So far this month foreign investors have withdrawn Rs 22,194 crore from Indian equities, according to exchange data. According to analysts, the Reserve Bank of India has allowed the fall in rupee's exchange rate versus US dollar amid dwindling forex reserves and declining

# Gold maintains rising streak for fifth straight session, silver remains flat

basket.

choice of investors, according to a report by Germinate Investor Services Research.

This was higher than 212 NFOs collecting Rs 63,854 crore in 2023 and 228 NFOs garnering Rs 62,187 crore in 2022.

NFO The expanded from 81 offerings in 2020 to 239 in 2024, besides, the funds raised through the space more

landscape than doubled from Rs confidence. 53,703 crore in 2020. The Usually, NFOs come during a surging market when trend suggests a strong growth t heightened trajectory and investor sentiments are high and optimistic. The NFOs investor

higher fund mobilisation through NFOs in 2024. In the entire 2024, Sensex jumped 5,898.75 points or 8.16 per cent, and the Nifty surged 1,913.4 points or 8.80 per cent.

Overall, thematic/sectoral funds, index funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) captured significant investor interest.

"With 53 NFOs raising Rs 79,109 crore, these funds

include funds targeting sectors like manufacturing, technology, and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) themes. Individually,

Mulvidually, HDFC Manufacturing Fund NFO led the pack, with inflow of Rs 12,500 crore in

witnessed the deepest plunge of more than Re 1 in the past two weeks from the closing level of 85.52 on December 30. Rupee had breached the 85per-dollar mark for the first time on December 19, 2024. the local On Friday, currency had declined 18 paise to settle at 86.04 against the US dollar, a day

"RBI will allow the weakness as demand keeps moving up and supplies dwindle," said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP.

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

### INBRIEF India ranks third globally in fintech funding despite 33 per cent lower infusion in 2024

#### PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

India ranked third globally in terms of funding received in the fintech segment despite a decline of 33 per cent on a year-over-year basis to USD 1.9 billion in 2024, market intelligence firm Tracxn said in a report on Monday. The sector witnessed a

decline in funding, driven by a broader slowdown in demand and geopolitical headwinds, Tracxn's Annual India fintech report 2024 said. "The fintech sector experienced a notable decline in funding in 2024, with a total of USD 1.9 billion raised. This represents a 33 per

cent decrease from the USD 2.8 billion secured in 2023.

basis.

The Indian fintech ecosystem has solidified its position as one of the top three globally funded fintech ecosystems in 2024, trailing only the US and the UK," the report said.

The sector had raised USD 5.6 billion in 2022. The highest funding of USD 805 during 2024 annual total.



funding was received by the sector in the third India's quarter which was 61 ecosystem continues to per cent higher on a demonstrate year-over-year (Y-o-Y) remarkable resilience and adaptability. The emergence of two new Additionally, 59 per cent of the total funding unicorns and a record in 2024 was secured eight IPOs in 2024 during the second half underscore the sector's

of the year, indicating a ability to thrive amidst challenges," late-year recovery while August emerged as the Co-Founder, Singh said. most robust month for funding, contributing USD 434 million to the "As we look to the future, the sector is rounds poised to build on these "Despite the global successes,

slowdown, financial inclusion and fintech innovation while solidifying its position as a global leader in the fintech space," Singh said. The year witnessed emergence of two

unicorns, Money View and Perfios, compared to a single unicorn in Tracxn, 2023 though there were only three USD 100 Neha million-plus funding recorded, on these marking a 50 per cent Late-stage funding driving decline from the six amounted to USD 1.1

2024

the

such rounds in 2023. The digital lending solutions dominated the funding received by accounting for 64 per cent of the total funding raised during the year. The notable deals in 2024 included DMI Finance raising USD 334 million funding led by MUFG and Credit Saison raising USD 144 million during the year. The late-stage rounds are the most affected.

billion, marking a 42 per cent reduction to the two IPOs in 2023. compared to the USD its leadership as the top 1.9 billion raised in hub for fintech funding 2023, the report said. in 2024, followed by The late-stage funding was USD 3.1 billion in Mumbai and Delhi. Among investors, Peak 2022. XV

Early-stage funding rounds recorded a 16 per cent Y-o-Y drop to USD 562 million in 2024 from USD 667 million raised in 2023 and a 70 per cent decline compared to USD 1.9 billion in 2022. Seed-stage funding declined 19 per cent Y-o-Y to USD 178 million in 2024 from USD 219 million in 2023 and 66 per cent from USD 529 million in 2022.

and 'Mergers acquisition activity saw a slight dip, with 26 acquisitions recorded in 2024, down 16 per cent from 31 in 2023.

Notable transactions included the USD 94.5 million acquisition of PureSoftware bv Happiest Minds, and the USD 44 million acquisition of ET million, a 77 per cent drop from USD 836 Money by 360 One," the report said.

