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India-China continue border talks MEA Jaishankar

## **BJP CMs CORNER KEJRIWAL**

LUCKNOW, FRIDAY JANUARY 24, 2025; PAGES 12 ₹3

 $\mathbf{F}_{\mathrm{Misri}}^{\mathrm{oreign}}$  Secretary Vikram Misri will travel to Beijing on a two-day visit starting Sunday to discuss next steps in improving ties between the two nations. This comes after armies of India and China in October last year agreed to disengage from friction points Line of Actual at Control(LAC)in Eastern

Ladakh. High level talks between the two countries gathered momentum following the pact. It will be the second top level meeting in the last one and half months between the two neighbours. National Security Advisor(NSA)Ajit Doval travelled to Beijing and held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang under the framework of Special Representatives(SR)dialogue on the boundary dispute.

"Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri will be visiting Beijing on January 26 and 27 for a meeting of the Foreign two countries. Secretary-Vice Minister mechanism between India and China," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday. trade.

'The resumption of this bilateral mechanism flows from the agreement at the leadership level to discuss the next steps for India-China relations, including in the political, economic, and people-to-people domains," it said in a brief statement. The decision to revive the SR

dialogue mechanism and other such formats was taken at a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazan on October 23. In the nearly 50-minute meeting, Modi underscored

Continued on page 8

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE said. The external affairs minister

the importance of properly

handling differences and

disputes and not allowing

them to disturb peace and tranquillity in border areas.

The Modi-Xi meeting came two days after India and China

firmed up a disengagement pact for Depsang and Demchok, the last two friction

Last week, External Affairs

India-China relationship is

needs to be given to the longer-term evolution of the

"At a time when most of its

relationships are moving

forward, India confronts a

particular challenge in

establishing an equilibrium

with China. Much of that

arises from the fact that both

nations are on the rise," he had

ties.

points in eastern Ladakh.

: DELHI I LUCKNOW I BHOPAL I BHUBANESWAR I RANCHI I RAIPUR I CHANDIGARH I DEHRADUN I HYDERABAD I VIJAYWADA

noted that as immediate neighbours and the only two societies with over a billion people, India-China dynamic could never have been easy.

InSiDE

"But it has been further sharpened by a boundary dispute, by some baggage of history and by differing sociopolitical systems. Misreadings past policy-makers, whether driven by idealism or absence of realpolitik, has actually helped neither cooperation nor competition with China," he said.

'That has clearly changed in the last decade. Right now, the relationship is trying to disentangle itself from the complications arising from the post-2020 border situation," he added. These meetings came after the

In the SR dialogue, India pressed for a fair, reasonable two nations arrived at an and mutually acceptable settlement of the overall agreement to resume patrolling along the LAC "leading to disengagement". The patrolling arrangement came four years after the boundary dispute between the Doval and Wang also focused on "positive" direction for Galwan Valley clash, signalling cross-border cooperation de-escalation in a region including resuming the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, where both countries stationed tens of thousands of river data sharing and border troops.

The disengagement agreement has facilitated the Indian Minister S Jaishankar said the military to resume patrolling up to the old stations in trying to disentangle itself Depsang and Demchok -- the two major friction points that from the complications arising from the post-2020 border situation and more thought were left to be settled between the two nations.

The two sides also completed one round of patrolling in November and also agreed to carry out one coordinated patrol every week in the areas where tensions have persisted 2020. India has since maintained that its ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas.

## talks deportation of Indians in US

PTI WASHINGTON

Tndia has always been open Ito legitimate return of undocumented Indians to their country, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday, noting that New Delhi is still in the process of verifying those from the US who can be deported to India and the number of such individuals cannot be determined vet.

"As a government, we are obviously very much supportive of legal mobility because we do believe in a global workplace. We want Indian talent and Indian skills to have the maximum opportunity at the global level. At the same time, we are also very firmly opposed to illegal mobility and illegal migration," Jaishankar told a group of Indian reporters here.

Continued on page 8

### 76.700 76,650 76,600 76,550 76.500 76.450 76,400 12:00 pm 3:00 pm LUCKNOW MAX 25.4°C(+3.4) MIN 10.1°C(+2.6)

## Food, garlands rates set by EC for Delhi polls

RAJESH KUMAR 📕 NEW DELHI

The poll watchdog is closely monitoring the rates of chai, pakora, even cholekulche, and how much is spent on garlands and drones while campaigning in the assembly polls in the national capital The Election Commission of India has specified rates such as Rs 35 for a plate of poori-sabzi, Rs 30 for kulche-chole, Rs 19 for a plate of pakoras, Rs 12 for a samosa or bread pakora, Rs 6 for a cup of tea, Rs 12 for a cup of coffee, Rs 20 for a sandwich, Rs 15 for a kachori, Rs 19 for a one-litre water bottle, and Rs 70 for lunch or dinner. According to the rates chart approved by the EC, the rate for the use of drones is fixed at Rs 7,000 per day. A small garland cannot exceed Rs 20, while 10-foot garlands cannot cost more than Rs 1,500. Flowers used for stage decorations are priced at Rs 35 per square foot. A candidate can hire a horse at Rs 3,075 per day and an elephant at Rs

the electoral officer, in consultation with political parties, candidates, and traders, and is handed over to each person filing nomination गंचन सदन papers. Though in a city like Delhi, which has 70 assembly RVACHAN constituencies with an average of 22-25 lakh voters each in ai SADAN

### In his maiden speech ahead of the polls, Adityanath accused the AAP of settling accused the AAP of settling Bangladeshi and Rohingya nationals in Delhi and compromising national security while hitting out at the ruling party for being involved in the riots that STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI Friday is on schedule, and he is likely to address a massive gathering," said Delhi Congress chief Devendra

Tongress leader Rahul took place in the national Gandhi's rally in the Capital in 2020. Sounding the poll bugle, the senior BJP leader launched a scathing attack on the AAP national capital on Thursday was canceled due to his poor health and medical advice. He was scheduled to hold the and its supremo Arvind Kejriwal. "There is an Okhla rally in Mustafabad in northeast Delhi, but people familiar with him said he is industrial area in Delhi but there has been no trade suffering from chest there for the past 10 years. congestion.

While the AAP took no The Congress campaign for interest in setting up industries there, they have undoubtedly settled Rohingyas and Bangladeshis settled Yogi claimed that AAP leaders are distributing canceled. Aadhars at homes to

leaders will step up the campaign in Delhi," he said. **Continued on page 8** 



## infiltrators. "And on the other side you can see New Okhla [NOIDA]. Compare the roads of Delhi to Noida

Wednesday.

election

## **Rahul Gandhi cancels two** rallies on consecutive days

the Assembly elections was expected to get a big boost from Rahul's three daily rallies on three successive days, starting January 22, but two of these have now been

"As of now, Rahul Gandhi's election rally in Madipur on



### RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

Days after a Delhi-based entrepreneur shared his findings on differential pricing



### Yadav, a day after the Leader of Opposition in the Lok by Delhi government are in a very bad condition," he Sabha failed to show up for an election rally near Inderlok metro station in the Sadar alleged. Calling it a 'well thought conspiracy', the firebrand leader said, "They have not just kept the people of Delhi Assembly constituency on

and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, there is a difference

of sky and earth. There are

world class educational institutions and medical colleges in UP while the

educational institutions run

PTI

Dismissing speculation that the cancellation of Rahul's devoid of basic facilities, rallies was aimed at helping they have also compromised the AAP-by preventing a division of Muslim voterson national security through their actions. You must have Yadav said, "These are rumors. We are fighting the seen the riots in Delhi in 2020 and how the AAP independently." leaders and councillors were "After Republic Day, the party engaged in that. They are repeatedly messing with national security."

मुख्य अतिथि

माननीय मुख्यमंत्री उत्तर प्रदेश

### **CCI probe into** Zomato, Swiggy

NRAI calls for

Rohingya and Bangladeshi

there," he said.

SAUMYA SHUKLA 📕 NEW DELHI

descended in the national

Capital going full throttle against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) ahead of the

high-octane Delhi Assembly

elections with its prominent

leaders including party president and Union

Minister Jaggat Prakash Nadda, and three chief

ministers-Uttar Pradesh

(UP) Chief Minister (CM)

Yogi Adityanath, Madhya Pradesh CM Mohanlal

Yadav, and Uttarakhand CM

Pushkar Singh Dhami-

meetings across the length and breadth of the city.

he star campaigners of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 $T_{\rm Association}^{\rm he \ National \ Restaurant} \ Restaurant$ (NRAI), which represents half a million eateries nationwide, said it will approach Competition Commission of India over "private labelling" by Zomato and Swiggy and their foray into quick commerce food delivery via Bistro by Blinkit and Snacc, respectively.

In an interview, NRAI President Sagar Daryani raised concerns over "anti-competitive" practices of food delivery aggregators, "data masking" and "deep

masking" and "deep discounting". "We will be adding to our petition in CCI about them (Tomatic CCI about them (Zomato, Swiggy) doing private labels through Bistro and Snacc," Daryani shared. He said NRAI will also request CCI to investigate complaints received from its member restaurants that Zomato and Swiggy were procuring from third party commercial kitchens for Zomato Everyday and Swiggy Daily.

Queries sent to Swiggy and Zomato remained unanswered

Daryani said NRAI was "very concerned" as manv restaurants were already shutting down with several losing workers their livelihoods.