The sector recorded million in 2023 and an eight IPOs in 2024 which was a 300 per 81 per cent decrease from USD 1.01 billion cent increase compared in 2022.

after registering a marginal

gain of 5 paise. In the

SURJIT PATAR MEMORIAL FUNCTION-2025 ON 14TH JANUARY

AMRITSAR: "Surjit Patar Memorial Function-2025" will be organised by Guru Nanak Dev University in collaboration with Punjab Kala Parishad, Chandigarh, and the Department of Languages, Punjab, Patiala on January 14th, Tuesday, at the Golden Jubilee Convention Centre of the University, at 10 am.



#### **PVUNL HOSTS FIRST ASH USER MEET 2025 AT** RANCHI



Patratu Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (PVUNL) successfully organized its inaugural Ash User Meet 2025 at Chanakya BNR Hotel, Ranchi, emphasizing applications of fly and bottom

### **PONGAL FESTIVAL OBSERVED AT NARUVI HOSPITALS**

The annual Pongal celebrations at Naruvi Hospitals, Vellore, was celebrated with fervour, with enthusiastic participation from people cutting across age, gender, community. religion. and



### REC LIMITED COMMITS ₹8.44 CRORE UNDER CSR TO SUPPORT 1MW SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER PLANT



REC Limited, a Maharatna CPSE under the Ministry of Power and a leading NBFC, has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Gandhigram Rural Institute under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.



# Jannik Sinner starts his Australian Open title defence with a straight set win

#### PTI MELBOURNE

fter wasting a set point in the second tiebreaker with an ill-conceived drop shot, Jannik Sinner quickly reverted to what's been working for him and finished off a straight-set win over Nicolas Jarry to begin his

Australian Open title defense. The 7-6 (2), 7-6 (5), 6-1 victory on Rod Laver Arena extended Sinner's winning streaks to 15 on both the tour and on hard courts in Grand Slams.

After all the pre-tournament attention on the 2024 doping cases of Sinner and long-time women's No. 1 Iga Swiatek, both started the year's first Grand Slam tournament about the same time on nearby courts on Day 2. "Yeah, I was curious to see how it was," Sinner said of the reception at Rod Laver, where he became a fan favorite last year. "You never know what's happening. I was happy about the crowd. It was a nice atmosphere.

Top-ranked Sinner had to grind

for two long, tiebreak sets against No. 35-ranked Jarry, a 29-year-old from Chile, before finding his touch.

"It was a very close one because the first sets, they can go both ways," Sinner said. "In the third set when I broke it the first time, that gave me a little bit of room to breathe.

"I'm happy how I handled the very tough situation."

Sinner has got a good record at Melbourne Park in that department. He rallied from two sets down in last year's final to beat Daniil Medvedev for his first Grand Slam title, coming off a semifinal upset of 10-time champion Novak Djokovic.

While Sinner was deep into his match against Jarry, Swiatek, a five-time major winner from Poland, fended off top-ranked doubles player Katerina doubles player Katerina Siniakova 6-3, 6-4 on John Cain Arena

Coco Gauff had a little difficulty adjusting to the sun at one end of Rod Laver Arena in Monday's



first marquee match and dropped a 6-3, 6-3 win over 2020 an early service game before champion Sofia Kenin. last November and started this quickly settling into a rhythm in Third-seeded Gauff beat Swiatek season by helping the U.S. To

to win the title at the WTA Finals Michelsen's three

victory at the United Cup last week, against beating No. 2

Swiatek in the final. Gauff, the 2023 U.S. Open champion is wearing a Marvel-inspired bodysuit and skirt at Melbourne Park and she's radiating confidence and calm. "I knew going in it was going to be difficult, but you know I'm happy with how I played," she said of the 1-hour, 20-minute win over Kenin, who at No. 81 is a much tougher opponent than her ranking suggests.

"I mean (I) could serve better, but like on that side I was struggling to see the ball," Guaff said, pointing to one baseline on the main show court that was bathed in sun. "So I'm just happy that I was able to manage through that." Another 20-year-old American, Alex Michelsen, produced the biggest win of his young career with a 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4 first-round upset of 2023 Australian runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas.

of the fourth set helped him earn a vital break against the 11th-seeded Tsitsipas and, after shaking off jitters on his own serve, he closed out for his first victory over a player ranked in the top 20 at a Grand Slam. No. 17 Frances Tiafoe advanced in five sets over Arthur Rinderknech of France.

sports 11

Gauff went into her opening round on a streak of winning 33 matches against players ranked outside the Top 50, dating to a loss to Kenin at Wimbledon 2023.