Addressing an NRAI townhall with restaurant industry stakeholders on Wednesday, Daryani suggested that restaurants need to look at a "third alternative" like ONDC and could replicate the success achieved through a pilot in Bengaluru, throughout India. During the townhall, top restaurateurs raised concerns over the entry of food delivery aggregators like Zomato and Swiggy into private labelling and dining-in, and stressed the need for alternatives in the market.

by two ride-hailing apps in a series of posts on X, comparing fares across different devices and battery levels, the Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notices to tech giant Apple Inc. and cab aggregators Ola and Uber, seeking clarification on reports of alleged differential pricing based on the type of mobile device used to book rides. This comes after reports that the two companies comes after reports that the two companies appeared to charge different fares for the same

appeared to charge different fares for the same service, depending on whether the customer was using an iPhone or an Android device. "As a follow-up to the earlier observation of apparent #DifferentialPricing based on the different models of mobiles (#iPhones/ #Android) being used, the Department of Consumer Affairs, through the CCPA, has issued notices to major cab aggregators #Ola and #Uber, seeking their responses," Union Minister for Consumers' Affairs Prahlad Joshi said in a social media post.

Apple has been asked to respond to technical issues reported by iPhone users after a recent software update. Apple has been releasing updates, including iOS 18.0.1 in October, to address screen and camera freezing issues, and the latest 18.2.1 update for bug fixes.

In its notice, the CCPA asked the companies to explain their pricing methods and address concerns about potential discrimination. The ministry described the practice as "apparent differential pricing" and sought a detailed response to ensure transparency and fairness in fare calculations.



Recently, a survey by LocalCircles revealed that 60 percent of iPhone users experienced service problems, with call failures being the most significant issue. Nearly 90 percent of surveyed iPhone users attributed their difficulties directly to an iOS update, with no blame placed on Wi-Fi or mobile networks. Last month, the internet was abuzz with speculation that cab aggregators charged different fares - higher for those making bookings on iPhones - for the same ride. However, other social media users soon joined the chorus, alleging they were being charged different fares for identical rides when booking through Android and iOS devices. Joshi had emphasized "zero tolerance for

consumer exploitation" and asked the CCPA to conduct a thorough inquiry into these allegations. He had described this practice as a "prima facie unfair trade practice" and a 'blatant disregard" for consumers' right to transparency.

6,150 per day. Candidates need to get the poll panel's approval to hire animals for campaigning. The daily wage rate ranges from Rs 692 for unskilled workers to Rs 913 for graduates and above. The EC has also set rates for Continued on page 8 | accommodations in hotels and



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

Rs 25 each. There

are also price limits

for flags, posters, h a n d b i l l s ,

hoardings, cut-outs, and stickers.

Pens used in party

cannot exceed Rs 6 each.

the

instruments used at campaign events, drums are priced at Rs

According to officials, each returning officer prepares the

rate list of services and

materials used by the

candidates. Officials said the

itemized rate list is finalized by

a committee, which includes

offices

musical

during

S

Among

500 per day.

election

for vehicles. The rates for ruling Aam Aadmi Party vehicles like Tata Sumo, (AAP), used for maintaining party offices, event venues, or Toyota Innova, and Mahindra Scorpio, among others, are Rs 2,421 per day per vehicle. For a

normal car, the limit is Rs 1,499 per day. The maximum cost for a two-wheeler is Rs 84 per day. The rate list also

specifies the maximum expenditure limit for tents, chairs, tables, podiums, and chairs, tables, podiums, and generators. For gatherings of up to 2,000 people, for example, the maximum rate, including all related expenses, is set at Rs 30,000 per event. For smaller gatherings of fewer than 250 people, the staging rate is Rs 6,150. A broom, the party symbol of the

area of 1,483 square kilometers, the prices of most commodities are more or less the same but may vary occasionally.

Candidates are required to submit their expenditure report to the poll panel within 30 days of the completion of an election. The expenses are also monitored by the campaigning, commission through video cannot cost more than during recording the

campaign. The accounting of expenses is done from the date candidates file their nomination papers until the day of the results. In the event of a violation or incorrect claims, the candidacy of the person is canceled as per Election Commission rules. As a norm, the poll panel tracks candidates' expenses itemduring election wise campaigns. The rates are fixed based on feedback from district election officials, market dealers, political parties, and the prevailing Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Continued on page 8

## **Doubts raised in Saif Ali attack case**

### TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

There is still more than what meets the L eye in matters relating to the recent attack on Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan and the arrest of the accused Shariful Islam Shehzad Mohammad Amin Fakir for his alleged involvement in the incident. Or so it appears, going by the questions being raised in different quarters about the actor's rapid recovery and also the identity of the arrested Bangladeshi national. On his part, Shariful's father Mohammed

Ruhul Amin Fakir has questioned the authenticity of the of the CCTV footage used to make the arrest of his son did not match with that of the person in the CCTV footage taken from actor's building on the day of incident, in which the intruder to Saif;s house is seen climbing down the stairs. The CCTV-based photograph which initially made it to social media has been featured widely in print and electronic media.

Talking to a leading television, the accused's father Mohammed Fakir said:



"The person in the CCTV footage is not my son. But the police have used this footage as the basis to arrest my son (in connection with the Saif Ali Khan attack)".

Mohammed Fakir also defended his son by saying his son had never kept his hair long, unlike the person in the video.

Shariful was arrested by the Mumbai police from Hiranandani Estate at Thane

### (west) on January 19. Police said Shariful hailed from Rajabariya village in Nalchity sub-region of Jhalokati district

When Shariful was produced before a holiday court on the same day, the accused's lawyer Sandeep D. Sherkhane had contested the claim made by the police that his client was a Bangladeshi who came to Mumbai six months ago.

'The accused has been living in Mumbai with his family for the past 7 years. I argued in court yesterday very clearly on this. The police are trying to make him a scapegoat as this case involves a Bollywood celebrity," Sherkhane had said.

It may be recalled that during the knife attack carried out on him allegedly by Shariful in the small hours of January 16, Saif had had sustained six stab wounds, including the one in his spine while he was grappling an intruder in the actor's Sharan" building at Bandra (W) in north-west Mumbai.

Continued on page 8

### INDONESIA IN INDIA



Band of the Indonesian contingent marches during the full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade on January 25. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto is the chief guest at India's 76th Republic Day celebrations Photo: Ranian Dimri



## city 02



This is to inform the general public that in the registration form of my son ABDUL MUKEEM, a student of class 10, the name has been erroneously changed to ABDUL MUBEEN, which is wrong. My name is Abdul Mobeen which is true and correct. So change the name which is correct. Abdul Mobeen Resident Naubasta, Mudila, Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh (271604).

## Information

This is to inform the general public that in the registration form of my son Abdul (ABDUL Mukeem MUKEEM) who is a student of class 10, my name has been erroneously mentioned as Shahnaz Khatoon which is false and my real name is SHAHNAJ KHATOON. So change the name which is correct. Shahnaz Khatoon Resident Naubasta, Mudila, Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh (271604).

### NOTICE

I am Neeta Gupta My Allatment letter & other documents of plot no.J7/014 at Sushant Golf City Lucknow has been lost in Hazaratganj,Lucknow on dated 14/01/2025



I have changed my name from mohd amir rizwan to amir rizwan. In future i shall Be known as amir rizwan. Amir rizwan s/o rizwan ullah, 568, c-block, defence colony, jajmau, kanpur



I have changed my name from Bhavya Panjwani to Bhavvya panjwani to be known as Bhavvva paniwani in all future references. Bhavvya panjwani, Add.- 1/49 w-1, Saket Nagar, Kanpur

### सूचना

I have changed my name from Shabana Chaudhri to Shabana Choudhari for all future Purposes. Shabana Choudhari W/O Arif Khan R/O 89/140,Ram Chandi Akhada Dalel Purwa Kanpur

### NOTICE

Nagar

I have changed my name from Mohammad Vakee Syed to Syed Mohd Vakee for all future Purposes. Syed Mohd Vakee S/O Mohd Ilyas Syed R/O 105/196-A. Chaman Gani Kanpur Nagar

### NOTICE

I, Sonika Singh, W/O Rajesh Kumar, aged 47 years, R/o B2/97, Sect-F, Jankipuram, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh U.P. 226021, my First name is Sonika and some of my documents my name is Sonika Singh. I had changed my name Sonika Singh for all future activities

### NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my name has been erroneously mentioned as Shaheen" in the school records of my daughter Hania Alam Siddiqui, which is incorrect.My correct name is Shaheen Alam which is also mentioned in my Aadhar card.Shaheen Alam, W/o Mr. Shah Alam, R/o 69/71, Chhitwapur, Bhedi Mandi, Hussainganj, Lucknow.

### NOTICE

My real name is Barkha Singh. This Barkha has been entered in my Aadhar card by mistake. In future, I should be known and recognized only by the name of Barkha Singh. Barkha Singh D/O Late : Mahaveer Singh, 145/1, JK Colony P.O. Shivan Tannery, Jajmau Kanpur Nagar- 208010

### NOTICE

Inspector Vinod Kumar Pandey said that the accused I Shiv Nandan Verma age 51 was arrested from Sector-8 vears dependent of Himanshu underpass of PGI area on a tip-Verma resident of vill off by an informer. Police are searching for other accused involved in the case. The police had registered a case against three people, including the one arrested on

## Netaji's life embodies courage, loyalty, selfless service: CM

### PNS LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, described Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as the epitome of courage, lovalty and selfless service, calling on the youth to find inspiration in his vision and ideals. On the occasion of the birth anniversary

of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the chief minister paid glowing tributes by garlanding his statue at Parivartan Chowk. He also reflected on Netaji's immense contributions to the nation, hailing him as a great son of Mother India and an iconic hero of the freedom struggle. Addressing the youth, the chief minister highlighted Netaji's extraordinary life, remarkable personality and historic deeds.

He described how Netaji gave a transfor-mative direction to India's freedom struggle, igniting an enduring flame of patrio-tism in the hearts of Indians. "His immortal slogan, 'Give me blood, and I will give you freedom, inspires genera-

tions and is a testament to his undying legacy," he remarked.

Chief Minister Yogi said that Netaji's birth anniversary was celebrated as Parakram Diwas to honour his unparalleled valour and contributions. He said, "This illustrious son of Mother India reshaped the freedom movement with his vision and actions, becoming a beacon of pride and inspiration for every Indian." He praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2021 decision to declare January 23

as Parakram Diwas, calling it a profound gesture of the nation's gratitude to Netaji. The chief minister also reflected on Netaji's bold choice to resign from a prestigious civil service position, refusing to work under colonial rule. This act of defiance, he noted, epitomised Netaji's patri-otism and served as a source of inspiration

man was arrested on

the accused drugged the victim after visiting her house in

PNS LUCKNOW



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath pays tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his birth anniversary, in PTI Lucknow on Thursday

for countless young Indians.

He highlighted Netaji's unvielding spirit, which thrived despite resource constraints. "Netaji's slogans ignited nationalism, leading to his house arrest by the British. Undeterred, he sought international support in Germany, Japan and beyond, showcasing his relentless dedication to India's freedom," the chief minister said.

Chief Minister Yogi urged the youth to rise above caste, religion, language and region-al differences, prioritising national duty above all. He stated that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's life exemplifies unwavering loyalty and dedication to the nation. The chief minister urged the youth to look beyond personal careers and recognise their responsibilities toward the country and society.

Recalling Netaji's courage and commitment, Chief Minister Yogi remarked that his remarkable personality continues to inspire youth, teaching them resilience in the face of challenges. Every step of Netaji's journey served as a guiding light, leading his contemporaries in the freedom struggle and offering solutions to societal issues, he added.

The chief minister remarked that Netaji's message is as relevant today as it was during the freedom movement. He encouraged the youth to embrace Netaji's ideals and actively contribute to nation-building. Chief Minister Yogi said, "Celebrating Yuva Pakhwada, from the revered birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda to that of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, this entire programme offers a fresh wave of inspiration to the youth."

He pointed out that this celebration serves as a powerful source of motivation for the youth. Emphasising unity, he urged every citizen to rise above caste, creed, religion, region and language, and focus on a single duty – Rashtradharma. He added that the towering legacy of Netaji

Subhas Chandra Bose continues to inspire people to serve the nation with unwavering dedication.

On this occasion, Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, MLA Neeraj Bora, Amresh Kumar, MLC Avnish Singh, Angad Singh, Ramchandra Pradhan, Lalji Prasad Nirmal, and others were present.

SI accused of beating

## Knife attack on girl: Police close to nabbing accused

Lucknow (PNS): Police have married and a native of Sidhauli identified the accused who in Sitapur. barged into a girl's house in In the attack, the victim, Ruby, suffered serious injuries to her Shankarpur village in Madiaon on Tuesday morning and attacked her with a knife, offineck, both hands, and chin. The accused had visited her house several times before. The cials said. girl had been staying with her

According to the police, teams are conducting raids in search of the attacker, and the accused is expected to be arrested soon. Meanwhile, the condition of the girl, admitted in KGMU, is improving. Police said that the girl was not

medically fit to talk, so she could not be questioned about the reason behind the attack.

Clues were found on the basis of call details and the bike number, which the miscreant abandoned outside the house in the hurry to flee after being chased by residents who responded after hearing the girl's screams. The accused, who had attacked the girl with a knife in anger, is said to be Singh, who has an old house in Shankarpur village and has given it to the woman, a resident of Jagdishpur, Sandana, Sitapur, to look after it. On Tuesday morning, a young man on a bike entered the house and stabbed Ruby several times before fleeing the scene, leaving the bike behind. The bike on which the attacker arrived is registered in the name of a resident

mother and other family mem-

bers at the house of former

Barabanki MLA Harigovind

of Palhari, BKT. CCTV footage has also been reviewed. In it, the accused was seen running away on foot after the incident.

### Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Sitapur Eye Hospital, Sitapur U.P.-261001

RIOEHS/Tender/2024-2025/1 Dt 23/01/2025 Short Term Tender Notice

On behalf of Secretary, sealed tenders are invited for Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Sitapur Eye Hospital, Sitapur for purchase of Ophthalmic Instruments & Equipments from manufacturers or their authorized distributors.Details of Ophthalmic Equipments and Instruments terms and conditions of the tender are available on our website www.sitapureyehospital.org

Phone No. 05862-242884, +91-7897364617 Chief Medical Officer

uths	verka Her Die Da. Her Da Da				
akesh Singh, president of the ssociation, condemned the ncident and alleged that Sub- nspector Sanjay Yadav was	THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155. SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66 Notice Inviting e Tender www.verka.coop e- tenders are hereby Invited for the purchase and supply of following item :-				
drunk and specifically targeted Dalit labourers without cause.	Sr.no. Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty			
He also accused the sub-inspec- tor of extorting money by impli- cating people in false cases. The organisation president, Rakesh Singh, further accused the police of falsely implicating	For Verka Head Office, Chandigarh     a) ESL Film     i. ESL EVOH Film 130 ml     ii. ESL EVOH Film 450 ml     b) GDL	Half yearly/ 30000 Kg 12000 Kg Annual/16.5 MT			
individuals. The injured work- ers have been sent for medical examination. The farmers' union has given the administra- tion a 48-hour ultimatum. If no	<ol> <li>For Verka Patiala Dairy Hirring of vehicle for procurement, marketing activities and extension work etc. for Verka Milk Plant (Swift desire, Toyta etois, Honda amaze, Verna i.e sedan cars with open diggi)</li> </ol>	03 No's			
action is taken, they will sur- round the police station, and if necessary, march to Lucknow in support of the injured workers. Malihabad Inspector Satish Chandra Sahu stated that	<ul> <li>NOTE:</li> <li>1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit www.verka.coop &amp; e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in</li> <li>2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.</li> </ul>	•			
CCTV footage is being investi-	Dy. General	Manager (Purchase)			

## Man arrested for raping niece

Punjab to buy goods to be used in completing the project. At that time, the girl was all alone at home. The accused

A<sup>man</sup> was arrested Thursday on the charges of was carrying sweets, which the girl ate and fell unconraping his sister's daughter and extorting money to run his business, police said here. According to the PGI police, scious.

The accused then took off her clothes and clicked her picture before allegedly raping her. "When I regained conscious-

Punjab and raped her. "He also took objectionable ness, I had no clothes," the girl had told the police. The victim further alleged that pictures of the victim and started blackmailing her. The accused called the victim to the accused showed her Gonda and Lucknow and sexobscene pictures to her and demanded jewellery. He promised to return the jew-

ually exploited her there as ellery once his project was completed by December. He took all the jewellery and Rs 6.000 in cash and returned to Lucknow. The victim said she did not inform anyone about the incident as she was petrified. He called her to Lucknow on the pretext of returning the jewellery and money and allegedly raped her by threatening to make her nude pictures viral. He forcibly took her to Gonda and alleged raped her there too. The in a big project in Lucknow's accused is a resident of Sangrampur police station area PGI area. The accused further of Amethi district. told her that he had visited

up Dalit youths Lucknow (PNS): A sub-inspector in Malihabad has been accused of inquiring about the caste of Dalit youths and beat-

ing them up. In protest, mem-bers of the Kisan Union Loktantrik Sangathan gheraoed the Malihabad Police Station on Thursday, demanding action against the accused police inspector and the other cops involved.

It was alleged that at around 2:30 am on Wednesday, Inspector Sanjay Yadav, along with some other people in police uniform, reached the Dharm Kanta (weighing bridge) near Mall Road Amaniganj. The area is known as a wood trade centre, according to locals.

It was claimed that the sub-Malihabad Inspector Satish inspector began beating labour-Chandra Sahu stated that at the weighing machine CCTV footage is being investi located on the Hardoi-Lucknow road. The sub-inspector allegedly first asked the labourers about their caste before starting to beat them without any reason A video of the incident has also surfaced. After learning about the incident, members of the Kisan Union Loktantrik gathered at the police station on Thursday morning. They demanded action against the accused policemen.

and mourning. The local

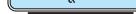
municipal administration has

been informed of the incident

and urged to implement effec-

tive measures to control strav

dogs and prevent such tragedies, police officials said.