The draw presented another tough trip to Australia for Kenin. It was the third straight year Kenin faced a Grand Slam champion in the first round in Australia, and her fourth consecutive first-round exit here. Gauff will next play Jodie Burrage of Britain. No. 7 Jessica Pegula also advanced along with No. 12 Diana Shnaider, No. 28 Elina Svitolina, and Belinda Bencic, who ousted No. 16 Jelena

bottom Montpellier had two players sent off near the end of a 3-1 home loss

Dutch striker Emanuel Emegha scored two first-half goals for Strasbourg and

then had a third ruled out for offside in

Toulouse scored from Ismaël Doukoure's own-goal in the 35th and, in the 75th, striker Zakaria Aboukhlal prepared to take a penalty to make it 2-

2 after being fouled. However, the referee changed his mind following a

video review and instead awarded Toulouse a free kick right on the edge

More frustration followed for the home

Toulouse thought it had equalized

Ferri were sent off within one minute

to Angers

the 38th minute.

of the area.

of each other.

side moments later.

booming



# Nick Taylor wins another playoff with clutch play

the tournament," he said.

### PTI HONOLULU

Nick Taylor in a playoff is tough to beat. Getting there was hardest part for the Canadian, who delivered another highlight reel of clutch moments in the Sony Open.

Down to his last shot, Taylor chipped in from 60 feet for eagle on the par-5 closing hole at Waialae for a 5-under 65 to get into a playoff with

Nico Echavarria He holed a 10-foot birdie putt for eagle on the second on the first extra hole. And playoff hole at No. 18, and the then he hit a wedge from 46 first putt came out soft and was 7 feet short. He missed vards that was close to perfect the birdie putt to extend the to set up a 3-foot birdie putt The last might have been the easiest shot he had in the final hour. "I'm a bit stunned this worked out this way," Taylor said. That was true for so many others, starting with Echavarria, the 30-year-old Chilean who delivered some big moments of his own with a 15-foot par save, a 12-foot birdie, and twice getting upand-down from the bunker at the end for a 65 to join Taylor at 16-under 264. Behind them were Stephan Jaeger and J.J. Spaun, and the Sony Open looked to come down to them along the back nine until Jaeger piped a drive out-of-bounds on the 16th and Spaun bogeyed from a bunker on the 17th. Both failed to birdie the par-5 18th to join the playoff.

### soaked crowd.

The victory sends Taylor to Echavarria didn't miss a beat in his bid for a third straight the Masters again, a big perk after a dismal end to last year with a PGA Tour title. season. He moved back to No. The bunker shot on the 18th was creative and bold for a tap-in birdie. On the 18th in 29 in the world and will be in all the signature events this year. None of this seemed possible when he was two the first playoff hole, his second shot looked to be about 20 feet away on the behind with two to play fringe for an eagle putt when the wind nudged it down the coming off two short misses. "It was just one of those where you try to go until they don't hill into the rough, forcing him to get up-and-down. He had 40 feet on the collar let you play anymore," Taylor said. "I was 1 over through seven, get on a birdie streak there. It's always so bunched here, but I did a really good job every day really of just

hanging in there. lly good or me

### service returns in the ninth game Ostapenko.

## Paris Saint-Germain remains unbeaten in French league

### PTI PARIS

Paris Saint-Germain remained unbeaten and seven points clear at the top of the French league — halfway through the season — after Ousmane Dembélé scored twice in a 2-1 win over Saint-Etienne.

Marseille is in second place after 17 rounds, with third-place Monaco 12 points adrift of defending champion PSG, which has beaten both sides. Dembélé scored in the 13th minute

and the France winger netted from the penalty spot 10 minutes later after a video review spotted a handball from Léo Pétrot on Achraf Hakimi's cross. The decision seemed harsh as the ball grazed Pétrot's hand without him

knowing. Dembélé moved to 10 league goals, level with teammate Bradley Barcola and one behind co-top scorers Jonathan David (Lille) and Mason Greenwood (Marseille)

Barcola thought he had his 11th goal of the season close to halftime but, on a day of video reviews, the goal was ruled out for a foul by the player himself.

PSG has been linked with a move for Georgia winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia from Napoli, but it was another Georgian who scored for 16th-place Saint-Etienne as Zuriko Davitashvili neatly curled in a free kick midway through the second half.

Despite its unbeaten league record,



close to conceding an equalizer. Earlier, Deiver Machado scored late as seventh-place Lens won 2-1 at struggling Le Havre to move one point behind Lyon in sixth

The Colombia defender headed powerfully home from Poland winger Przemyslaw Frankowski's cross in the 77th minute.

defender Central Khusanov was left out of the Lens squad amid reports of an imminent big-money transfer to Premier League defending champion Manchester Čity reportedly worth 50 million euros (\$51 million).

The 20-year-old joined Lens on a four-PSG again looked nervous and came year contract last season, becoming the

first Uzbek to play in Ligue 1. Lens paid just 100,000 euros (\$110,000) to sign him from Belarus club Energetik-BGU Minsk.