मेरे स्वामित्व में भवन सं. 48/एलआईजी इन्दिरा नगर कानपुर नगर का मल आवंटन पत्र व कब्जा लेटर कहीं गिर गए हैं। शोभित सिंह पुत्र अमर बहादुर सिंह

### NOTICE

General Public is informed that the sale dead dated 18-09-2015 executed by Rakesh Kumar Srivastava Alias Rahas Bihari Srivastava R/o Saryu Vihar Coloney Tehsil & Dist Ayodhya in favour of Smt Sudha Singh W/o Dhruu Chandra Singh R/o Vill & Post Tikar Pargana Pashchim Rath Tehsil Beekapur Dist Ayodhya in respect of Bhavan no- L-8 Hous Nagar Palika No.6/22/8 /L-8 Area-60 squar Mrr which is Situated At Saryu Viha Coloney Mo.Ramna Tehsil & Distt Ayodhy registred in the office of Sub-Registar registred in the office of Sub-Registar, Tehsil-Sadar, district-Ayodhya at Bahi no-1 Serial no-7556 Applied For Mortgage at LICHFL Branch Faizabad Ayodhya Second Floor Atar Deep Complex Near Devkali Bypass Panchsheel Hotal Tehsil Sadar Dist Ayodhya has been lost. Kindly Return it t Undersign on Contact with the writte Undersign on Contact with the written objection with relevant documents; if having any claim objection with in 7 days from the date of this publication. It is use by anyone is invalid.Sachin Shanker Srivastava, Advocate, Shed No.3 Civil Court Faizabad mob-8299765176

### NOTICE

### **Public Notice**

A Claim Application has been filed by Sm Manju Singh against Shadab Beg an Mohd Imran registered as Arbitratic Case No. 100 / 2024 on 4/12/2024 pursuance to a dispute arisen between the claimant and Respondents pursuance of the Builder Agreeme dated 26th October 2017 wherein a clause no. 24 arbitration clause has bee provided that in case of any disput between the parties to the agreeme natter be referred to sole arbitrato Notice was issued to Mr. Shadab Be Resident of 165 / 17 Hata Fakir Mohd Maulviganj, Lucknow 226010 Tel. : +91-9559664788 and Mohd. Imran 163 / 242 Chikmandi Maulvi Ganj, Lucknow 22601 Tel: +91 9335917983 being Opposite Parties / Respondents of the Arbitration Since they failed to appear on date fixed for Arbitrator on 4 / 1 / 2025 hence a order for publication in the news paper has been issued by the Arbitrator. Henc in terms of order dated 4/1/2025 issued b Sole Arbitrator the publication is bein made with the directions to Shadab Be and Mohd Imran if they intend to subm any Reply to the claim they may do so o or before 27th January 2025 before th Arbitrator Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh (IP retd. And Former Member UP Real Estat Regulatory Authority) at 5 PM. ssued under the order dated 4 / 1 / 202 assed by Sole Arbitrator

affidavit No

Ugabhad Post Mubarakhpur Dist Raebareli UP 229208 have change by name form Shiv Nandan Verma to Shiv Nandan age 10/06/1971 vide IN-UP97854903901007W dated

11 dec 2024 before court lalganj

I Mamta Verma age 41 years dependent of Himanshu Verma Resident of vill Ugabhad Post Mubarakhpur Dist Raebareli UP 229208 have change by name form Mamta Verma to Mamta Devi age 14/04/1979 vide affidavit No IN-UP97853814791096W dated 11dec 2024 before court lalganj

### NOTICE

have changed my name from Faizul Ameen to FAIZUL AMIN S/o Mohd. Shakeel R/o 93/67 Akbar Hall Rizvi Road Kanpur for all future purpose.



I, Sanjeev Agarwal, S/o Brijmohan Agarwal, R/o 56-P, Turner Road, Cantt, Kanpur 208004. have changed my name to Sanjeev Kumar Agarwal for all future purposes.



In some of my documents my name is mentioned as Abdul Matin and in other documents my name is mentioned as Abdul Mateen Nadvi. Hence both the names belong to the same person. Abdul Mateen Nadvi son of Mohammad Umar, resident-Mahad Nadwa Campus, Hardoi Road, Sikrori, Kakori, Lucknow.

Thursday. The victim alleged that on October 3, 2024, her maternal uncle visited her home and told her that he had got work

**OTHE PIONEER** O

ASSIFIED

Daheli-Puliya

Pillibhit Bypass

name to Srijana Gangwar.

I, Dolly Tiwari D/o Ajay

Kumar Tiwari R/o 115/284 A

Maswanpur Kanpur Nagar

U.P.-208019 changed my

I, Prerna D/o Kanwar Singh

PD(1311)A

PD(1312)A

PD(1313)C

name to Tarushree Tiwari.

Tomar.

well," the police said.

NOTICE





W/o Ankit R/o Kalsi Saharanpur U.P. - 247341 changed my name to Prerna Singh. I hitherto known as Nutan D/o Dharmendra Kumar R/o Near Radha Krishna Mandir,

Gujratiyan, Dhampur, Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh-246761 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ranjana Singhal.

Stray dogs maul 3-year-old boy to death in Mathura

old boy was mauled to death by stray dogs while playing outside his house in the Kosi Kalan town of the district, police said. Ashish Sharma, Circle Officer (CO) of Chhata, said, Sujanpur "The incident occurred around Kanpur-Nagar U.P. - 208015 3 pm on Wednesday when the boy, identified as Sofiyan, was changed my-name to Surabhi playing outside his home (in the Eidgah Colony). A pack of six stray dogs surrounded him, PD(1309)A I, Srajna Gangwar D/o Ram attacked, and dragged him, leaving him grievously injured." Aotar Singh R/O A-73/20 Bannu Bal Nagar Tulipgrand Other children who witnessed the attack informed the boy's Road family, Sharma added. "The Mahanagar Bareilly Uttar family members rushed to the Pradesh-243006 changed my spot, used sticks to drive the dogs away, and rescued the PD(1310)A

### **CITYBRIEFS**

### FIRE IN WAITING AREA OF UPCAD BUILDING

A fire broke out in the waiting area of the UP Civil Aviation Department (UPCAD) building at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport at 11 pm on January 22. As the first respon-ders, the Airport's Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) team reached the site with two fire tenders and extinguished the flames. There was no loss of life or impact on airport operations. "The CCSIA team will work with the district administration and UPCAD officials to identify the cause of the short circuit due to which the fire broke out," the CCSIA spokesperson said.

### NETAJI'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

The 128th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was celebrated at Bengali Club. Blankets were also distributed on the occasion. Bose had visited the club premises on November 20, 1938, and it was here that the decision to form the Azad Hind Fauj was taken. President of the club, Arun Kumar Banerjee, addressed the gathering, Kaushik Bose, Debashish Mukherjee, Tapan Samantho, Ashish Bhattacharya, and Saurabh Biswas were also present.

NA/12/27682/2023/41055 gated.



Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of owers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property & O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand Notice Date & Possession Notice Date

Borrower : Smt. Priya Bhadauriya W/o Shri Shardend Pratap Singh, R/o : 111/479, Braham Nagar R. K. Nagar, Kanpur Nagar.

Demand Notice Date: 16-10-2024 • Date of Constructive Possession: 21-01-2025

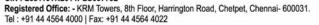
Property : Land and Building Builtover Residential Plot No. E-995, Block No. 1550, EWS Scheme No. 40, Ratanpur Panki, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Smt. Priya Bhadauriya W/o Shri Shardend Pratap Singh, Area: 47.64 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: House No. E-970, South: 7.50 Mtr. Wide Road, East House No. E-996, West: House No. E-994

Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 29.44.056.61 + Intt, +Others Charges Total Dues Amount as on Dated 20-01-2025 : Rs. 30,12,150.74 + Intt. + Others Cl

Date : 21-01-2025	Place : Kanpur	Authorised Officer
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### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**

(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792



APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property) **IDFC FIRST** 

Bank

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 25.09.2024 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1.MR. ASHISH KUMAR TIWARI, 2. MS. SHALINI TIWARI, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being RS. 11,62,162.89/- (Rupees Eleven Lac Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Sixty Two and Eighty Nine Paise Only) as on 24.09.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Demand notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub - section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 17th day of JAN 2025.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of THE IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of RS. 11,62,162.89/- (Rupees Eleven Lac Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Sixty Two and Eighty Nine Paise Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub - Section (8) Of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeet the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF NEW HOUSE NO. 258, OLD HOUSE NO. C-289, ADMEASURING 31.2 SQ. MTR., RCC RESIDENTIAL HOUSE. VILLAGE KARANPUR. KHAS MEERA BHAWAN, PARGANA & TEHSIL SADAR, DISTRICT PRATAPGARH, NEAR B.S.A. OFFICE, PRATAPGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-230144, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: PORTION OF HOUSE NO. 258, WEST: 6 METER ROAD, NORTH: HOUSE NO. C - 302, SOUTH: 9 METER ROAD

Date:17-01-2025	Authorised Officer
Place: UTTAR PRADESH	IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited
Loan Account No:103837021	and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)



child. But by then, he had suffered severe injuries, with bite and claw marks all over his body," Sharma said. The boy was initially taken to a nearby private hospital, where doctors referred him to a district hospital due to the severity of his injuries. However, Sofivan succumbed to his injuries on the way to the hospital, officials said. The death of Sofiyan, the youngest of three brothers, leaves his family in deep shock



## Maha Kumbh: 10 crore devotees take holy dip at Sangam

### PNS MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj has witnessed an unprecedented turnout of devotees, with over 10 crore people taking a holy dip in the sacred confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and the mystical Saraswati rivers.

The historic milestone was achieved by noon on Thursday, reflecting the immense faith and devotion of sadhus, saints, kalpvasis and pilgrims who have come here from around the world.

The Yogi Adityanath govern-ment estimates that this Maha Kumbh will host over 45 crore visitors, and the early achievement of 10 crore bathers reaffirms these projections.

On Thursday alone, 30 lakh devotees, including 10 lakh kalpvasis, participated in the holy ritual, contributing to the steady flow of daily pilgrims. The bathing festivals have drawn record crowds, with 3.5 crore devotees taking the Amrit Snan on Makar Sankranti and

1.7 crore participating on Paush Purnima. The vibrant confluence area showcases India's diverse cultural tapestry as devotees from different castes, creeds and countries unite in faith, embodying Maha Kumbh's theme of unity.

Remarkably, while crores of pilgrims visit the holy city, life in Prayagraj remains uninterrupted. The district administration has ensured that schools, offices and businesses operate smoothly, imposing restrictions only during major bathing festivals. This seamless coordination has brought joy to city residents, enhancing the grandeur of this global spiritu-

### **GUV TAKES HOLY DIP**

al event.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel took the holy dip in the Triveni Sangam on Thursday

Later she went to Parmarth



Sadhus take part in a procession during the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 in Prayagraj on Thursday

Niketan camp where Manas Katha is being narrated by Morari Bapu. He heard the discourse in the presence of Parmarth Niketan president Rajendra Das Maharaj, Swami Chidananda Saraswati, Santoshdas (Satua Baba), Sadhvi Bhagwati Saraswati. UP Minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi'.

Welcoming Bapu and other Saints, Anandiben Patel said, "It is a matter of good fortune to listen to the character of Ramji and Ramayana from Bapu's mouth at Triveni Sangam. Today Bapu gave a beautiful explanation of the naming of Lord Shri Ram and his brothers. We should also name our children after them."

On this occasion, she also praised the service of the sanitation workers.

### UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

The Maha Kumbh in Pravagrai PTI stands as a profound spiritual

यूनियन बैंक ([]

and cultural phenomenon. It encapsulates elements of faith, karma, devotion, meditation and philosophy, offering a mes-merising experience of Sanatan traditions and the universal principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is

One Family). The grandeur of Maha Kumbh attracts not only devotees from across India, but also international visitors. Pilgrims from nations like the USA, Canada, Germany, Russia, Fiji, Mauritius, Malaysia, Australia, and beyond converge on Prayagraj, transforming the sandy banks of the Ganga into a global village. The event's cula global village. The event's cul-tural and spiritual significance earned it the status of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017, further solid-ifying its global appeal. With an emphasis on digital technology, enhanced safety measures and cleanliness the

measures and cleanliness, the Yogi government has infused modernity into this ancient

tradition. Extensive arrange ments for accommodation, dining and sanitation have been made to ensure a seamless experience for millions of visitors.

city 03

The illuminated tents on the riverbanks at night create a mesmerising spectacle, while the serene environment fosters a sense of peace and spiritual solace.

The chants of 'Har Har Mahadev' and 'Jai Shri Ram' resonate across the event, enhancing the spiritual atmosphere. Devotees willingly guide each other in navigating the vast arrangements, reflecting the collective spirit of service and community. The Maha Kumbh is more than a festival - it is a celebration of humanity, spirituality and eternal traditions.

The Yogi government invites everyone to witness this unparalleled event, assuring a warm welcome and an unforgettable spiritual journey.

Branch Office : 1742/1, Rahul Complex, Civil Lines, Jhans Regional Office : 117/H/-1/240, Pandu Nagar, Kanpur

Head Office : 239, Vidhan Bhawan Marg, Nariman Point Mumba

Branch :

ing Amour

Bank

## **MAHA KUMBH SNIPPETS**

### DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF SANATAN BOARD TO BE ANNOUNCED ON JAN 27 DHARM SABHA: SEERS

Various akharas at the ongoing Maha Kumbh announced on Thursday that a constitution draft of a 'Sanatan Board' will be released during a religious gathering here on January 27 to "free" the Sanatan Dharm from the "control" of the government. Seers of several akharas held a press conference here at the Niranjani Akhara to unveil their plan for the proposed Sanatan Board. Sanatan Dharm is a Sanskrit word believed to mean a set of duties and practices eternal to Hinduism. Renowned spiritual speaker Devkinandan Thakur said the upcoming 'Dharma Sabha' (reli-gious gathering) to be held in Sector 17 of Mahakumbh Nagar will be commemorated as "Dharma Ki Swatantrata Ka Diwas" (Freedom of Religion Day). The constitution draft of the pro-posed Sanatan Board will be presented on the day, he added. Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad president Mahant Ravindra Puri confirmed Thakur's announcement, saying the constitution draft of the Sanatan Board will be finalised and officially announced "in the presence of all religious leaders". Explaining the need for a Sanatan Board, Thakur said, "Our dharma (religion) is not free because our temples are controlled by govern-ments, our gurukuls (traditional schools) have been shut down and our gau mata (sacred cows) are wandering on the streets. We need the Sanatan Board to advance our cause?

### FREE RO WATER FOR DEVOTEES

In a significant initiative to support devotees and tourists, the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam (Urban) has installed 200 water ATMs across the Maha Kumbh Mela grounds, providing pure RO drinking water completely free of cost. With all the 200 water ATMs strategically placed near various sectors and temples, pure RO water is being provided free of cost to the lakhs of devo-tees visiting Maha Kumbh daily. Devotees can easily fill their bottles or utensils with clean drinking water at the press of a button. Jal Nigam (Urban) Executive Engineer Satish Kumar said that the initial technical issues with the Water ATMs had been resolved. "Devotees can now access pure RO water complete-ly free with just the press of a button," he said, adding that the earlier fee of Re 1 for Water ATMs had been waived.

He said operators were present at each Water ATM to assist devotees, and technical issues were being monitored through sen-sor-based systems. "In case of any malfunction, technicians from the water corporation promptly address the issue," he said. Each Water ATM dispenses 12,000 to 15,000 litres of water daily,

benefiting lakhs of devotees. On Makar Sankranti, January 14, around 46,000 litres of water was provided through Water ATMs

## Congress alleges corruption, mismanagement in Kumbh

PNS LUCKNOW a political event. He said the

Uttar Pradesh Congress pres-ident Ajay Rai and Congress MP from Prayagraj Ujjwal Raman Singh, on Thursday charged the Yogi tion is happening by giving contracts to Gujarati companies. Adityanath government with corruption in the budget alloca-By holding cabinet meetings in Maha Kumbh, a political mestion for Maha Kumbh and sage is being given in the reli-gious and faith event," he questioned the government for its indifference in the arrangecharged. The Prayagraj MP, while attacking the government ments for the devotees and saints and the half-hearted preparations for the historic on irregularities, said that the event.

Addressing the media at a press laid long back when the tender Addressing the media at a press conference, Ujjwal Raman Singh, accused the government and officials of ignoring the saints and devotees. He said that the government and the entire for supply of sleepers worth Rs 200 crore per year for making pipe bridges was distributed among many private firms in an illegal and unlawful manner. "As official system was only engaged in hosting VIPs and taking a result of this change, the sleepers could not be supplied photographs, due to which the common devotees were facing on time and even those that were supplied were of poor quality due to which the bridges great inconvenience. Ajay Rai broke as soon as they were made," he alleged. also accused the government of corruption in the budget allocat-Ujjwal Raman Singh said that during the Kumbh Mela in ed in the name of the Maha Kumbh and said that it will be exposed with facts and figures 2019, the Bharatiya Janata Party government had said that the after the Maha Kumbh.

Rai said that the government metro rail would start operating was misleading everyone by in Prayagraj by Maha Kumbh claiming large-scale prepara-tions in the name of Maha 2025, but there was no trace of the metro. Kumbh. Questioning the cabi-He said, it was announced that net meeting in Mahakumbh Nagar, Rai said that by doing a six-lane bridge over the Ganga would be ready before the cabinet drama at the holy Kumbh Mela, but that too Mahasangam place of faith and remained incomplete, the brunt

quer when a steel bridge was constructed at a cost of Rs 60 had turned Maha Kumbh into government had changed the crore, at the same place, for only traditions of Maha Kumbh. 60 days. "Who is responsible for this loss and who is accountable "In the name of arrangements in Maha Kumbh, only corrupfor it?" he asked.