Veteran winger Andre Ayew put Le Havre ahead in the eighth minute, scoring for the second straight game following his goal against Marseille last

Striker Goduine Koyalipou equalized in the 28th with a header on debut after

Le Havre has lost five straight league games and is in 17th spot.

when Frank Magri side-footed in Aboukhlal's pinpoint cross from the left. But VAR intervened again to rule the goal out because United States defender Mark McKenzie was narrowly offside.

Forward Esteban Lepaul netted twice as Angers moved up to 13th place. He scored in each half, either side of a penalty from Montpellier midfielder Téji Savanier.

Montpellier lost its composure in the closing closing stages when defender Boubakar Kouyaté and captain Jordan

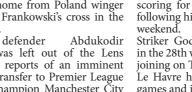
Midfielder Zinedine Ferhat added the at Toulouse in a match where video reviews affected both sides, and rockthird goal for Angers in the ninth minute of stoppage time.

### **Denmark captain Simon Kjaer** retires from

### Alex Michelsen upsets Tsitsipas at the Australian Open

### PTI MELBOURNE

lex Michelsen produced



joining on Thursday.

Elsewhere, improving Strasbourg climbed into ninth place with a 2-1 win

Echavarria was surprised it was only a two-man playoff. "If Nick doesn't chip in, I win "I misjudged the lag putt on the last hole. I didn't think it things happened at the end." was going to be that slow. Didn't consider the wind," Echavarria said. "The wind kind of held it and my lag putting today was a little off, which is a strength of mine. But, I mean, just one bad putt can't define a great week.

Taylor never looked like a winner - especially after missing a pair of 4-foot birdie putts on the 15th and 16th holes — until he had a lei around his neck and the trophy in his hand. It was his fifth PGA Tour title, the last

three in a playoff. He beat Charley Hoffman in Phoenix last year with clutch putting in a playoff. And it was the Canadian Open in 2023 when Taylor famously holed that 70-foot eagle putt

Jaeger and Spaun both left Waialae with plenty of regrets. From the time they made the turn, it looked like a duel between them to decide the winner, and they put on a great show until the final three holes.

Jaeger holed a 30-foot birdie putt on the 14th to catch Spaun, who then followed by making a par putt from just inside 30 feet to stay tied for the lead.

Jaeger didn't hit a fairway on the back nine except for an iron off the 15th tee, and it finally caught up with him at the end. He hit driver to cut off the dogleg on the 16th but it went so far left that it was never found, presumed to be out-of-bounds.

"The one on 16 I would like to have back. Wrong hole to hit to win his national open before a delirious, rain- that shot," Jaeger said.

his fledgling career to upset 2023 runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas in the first round of the Australian Open, and he knew instinctively where credit was due.

The 20-year-old American overcame nerves on his serve in the fourth set before clinching a 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4 win Monday over Tsitsipas, a 26-year-old from Greece who has a career-high No. 3 ranking and has contested two Grand Slam finals.

Michelsen started playing tennis around age 3 and hit most days as a kid with his mother, Sondra, a school teacher who played college tennis.

'Yeah, I'm sure she's watching right now," Michelsen told the crowd on John Cain Arena, one of the three main show courts at Melbourne Park. "Yeah, we hit a million



balls from the baseline every day. We'd go like 30 minutes up the middle, then we go across each way for like an

hour and a half. "I mean we would just go out there and she would never miss a ball — she's incredible. But no chance I'd be here

without without her, so thanks Mom. Love you." The No. 42-ranked Michelsen reached the third round last year on his Australia debut before losing in the first

rounds at Roland Garros and Wimbledon and in the second round at the U.S. Open.

His win over Tsitsipas was Michelsen's first against a player ranked in the top 20 at a Grand Slam.

He played with freedom against Tsitsipas, taking big swipes with his service returns — including three in the ninth game of the fourth set that helped earn him a vital break

but staved composed in the last game.

He got a bit tense on serve,

surrendering two hard-earned breaks in the fourth

'Yeah, I didn't take the most direct path, that's for sure. Shouldn't have got broken twice in the fourth. My serve let me down. Served double faulting way too much," he said. "But I was also returning really, really well. I felt like I was winning most of the baseline rallies when I was inside the baseline and

controlling the point. 'So I was thinking at 4-all, after I got broken twice, saying, You're still in this, just play every point for what it is? played a great 4-all game and got it done at 5-4."

He finished the match with eight aces and eight doublefaults, but hit 46 winners to only 40 unforced errors.

"First of all, I was just trying to stay super composed out there. I knew it was going to be a battle in the end," he said.

football

PTI COPENHAGEN

Former Denmark captain Simon Kjaer formally retired from soccer Monday despite offers to continue playing since he left AC Milan as a free agent last year.