While raising questions on the preparations for the Maha Kumbh, the MP said that road construction also fell prey to corruption. "In every Kumbh, even the streets and drains of the localities were built, but this time even the main roads and intersections were not touched. foundation of corruption was due to the mismanagement of the government, people are fac-ing trouble by walking 20-20 kilometres on foot," he alleged. 'The situation is such that the facilities of the tirtha purohits and kalpvasis have been curtailed; the tirtha purohits have been allotted a place of worship away from Sangam due to which the devotees are facing inconvenience," the MP

charged. Singh alleged that due to the negligence of the government, lakhs of pilgrims were coming on foot from the railway station and bus station to take bath, but no arrangements had been made for their drinking water, toilets and restrooms. Singh said that on Mauni Amavasva, four times more people would come for the holy dip than the

last bath, so proper preparations need to be made so that the devotees do not face any incon-

[Rule-8(1)] Jhansi Main, Jhans Whereas The undersigned being the authorized officer of Union Bank of India, under the Securitisation and Jhansi Main, Jhansi Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Security Interest Act. 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors of account to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being of dues with contractual rate of interest within 60 days from the date of receipt of the

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

**Union Bank** of India

said notice. The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount in full, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantor and public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him u/s. 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules. The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with property and any dealing with the property will subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, for an Amount and Interest

We also wish to draw kind attention of all concerned towards section 13(8) of the Act in respect of time available

### Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property and O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand & Possession Notice Date

Borrower : Shri Suraj Kumar Prajapati S/o Shri Sundar Lal and Smt. Rajni Prajapati W/o Shri Suraj Kuma Praiapati, Both R/o : Atarivan Saivar, Bijoli, Atarian, Bijoli, Distt, Jhansi,

Demand Notice Date: 04-11-2024 • Date of Constructive Possession: 18.01.2025

**Property** : Residential House Situated at House Plot No. 17, Arazi No. 1937, Balaji Colony, Mauza Bijoli, Opp Bunty Dhaba, Distt. Jhansi. **Owner of Property :** Smt. Rajni Prajapati W/o Shri Suraj Kumar Prajapati, **Area** : 974 Sq. Ft./ 90.52 Sq. Mtr., Bounded -North : Plot of Rajendra Pathak, South : Plot of Anurudh, East : 7.62 Mtr. Wide Road, West: Plot of Yogesh. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice: Rs. 47,62,155.85+Intt.+Others Charges Date : 23-01-2025 Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India Place : Jhansi



### POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)

[Under Rule-8 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002] Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferre under section 13(12) read with rule 3, 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notic as detailed here in below calling upon the borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise o the powers conferred on him / her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules.

the powers conterred on him / her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charges of the Indian Bank. The Borrower's / Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. This Possession Notice is being served to the Borrower (s), Guarantor (s) & Mortgagor (s) to deposit the said dues. Details as under:

Dt. of Demand Notice Name & Address of the Borrower (s)/ **Description of the** Guarantor (s)/ Proprietor / Mortgagors Immovable Property Branch : Aminabad Park Branch

to meet the needs of devotees

spirituality, the state government of which fell on the state exche-venience.

## Walkathon raises awareness about voting

### PNS LUCKNOW

Rinwa flagged off the state-KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium on Thursday. The objective of this walkathon was to raise awareness among citizens about the importance of votvoter participation in the upcoming elections.

Addressing all the partici-pants at the inauguration of toral officer said that the contribution of every citizen is

only our right, but it is also a means to give direction to our Uttar Pradesh Chief future. The aim of this aware-ness campaign is to ensure ness campaign is to ensure Rinwa flagged off the state-level walkathon organised at that every citizen exercises their franchise and strengthens democracy," he said. Rinwa stated that National

Voters Day is celebrated every year on January 25 to make citizens aware of their rights ing and ensure 100 per cent and duties. He noted that India is renowned as the largest democracy in the world.

pants at the inauguration of "Voters play an important the walkathon, the chief elec- role in keeping democracy alive and dynamic. Voters should vote according to their essential for strengthening conscience, without any tempdemocracy. "Voting is not tation, fear, caste, religion, or

other discriminations. Youths who have completed 18 years and those who have been left out should register their names in the voter list. Now citizens get a chance to become voters four times a year (January 1, April 1, July

1, and October 1). For these dates, people can become voters by filling out Form-6 in advance," he said. He highlighted the process of

becoming a voter, the voter list, and the importance of

voting. The chief electoral officer told all the participants that such programmes help bring about positive change in society. He said that many more programmes will be organised to increase voter awareness in the upcoming elections, which will include digital campaigns, workshops in schools and colleges, and awareness activities, especially focused on women

and divyang voters. He urged that voters should not only vote themselves but also motivate their family, friends, and those around them to do so.

Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob, who was the chief guest, said that the whole world respects India's democratic processes and systems. "For the last 70 years, voters in India have chosen the Central and state govern-

ments democratically without any discrimination or fear. We all have to maintain this system together," he said. The chief electoral officer administered the oath to all the participants. About 1,500 participants, including District Election Officer/District Magistrate Visakh G, Additional Chief Election Officer Chandshekhar, Chief Development Officer Ajay Jain, and senior officers of the Chief Election Officer's office, along with youth from NSS, NYK, Bharat Scout Guide, social organisations, government personnel, and students, participated.

### 1. M/s M. K. Printer Through Manish Mishra (Partner), All part and parcel of 16.11.2024 commercial space no 10 & 13, situated at 1 Floor of Sandeep Jaiswal (Partner), Address- Commercial Space 22.01.2025 No 10 & 13, Sultan Complex (Near Roadways Bus Stand), Rs. 15,36,273.00 Jagat Narain Road Kesarbagh, Lucknow multistoried building No and interest 2. Shri Manish Kumar Mishra s/o Ashok Kumar Mishra 195/1-5, Mohalla Peer thereon (Partner/Guarantor/Mortgagor), Add-1: 538KA758/1, Triveni Nagar, Sitapur Road, Lucknow 226020 Jaleel, Lucknow CERSA Asset id is 200006590526 Add-2: Ghooramau Bangala, Sitapur Add-3: Commercial Space No 10 & 13, Sultan Complex Bounded by:- East Commercial Space (Near Roadways Bus Stand), Jagat Narain Road (Ashwani Singh And Kesarbagh, Lucknow Neeraj Gupta), West: 3. Shri Sandeep Jaiswal S/O Lalta Prasad Jaiswal (Partner/Guarantor/Mortgagor), Add-1: 5/514, Viram Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow 226010 Add-2: Dariyapur, Allahabad Road, Sultanpur Corridor 7.6 Feet Wide North: Corridor 6 Feet Wide, South: Commercia Add-3: Commercial Space No 10 & 13, Sultan Complex Space (Neeraj Gupta) (Near Roadways Bus Stand), Jagat Narain Road Kesarbagh, Lucknow 1. M/S K B Agarwal Through Prop Sunil Kumar Agarwal Shop No G-1, Mandir (Borrower), Address: G-01, Haunuman Ji Mandir, Campus, Aminabad Park, 19.07.2024 22.01.2025 Aminabad, Lucknow 226018 ucknow 226018 Rs. 10,94,882.00 2. Sunil Kumar Agarwal (Proprietor/Borrower), Address Bounded by: East: and interest Agent Agent and Ag Agent and Agen Mandir Road, West: Hall of thereon Mandir, North: Basemen Alishbagh, Lucknow 226004 Amrish Kumar Agarwal (Guarantor), H.No. 278/44, Aishbagh, Near Hsani Mandir, Luckriow Rasta, South: Durga Devi Dwar 5. Sunil Kumar Agarwal (Mortgagor), Address: G-01 Haunuman Ji Mandir, Aminabad, Lucknow 226018 Authorised Officer Indian Bank Date : 24.01.2025 Place: Lucknow

### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited** (Formerly IDFC Bank Limited) CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

### APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6)& 9 (1)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) & 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) as per column (iii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (iv) mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) from Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as per column (i). For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on IDFC FIRST Bank website i.e. www.idfcfirstbank.com

	S. NO	(i) Demand Notice Amount	(ii) Agreementid	(iii) Name of Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s)	(v) Reserve Price Amount	(vi) EMD Amount	(vii) Date and Time of Auction	(viii) Date and Time EMD of Auction	(ix) Date and Time of Inspection	(x) Authorized Officer Name & Contact Number
	1	INR 17777566.76/- Demand Notice dated: 23-Sep-2023	42670317	Natraj Hosiery, Natraj Cosmetic And Gift Centre, Anurudh Kumar Gupta, Anurudh Kumar Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta), Anjana Gupta, Chitra Gupta, Anjana Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta) & Chitra Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta)	INR 13440000.00/-	INR 1344000.00/-	11-Feb- 2025 11.00 AM TO 1.00 PM	10-Feb- 2025 10.00 AM TO 5.00 PM	05-Feb- 2025 10.00 AM TO 4.00 PM	Name- Sujeet Jha Contact Number- 9795811000 Name- Vidyansh Gupta Contact Number- 8899428998
(IV) MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS : ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE HOUSE BEARING MUNICIPAL NO. 133/75, FIRST FLO ADMEASURING 156.133 SQ MTR., I.E. 1680 SQUARE FEET, SITUATED AT AMINABAD, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226018, BOUNDED AS BELOW:- NOF SUHELRAJ SIDDIQUI/ PLOT OF SUSHIL NIGAM, SOUTH: PLOT OF MR. LAL CHAND RASTOGI, EAST: AMINABAD ROAD & WEST: GOVERNMENT PROPE BADHU GALI							ELOW:-NORTH:			

Disclaimer: Please note that the said notice is issued for sale of immovable property only and IDFC FIRST Bank Limited has no right to sale of the movable assets, if any present at the immovable property Authorised Office

Date: 24.01.2025 Place: LUCKNOW

DFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd)

## CPI (ML) to back SP in Milkipur

### PNS LUCKNOW

The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) has announced to support the candidate of INDIA bloc constituent Samajwadi Party in the Milkipur assembly by-election in Ayodhya district.

Giving this information on Thursday, CPI (ML) state secretary Sudhakar Yadav said that to defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party's communal politics and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's bulldozer justice and to protect the Constitution, his party workers were working to make SP candidate Ajit Prasad win the Milkipur assembly seat in the bypoll.

He said that in the last Lok Sabha election, the people of the state had rejected the BJP and gave a strong mandate in favour of the INDIA bloc. "Instead of learning a lesson from this and making pro-people changes in its policies, the BJP is showing aggressive communalism. Anti-Muslim violence took place under the supervision of the administration in Bahraich and Sambhal. The government is busy finding and digging shrines in Muslim localities and thereby increasing tension. The encounter rule continues unabated. The poor are being evicted. Oppression of Dalits and women has increased," he said.

The CPI (ML) leader said that if the BJP did not indulge in dishonesty and abuse of power in Milkipur like in the Kundarki by-election, the victory of INDIA bloc constituent SP was certain.

Lucknow (PNS): Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will participate in the UP Diwas celebrations on Friday. Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will also be present on the occasion.

Addressing mediapersons on Thursday, Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh said that the main programme will be organised at Avadh Shilp Gram. He added that programmes will also be held at Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, Noida Shilp Gram, and in all district headquarters across the state.

UP Diwas will be celebrated on January 24, and National Tourism Day on January 25 will be celebrated as Voter Awareness Day, he said.

"The state of Uttar Pradesh was established on January 24, 1950. On this day, the name of the state was changed from United Provinces to Uttar Pradesh. Since the year 2018, the foundation day of the state has been organised continuously in a grand manner by various departments," he noted. He stated that the theme for UP Day 2025 celebrations has been set as 'Vikas aur Virasat, Pragati Ke Path Par Uttar Pradesh'. On this occasion, six individuals will be felicitated with the 'Gaurav Samman'

to the state. These include scientist Krishna Kani Shukla from Varanasi, industrialist Himanshu Gupta from the USA, industrialist Manish Verma from Kanpur, Krishna Yadav, industrialist from Bulandshahr, Colonel Subhash Deshwal, industrialist from Bulandshahr, and Dr Jai Singh, a banana producer from Bahraich. He mentioned that exhibitions, seminars, conferences, cultural programmes, competitions, and roadshows will be organised by all departments on the theme starting Friday. "Apart from this, for the general public, an exhibition based on former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Centenary Year by the Higher Education Department, an exhibition based on the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda by the Social Welfare Department, and an exhibition based on Iron Man

award for their respective contributions

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by the National Integration Department will be organised," he said.

He further stated that a stall has been set up by the Tourism Department for three days, where the tourist and mythological places of the state will be displayed

## **Dhankhar to participate in UP Diwas celebrations**



## state 04

## NER to run 184 specials for Mauni Amavasya

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

 $T_{(\text{NER})}^{ ext{he North Eastern Railway}}$ Kumbh special trains from January 27 to 31 to cater to the rush on the auspicious occasion of Mauni Amavasya (January 29).

A total of 16 Mela special trains will be run from Banaras, Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya Dham, Chhapra, Azamgarh, Dohrighat and Gomti Nagar (Lucknow) stations to Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi on January 27, with 14 trains scheduled for return journey. Besides, 23 Mela special trains will be run from Banaras, Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya Dham, Chhapra, Azamgarh, Dohrighat, Gomti Nagar, Kathgodam and Kasganj stations to Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi on January 28 with 21 specials for the return trip. Giving this information, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), Varanasi division

(NER) Vineer Srivastava said 23 Mela Special trains will be run from Banaras, Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya Dham, Chhapra, Azamgarh and Dohrighat stations to Prayagraj Rambagh and Jhusi on January 29 with 24 specials

for the return journey. On January 30, a total of 21 Mela special trains will be run from Banaras, Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya Dham, Chhapra, Azamgarh and Dohrighat stations to Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi with 21 trains for the return trip. Seven

Mela special trains will be run from Banaras, Bhatni, Gorakhpur and Chhapra to Prayagraj Rambagh and Jhusi on January 31 with 14 trains for the return journey. He said about 80 Unreserved

Ticketing System (UTS) will be operated at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations to facilitate the passengers.

Keeping in mind the extra crowd at the booking counters,

mayor directed the officials to

prevent encroachment in this

**DONATION DRIVE:** The

AFFWA (L), AFS Kanpur, con-

ducted a donation drive at

AFFWA (L) AFS Kanpur, Megha

Praveen, along with Executive

area in future.

30 mobile UTS will also be Kumar operational at crowded places in the station premises through which booking clerks will be able to give tickets to passen-

more than 300 travelling tick-et examiners (TTEs)/ticket checking staff have been deployed at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations to provide information about trains to the passengers, to avoid gathering of crowd at one place and checking ticket properly.

Mela passengers can book tick-ets from UTS on mobile app from any station in Prayagraj region. As the Railway Board has removed geofencing from the mobile app the devotees can book tickets from the app at Maha Kumbh stations (Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi)

also. Passenger can also book return ticket from Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi or any station in Prayagraj region in advance. This will happen only when

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The Faculty of Veterinary

and Animal Sciences

(FVAS), Banaras Hindu

University (BHU), secured first

place at the National Animal

Genetics and Resources Quiz

Competition, held at Hebbal

Veterinary College under the

the ticket is taken from Prayagraj Rambagh, Jhusi, Prayagraj etc, said Public Relations Officer, Varanasi Division (NER) Ashok Kumar and added that to give accurate information to the passengers about the trains and their status, 14 Sahayog counters are also being operated at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations, which are providing assistance 24 hours a day. The Scouts and Guides members will also help the passengers during heavy rush. The divisional railway manag-

er said dog squads have been deployed at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations during all the major bathing festivals of Maha Kumbh. Intelligence teams of Railway Protection Force have been deployed at the abovementioned stations. The Railway Protection Force and Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) teams in plain clothes have been deployed to keep an eye on criminals at these sta-

tions. Gazetted officers have been deployed at both the stations for monitoring and supervision. During Mauni Amavasya and other major bathing datess, gazetted officers are being put on eight-hour shift duty for monitoring, supervision and crowd control management, he added.

The Quick Response Team (QRT) of RPF has been deployed at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations to deal with any emergency situation. he any emergency situation. Ite said, adding that during Mauni Amavasya, a total of 1,065 RPF/Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF) personnel, including officers, will be deployed for security at Prayagraj Rambag and Jhusi stations.

Deployment of Railway Protection Force personnel has been ensured at every station from Prayagraj Rambag to Banaras on major bathing festivals, including Mauni Amavasya, he added.

AD: RISE e-learning platform will enhance knowledge, skills of vaccination workers



RISE e-learning platform training being held in Varanasi on Thursday

## **Encroachments cleared**



Vridhashram, Damodar Nagar. A total of 108 kits, each consist-Mayor Pramila Pandey leading the antiing of a new blanket, woollen cap encroachment drive with heavy police and shawl, were distributed at the force in Yatimkhana on Thursday Old Age Home. President of

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Committee members and area secretaries, took part in the donation drive. Megha Praveen  $T_{\rm (KNN)\ carried\ out\ an\ anti-}^{\rm he\ Kanpur\ Nagar\ Nigam}$ encroachment drive in honoured 16 staff members of the old age home in the presence Yatimkhana (Parade) area on Thursday. It was led by Mayor Pramila Pandey who reached of managers Vikas Pathak and Anoop Jaiswal. During the event the spot along with heavy police force and ordered the Megha Praveen, President and Sweta Juneja, Executive removal of encroachments Committee member, in charge of from Yatimkhana to Rehmani AFFWA AFS, Kanpur, were Market. felicitated with two copies of 'Bhagavad Gita'

With the help of bulldozer, ille-

### FVAS-BHU team secures first place in quiz competition gal shops set up on footpaths and on the road were removed in around one km stretch. The

Animal

Vashisth and Prashant Dwivedi, triumphed over par-ticipants from leading veteri-nary colleges across the country. Prof NK Singh, Dean of FVAS, BHU, congratulated the team on their remarkable achievement, emphasising that the victory reflects BHU's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering academic excellence in veterinary sciences.

> meeting of Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, scheduled to be organised by Varanasi dis-trict and city units of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on January 23 at Kisan Inter College Mirza Murad, Raja Talab, has been postponed due to unavoidable reasons. This information was given by BJP's Kashi region president Dilip Patel in a press release.

The Health and Family Welfare department and the National Health Mission (NHM) have developed RISE (Rapid Immunisation Skill Enhancement) e-learning platform to strengthen the vaccination programme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

nation workers in which the JSI institution is providing support. The objective of this e-learning platform is to enhance the knowledge and skills of health workers for

efficient operation of the vaccination programme. The training of district and block level officers on Thursday was providedby the state- level trainers — Project Officer Pramod Borakhede, Data Officer Mohd Anwar Hussain (State JSI Team), District Immunisation Officer (DIO) Dr AK Maurya and DHEIÓ Harivansh Yadav in the auditorium of the Additional

Director (Medical Health and Family Welfare) office. Additional Director Dr Neeta Kulshreshtha said RISE e-learning platform will increase the knowledge and skills of vaccination workers.