Kjaer will perhaps be best remembered as the captain who rushed to Christian Eriksen's aid and then led teammates in shielding him from view on the field after the star playmaker collapsed because of cardiac arrest during a European Championship game in June 2021.

Kjaer also consoled Eriksen's partner on the field. Kjaer, along with the Denmark team and medical staff, later won the FIFA Fair Play Award for their actions in Copenhagen.

# Regularly peeping into past glory keeps Sindhu hungry for more success

### PTI NEW DELHI

When the going gets tough for P V Sindhu, the star badminton player dives into her highly successful past to seek inspiration to keep going in her quest for more glory. The 29-year-old has in her

cabinet every trophy and medal that is there to be won. She is one of the only three Indians to win two Olympic medals, and is also a world champion besides claiming medals at Asian Games and

Commonwealth Games. But Sindhu struggled to repeat her international success last season, the medal-less show at the Paris Olympics raising doubts about her future in the sport she dominated for so long.

Sindhu however, For speculations don't not matter. She still steps on the court with the same passion that has catapulted her to the zenith of world badminton.

"Of course yes," Sindhu told were days where I was injured PTI in an interview when asked if she still has the hunger to keep going. "I am saying this because when

you see those wins, how happy it makes you and how much confidence it gives you, that itself will take you to another level. Seeing wins again and again keeps that hunger going, so definitely yes.

There are some clips when you are really young when you look at it, it feels like wow, you know, you have done so much and you know why can't I do it more? You question yourself, and that's when it all starts, so yes," Sindhu said during an interaction facilitated by sports brand PUMA, which has signed her as an ambassador.

Sindhu understands that she will have to endure plenty of struggles but she can't afford to lose hope.

"I have seen a lot through sport, it was important for me to believe in myself when there

and I didn't know if I can come back and I can be my 100 per cent, which happened in 2015, when I had an injury, but then I bounced back, and I got a silver at Rio.

\*My life has changed a lot since the time I started and till now I have had a lot of awards, rewards which has given me a lot of confidence. I am very grateful for whatever I have achieved and when I look back, I can tell that yes I have done whatever I could

Wins and losses are part of the learning curves. So what has been the biggest learning for Sindhu?

"Being patient. That has taught me a lot in life, being patient and wait for the right time because sometimes game teaches you to be patient no matter what.

You have to keep waiting till you get whether it is success or whether it is the right time or whether it is the right shot... you are actually at your lows.



You have to wait for the right time to do the right thing." Sindhu said self-belief

is something an athlete can't do without, indicating that she is trying to overcome the ongoing tough phase with the same virtue.

"It hits you when you are actually not able to win or not able to get that success or when

That is when it is important for an athlete to stay there and keep believing in yourself. There were days when I lost matches which were very very close.

happening, can I bounce back, especially lowest is when it hits you really hard. I was doubting for so many more years

myself but people around me were very very supportive in terms of they were like it's okay, believe in yourself, you can do

"I am very lucky to say that I have parents who are sports persons and they know what it is and what it takes because they have experienced so much that they tell me that this is what happens and you need to be stronger and you need to come back stronger."

Sindhu was candid in admitting that digesting defeats is still difficult for her despite so much success in her career.

"It does hurt, it does hurt at any point of time even though let's say if you don't have to prove anything, or if you have achieved everything and what is left you might ask me what else is left?

"For me I feel that there is a lot of time left and I can win a lot of tournaments and I can play

because if you are fit and if you are injury free I think passion towards the sport itself will take you much more longer."

She also emphasised that the relationship between a coach and an athlete needs to be very clear in terms of what is going in your head on and off court. "A coach needs to understand even if I am not able to say what is happening in the court. As a coach you know he understands what you feel. So it is very important to also have that trust between a coach and

an athlete? Sindhu has a clear plan for the 2025 season when she will compete in select tournaments to avoid injuries.

"There are a lot of tournaments every month. We are out for like 15 days, 20 days. Definitely I will pick and choose a tournament because as you said I need to stay injury free. That is very important. If you stay injury free that's when you go and give your 100 per cent.

"There are some tournaments where BWF says that you have to play, but apart from that, the players are also smart enough to pick and tournaments." choose

Sindhu said she is still evolving as a player, working on her skills because "the game has been changing so much."

'People have become really strong in their defense so to break that, you have to work on that. You have to also work on defense. Not everyone gives you chance to attack. Because I'm a tall player and I have a good reach, so not everyone will give you a chance to attack, so accordingly you have to make changes

Sindhu also hoped that the gulf between her and the next generation will be bridged sooner than later.

"I am hoping that the gap closes soon. There are a lot of youngsters I have seen in the Sved Modi (recent tournament she won) doing really well.

There were days where I was like why am I losing, what is can I come back stronger and



all-time record of 14 straight

victories with a 1-0 win over

Osasuna on Sunday and went

top of the Spanish league at

Julián Álvarez scored in the

55th minute at the Metropolitano stadium to give Atletico the milestone victory and a one-point lead

over second-place Madrid.

Diego Simeone's team has a

six-point gap to third-place

Atletico has won all of its

matches across all competitions since October. Its last setback was a 1-0 loss at Real Betis in the Spanish

league on Oct. 27. Eight of

the victories have come in

the halfway stage.

# **Barcelona thrashes Real Madrid 5-2 to win Spanish Super Cup final**

Real Madrid came out looking for some "clasico" against Barcelona but ended up being embarrassed again. Madrid lost 5-2 to Barcelona

in the Spanish Super Cup final at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday. That followed a 4-0 loss at home to Barcelona in the Spanish league in October.

Kylian Mbappé put Madrid ahead early in his second clasico, but Barcelona then ran away with goals by Lamine Yamal, Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha – who scored twice - and Alejandro Balde.

Rodrygo scored for Madrid on the hour mark after goalkeeper Barcelona Wojciech Szczesny was sent off early in the second half. It was the third straight win for Barcelona in 2025 after it

the season."

us reflect on what we had done wrong," Lewandowski said. "Now we can look forward to the run of games that we have until the end of Madrid lost for the first time after a run of five consecutive

victories. "It was a bad night," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "It's a disappointment, we won't hide it, but it's soccer ... You have to try to learn from the losses. We have to look forward to what's ahead." Mbappé had been contained when the rivals met in October but scored a superb goal five minutes into the

goal five minutes into the match at King Abdullah Sports City stadium after picking up the ball just inside Madrid's half, running at the defense and then finding the net with a clever finish. But Yamal evened the match with



a nice run in the 22nd and Lewandowski, who scored twice in the earlier clasico,

put the Catalans ahead in the 36th. Raphinha added goals in the

39th and 48th minutes, while Balde scored in first-half stoppage time.

Rodrygo scored from a free kick in the 60th after Szczesny was sent off for a

foul outside the area to stop a breakaway.

Lewandowski has 26 goals in

Lewandowski has 26 goals in 27 appearance across all competitions for Barcelona, while Raphinha has scored 19 times and Yamal eight. Barcelona was able to count on Spain midfielder Dani Olmo after the Spanish government stepped in to provisionally allow the club to register him with the league. league.

The final came after Mallorca fans said they were harassed by local men who support Madrid after Thursday's semifinal. Two wives of Mallorca players said they

were groped. The Spanish Super Cup has become a moneymaker for the federation and competing clubs since the federation struck a deal in 2019 to hold it in Saudi Arabia

ATLETICO'S RECORD Atletico Madrid set a club

the league. "It's an important streak to show the growth of this club," Simeone said. "We have been working really hard." It was the seventh consecutive league game without a win for Osasuna, which is in 11th place.

Barcelona.



### Cummins, Hazlewood in Australia CT squad despite injury concerns

starts.

### PTI SYDNEY

Pat Cummins was on Monday named captain of Australia for next month's Champions Trophy while fellow pacer Josh Hazlewood too was included in the squad despite lingering injury concerns surrounding both players.

Cummins was managing an ankle injury throughout the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India, which played a part in him missing the upcoming tour to Sri Lanka along with the pacer wanting to stay back at home to welcome his second baby.

"I don't really have any more information than what I shared the Test

### You cannot compare one generation of cricketers with another, says Kapil Dev

### PTI NEW DELHI

 $I\!\!I t$  is needless to compare two generations of players and pass a judgement on who was better, legendary cricketer Kapil Dev said on Monday and refused to get into a debate if BCCI selectors were right in excluding Yashasvi Jaiswal and Rishabh Pant from the T20I squad for the five-match T20I squad for the five-match series against England. Kapil bowled nearly 300 overs during the 1991-92 Test

series against Australia and in the same rubber he became the first Indian to take 400 wickets in the traditional format apart from contributing with the bat in

the team's cause. India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah could not bowl in the second innings of the fifth Border-Gavaskar Test recently because of back spasms. India lost the fivematch series 1-3. The 31-

The Aussies, a two-time winners in the event and the reigning ODI world champions, also picked all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, who year-old Bumrah bowled

was dropped for the fifth Test at SCG against India after mediocre outings in the first SA include Ngidi, Nortje in CT squad four matches. "This is a balanced and experienced squad with the **PTI** JOHANNESBURG core having been involved in the previous one-day World Couth Africa on Monday included SLungi Ngidi and Anrich Nortje in the Cup, the West Indies series, last Temba Bavuma-led squad for next year's successful tour of the UK and the more recent Pakistan month's Champions Trophy after the Bailey said "It offers a variety of options for touring management depending on opposition and the conditions that may present in Pakistan," he added. The squad will assemble, prepare and play a one-off ODI against Sri Lanka following the Test series before heading to Pakistan for the group stage matches of the ICC showpiece. Australia gave prominence to all-rounders in the squad selection as Matthew Short and Aaron Hardie were drafted in ahead of out-of-form Jake-Fraser McGurk. Adam Zampa is the lone specialist spinner in the squad. He will be supported by part-timers Short and Glenn Maxwell

Under ICC guidelines, Australia needed to name a

squad by Monday, but can

change it for injuries at any

time before the tournament



more than 150 overs and emerged the highest wickettaker on both sides with 32 scalps.

"Please don't compare. You compare cannot one generation with another. That is not required. Today, players are scoring 300 runs in a day. It didn't happen during our time. So don't compare the two (generations)," said Kapil during an event hosted by the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) of which he is the president. 1983 World Cup-The

winning skipper also added that one should not question the judgement of the selectors as they would have arrived at the decision to not play Jaiswal and Pant after giving

it a thought. The two cricketers played all five Tests during the gruelling Australia series, with Jaiswal (391) emerging the secondhighest run-getter, second only to Travis Head (448).

Asked if it was the right decision to drop two for the home series, Kapil said, "How nome series, Kapil said, How can I comment on the judgement of others? I think the selectors would have though about it." "So, if I say something it would be criticising them. I don't want to criticise them.

They (selectors) are a group of people who must have planned and thought about that.'

With batting stalwarts Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli dishing out below-par performances in Australia, and talks of whether it's time for them to retire swirling, Kapil said the decision should be left to them.

"They are very big players. Let's hope when they think it's the right time to play, when they think it's not, they will call it off," said Kapil, in response to a question whether they should be there for the Test series in England later this year.

## **Gauff starts her Australian Open with a straight-sets** Kenin

### PTI MELBOURNE

Coco Gauff had a little difficulty adjusting to the sun at one end of Rod Laver Arena and dropped an early service game but quickly service game but quickly settled into a rhythm to start her Australian Open with a 6-3, 6-3 win Monday over 2020 champion Sofia Kenin.

Third-seeded Gauff won the title at the WTA Finals last November and started this season by helping the U.S. To victory at the United Cup last week, a run that gives her a chance to move atop the

rankings. The 2023 U.S. Open champion is wearing a Marvel-inspired bodysuit and skirt at Melbourne Park and she's radiating confidence

Michelsen's three booming service returns in the ninth game of the fourth set helped him earn a vital break against the 11th-seeded Tsitsipas and, after shaking off jitters on his own serve, he closed out for his first ever victory over a player ranked in the top 20.

Stefanos Tsitsipas.

Gauff went into her opening round on a streak of winning 33 matches against players ranked outside the Top 50, dating to a loss to Kenin at

Wimbledon 2023. It was tough going early, with Gauff converting an early break before Kenin got back on serve at 2-2, hitting deep ground strokes and getting good bounce off the hard court.

squad (for Sri Lanka series) a few days ago," said Chair of Selectors George Bailey. "I believe he's had the scan, I

have no idea what the scan said. But we want to give him a little bit of space at the back end of the Border-Gavaskar; obviously baby pending.

"We'll work through that with Pat and obviously the selection panel and the medical team ... But I know he's very keen," he added.

Hazlewood, side lined from the Melbourne and Sydney Tests due to a calf niggle, was similarly not picked for the Sri Lanka series but has been named in the preliminary 15player Champions Trophy squad.

respective injuries.

d sufficientl

rom

Nortje sustained an injury on his big toe last month which ruled him out of the series against Pakistan while a groin strain in November forced Ngidi to miss the series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

South Africa, the semifinalists of the 2023 ODI World Cup, are placed in group B of the Champions Trophy,

They will start their campaign against Afghanistan in Karachi on February 21 before meeting Australia in Rawalpindi on February 25 and their final group game is against England on March 1.

However, frontline pacer Gerald Coetzee was not picked because of the groin injury that he suffered during the first Test against Sri Lanka in Durban last year.

Subsequently, he missed the second Test at Gqerberha and the entire home



Keshav Maharaj and Tabraiz Shamsi are the specialist spinners, who will be assisted by Aiden Markram's part-time off-spin.

South Africa squad: Temba Bavuma (captain), Tony de Zorzi, Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, Rassie van der Dussen

"I knew going in it was going to be difficult, but you know I'm happy with how I played," she said of the 1-hour, 20minute win over Kenin, who at No. 81 is a much tougher opponent than her ranking suggests.

"I mean (I) could serve better. but like on that side I was struggling to see the ball," Guaff said, pointing to one baseline on the main show court that was bathed in sun. "So I'm just happy that I was able to manage through that." 20-year-old Another American, Alex Michelsen, produced the biggest win of his young career with a 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, ŏ-4 first-round upset of 2023 Australian runner-up

who had five ac But Ga and four double-faults in her first two service games, lifted her tempo, started taking the ball earlier and won four of the next five games. She finished the match with 12 aces and nine double-faults, and saved seven of the eight breakpoints she faced. She also had 28 winners, including two rifling backhands on key points in the second set, and 13

unforced errors. The draw presented another tough trip to Australia for Kenin. It was the third straight year Kenin faced a Grand Slam champion in the first round in Australia, and her fourth consecutive firstround exit here.

### India Open: Spotlight on Satwik-Chirag as jumbo Indian contingent eyes end to two-year title drought

Pacer Nandre Burger, who suffered a a

lumbar stress reaction, ahead of the ODI

series against Ireland in early October

However, the Proteas trusted the

improving fitness of all-rounder Wiaan

Mulder, who broke his middle finger in

Lanka, but he played in the second Test

against Pakistan after the physios gave the green signal.

too was not considered for selection.

rubber against Pakistan.

the series against Sri

### PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Ahe contingent is the biggest ever but focus would be on a handful of tried-and-tested names, especially the men's doubles team of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, when Indian shuttlers go up against a world-class field in the India Open Super 750 tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

Despite the name, Indian success at the tournament hasn't been particularly regular with none from the host nation winning any title in the past two editions.

The 21-strong group that will take the court this week would be desperate to change that statistic and make some amends after an ordinary Olympic campaign six months ago.

especially high from Satwik and Chirag, who claimed the doubles title in 2022, the same year in which the currently erratic Lakshya Sen notched the men's singles top honour. The tournament will feature 18 of the world's top-20 men's singles players and 14

of the top-20 women's singles shuttlers. Chirag and Satwik, who are former world number ones,

have made a good start to the season by reaching the semifinals of the Malaysia Super 1000 last week. Despite the Paris Games disappointment, they have emerged as India's most reliable performers over the last two years by regularly

Chang making the deep end of the draws.

They would be expected to

do the same in the USD 950,000 event to be held at The expectations would be the KD Jadhav Indoor Stadium here.

Chirag. Satwik and semifinalists at the 2024 China Masters, will face Malaysia's Wei Chong Man and Kai Wun Tee in their opening round.

While the Indians have shown impressive form, they will be seeking improvement in quick rallies and service variations in a bid to better their runners-up position in

the tournament last year. However, the Indian pair will face stiff competition from top names such as China's Olympic silver-medallists Liang Weikeng and Wang

Also there in the field are Paris bronze-medallists Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia, Denmark's



Kim Astrup and Anders Rasmussen, and the Indonesian combination of Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto. Sindhu back in action

Despite an underwhelming 2024, one can never discount

two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu, who would be back in action after missing

the season-opener in Kuala Lumpur due to her wedding. The 29-year-old Hyderabadi returned to winning ways, lifting the Syed Modi International title, although it

was against predominantly Indian field. Anupama Upadhyaya and is Malaysia last week.

drawn to face Japan's rising star Tomoka Miyazaki in a potentially intriguing second round.

MKiyazaki is a 2022 world iunior champion and Sindhu's conqueror at last year's Swiss Open. Sindhu last won this event in 2017. The very exciting but equally inconsistent Lakshya Sen would be aiming to replicate his 2022 success at the event. He can draw confidence from his Syed Modi title win and a third-place finish at the Kings Cup a few days ago. He faces a tough opening test against Chinese left-hander Hong Yang Weng.

HS Prannoy, returning after a five-month break following a pre-quarterfinal exit at the Sindhu will begin her Paris Olympics, stumbled in campaign against compatriot the second round in

However, the 32-year-old mark. Among them is Priyanshu veteran showed signs of his vintage form during the short campaign. He will look Rajawat, who faces a tough challenge in his opening to build on that when he faces Chinese Taipei's Li round against sixth-seeded Yang Su in the first round. A victory could set up a

of

Christie

With marquee players like

Olympic champions Viktor Axelsen (men) and An Se

Young (women), and world

No. 1 Shi Yuqi leading the

competition, it would be no

stroll in the park for the

But being on home turf

could prove to be the morale-booster that helps

them go over the line in

Some promising youngsters

will also be eager to make a

Jonatan

Indonesia.

Indians in fray.

difficult situations.

Young names eye glory

Japanese Kodai Naraoka. Malvika Bansod will take on third seed Chinese Yue Han, showdown with second seed

and Aakarshi Kashyap will face eighth-seeded Thai Pornpawee Chochuwong. In women's doubles, India's

hopes will rest on fifthseeded team of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, who will face Japan's Arisa Igarashi and Ayako Sakuramoto in the first round.

Meanwhile, Guwahat

Masters-winning pair of Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa, will take on the British duo of Chloe Coney and Estelle Van Leeuwen The Indians are seeded seventh here.

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