On the occasion Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said all the vaccination workers of the district should be trained. In the training to be held at the block level, all vaccination workers like Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife (ANMs), CHOs, Staff Nurses and Women Supervisors (LHVs) should be included and trained. Their list should also be made available at the district

level. District Immunisation Officer Dr AK Maurya said while discussing various aspects of vaccination in the training, it was explained in detail how the RISE e-learning platform works, how the modules included in it provide technical informa-

through his soulful acting. MMAK-BHU coordinator Prof

Sanjay Kumar, in his welcome

address, discussed the impor-

tant points of 'Kutiyattam' and

highlighted its social and liter-

ary aspects. Coordinator of

tion to the health workers to increase vaccination skills. The trainers said that there are a total of five modules in the RISE e-learning platform. It is necessary for the trainee to complete all the five modules.

The second module will start 15 days after completing one module. In this way, five modules will be completed within 75 davs.

The facility of self-assessment was also provided to the trainees through pre-andpost tests in the training. District Health Education and

Information Officer Harivansh Yadav, medical officers of all community health centres (CHCs,) HEO, WHO's SMO Dr Chelsea, Dr Satrupa, Dr Shahid from UNICEF, Reena Verma from UNDP, UNDP U-WIN Coordinator Praveen Mishra, Programme Coordinator (RI) from WJCF Varanasi and Azamgarh Division Dharmendra Tiwari and othesw were present in the training.

## Innovative consumer protection tools developed

Varanasi (PNS): In a significant development three innovative apps – 'Jago Grahak Jago App', 'Jagriti App', and 'Jagriti Dashboard' have been developed under the leadership by Dr NS Rajput, associate professor, Department of Electronics Engineering, IIT (BHU). These apps form part of an intelligent cyber-physical system that operates in realtime and runs on the Airavat AI supercomputer under the National Supercomputing Mission for AI and data analytics. The cutting-edge system analyses existing text and design elements on e-commerce platforms to assess whether they are being used to influence consumer psycholo-gy. Dr Rajput shared that the Jago Grahak Jago App' pro-vides essential e-commerce information regarding all URLs during consumer's online activities and alerts them if a URL could potential-

ly be unsafe, advising caution. Meanwhile, the 'Jagriti App' allows users to report URLs where the presence of one or more dark patterns is suspected— patterns that are deemed illegal. These reports are subsequently registered as complaints with the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) for poten-tial remediation and further action. The CCPA is empowered with the 'Jagriti Dashboard,' which generates real-time reports on e-com-merce URLs for the presence of dark patterns, significant-ly enhancing the ability to monitor and regulate online consumer interactions effectively. This solution will assist CCPA in identifying dark patterns, accelerating the resolution of consumer disputes and curbing harmful practices against consumer interests. These innovative consumer protection tools -

Grahak Jago App,' 'Jagriti App,' and 'Jagriti Dashboard,' develand Jagriti Dashboard, devel-oped by the Department of Electronics Engineering at IIT (BHU), were officially launched recently by Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution and Minister for New and Renewable Energy Prahlad Joshi. These revolutionary applications were unveiled at a grand event organised by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. NEW SPECIES DISCOV-ERED: Dr Raghvendra Singh (Senior Assistant Professor) and Soumyadeep Rajwar, a research scholar from the Department of Botany, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) have discovered a new species of phytopathogenic fungi, indicum Épicoccum (Ascomycota, Didymellaceae), associated with an emerging spot disease 'Jago leaf in

Chrysopogon zizanioides (vetiver) from Varanasi. The species was identified based on morpho-cultural characteristics and multigene molecular phylogenetic analyses Phylogenetic analysis revealed that Epicoccum indicum forms a distinct clade, separate from other related species, which justifies its classification as a new species. The species name refers to the India from where it was discovered. The voucher specimen is deposited in the Ajrekar Mycological Herbarium in Pune, and the live culture is stored at NFCCI, Pune. This discovery was published in Fungal Diversity, a prestigious Q1 journal with an impact factor of 24.5, on December 19, 2024. Dr Singh highlighted that Chrysopogon zizanioides, commonly known as vetiver or khus, has various medicinal uses, including treatments for pain, inflammation, and infections.

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Atwo-day national seminar on 'Indian Visual Cultures through Paint, Print and Digital Media: Shaping Changing Patterns and Possibilities' was inaugurated under the joint aegis of Malaviya Moolva Anushilan Kendra (MMAK) and Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies in Banaras Hindu Studies in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Thursday. The keynote speak-er of the inaugural session was Prof Sanil V, Department of Philosophy, IIT-Delhi. Speaking on teric IV Speaking on topic 'How an ancient theatre can provide justification to the contemporary film artiste, Prof Sanil said that 'Kutivattam' dance form of Kerala provides film director Kumar Sahni a way to imagine the visual elements of cinema. He emphasised on exploring this visual form through 'Natankusam', a 14th century



Indian culture is phonetic & visual: Prof the Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies, BHU, Prof Rajkumar, while highlighting the Indianness of the cultural comprehensiveness of the Hindi region, said that Indian culture is phonetic and visual. The coordinators of this seminar Dr Deepali Yadav and Dr Vipin Kadawat were also present. The programme was conduc ed by organising secretary of the seminar Dr Geetanjali Singh. Dr Vipin Kadawat pro-posed the vote of thanks. Prof Crystal Davedawson, Prof Satish Poduval, University Advisor RP Malhotra, Dr Devendra Kumar, Dr Beauty Yadav, Prof Pradosh Mishra, Dr Vivek Singh, Dr Dharmajang, Dr Rajiv Verma, Dr Prasenjit Panda, Dr Swati Mishra, Dr Suresh K. Nair and researchers and students from various faculties of the university were present in the national seminar.

## and improve skills of vacci-**POSTPONED:** The public

The FVAS-BHU team secured first position in the competition held recently in Karnataka. Karnataka Veterinary, Animal, and Fisheries Sciences University (KVAFSU). The competition was organised as part of the 22nd Annual Convention of the Society for Conservation of Domestic Biodiversity (SOCDAB). BHU's winning team, comprising Priyanshu

A seminar on Indian visual cultures being held at BHU in Varanasi on Thursday.

treatise which criticises 'Kutiyattam' for violating the principles of classical perfor-mance tradition based on Natyashastra'. He explained how an artiste stages a dramatic tale lasting several days

## Knp Metro completes erection | Road safety human chain formed of PEB structures for all stns

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

The Kanpur Metro has com-pleted the erection of pre-engineered building (PEB) structures or platform roofs for all stations. This marks a significant milestone as residents can now see the outlines of all the station boxes from Baradevi to Naubasta. The casting of the

central pillars on the platform. The design is both cost-effec-

tive and eco-friendly and the use of translucent or transparent sheets in these structures allows natural sunlight to illuminate the platform throughout the day, reducing the need for artificial lighting and saving electricity. Managing Director of UPMRC

1411月月日 一日

platform levels for all the stations in the Baradevi-Naubasta elevated section was completed in September last year. This was followed by the erection of PEB structures for the platform roofs. Simultaneously, work on the construction and flooring of technical rooms on the concourse level (first floor) of the stations also gained momentum. One of the key benefits of PEB structures is their ability to cover large areas without requiring thetically pleasing."

Sushil Kumar said, "Kanpur Metro is committed to utilising renewable energy at all elevated stations while prioritising environmental protection. The five stations of the Baradevi-Naubasta elevated section have been designed to maximise solar energy use, similar to the priority corridor. The PEB structures used for the platform roofs are not only efficient and cost-effective but also environmentally friendly and aes-



### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

road safety human chain was formed by Avolunteer students at Mahila Mahavidyalaya Kidwai Nagar in which 151 of them took part. A road safety oath was administered in which the students were motivated to follow all the rules and responsibilities towards road safety. In the programme Principal Professor Anju

Chaudhary also asked the students to be aware of road safety rules before walking on the road. Programme officer Dr Namrata Pandey administered the road safety oath. In the programme college spokesperson Dr Saba Yunus and Profr Pragya Srivastava provided special support to the programme. MAN SUCCUMBS: An elderly man who was seriously injured after he was allegedly beaten up with sticks by his nephew and his friends in Firozpur village under Mangalpur police station area of Kanpur Dehat succumbed to his injuries late on Wednesday night during treatment at the LLR (Hallet) Hospital.

On the complaint of his daughter-in-law, police registered an FIR against three persons of unintentional murder and after sending the body for autopsy, conducted raids in search of the assailants. Ram Singh (65) of

Firozpur had enmity with nephew Indal. On Wednesday evening, Indal consumed liquor with friends, Pravesh and Gaurav. Thereafter, he along with wife Rani arrived at Ram Singh's house and forcibly took him to a garden and beat him brutally and escaped after dumping him in unconscious state. When Ram Singh did not return home till late, his daughter-in-law Puja, wife of Vishnu, along with sister-in-law Mamta went towards the garden and found him laying in unconcious state there. He was taken to the district hospital from where after first aid he was referred to LLR (Hallet) hospital, Kanpur, where he died during treatment late at night. On getting information about the incident, CO Derapur Mahendra Singh, Inspector Mangalpur Sanjay Kumar Gupta rushed to village and carried out investigation. After forensic team collected evidence, the body was sent for autopsy. Inspector Mangalpur said old enmity was going on between the deceased and the assailant.

On the complaint of daughter-in-law Puja, police lodged FIR against Indal, his wife and son under relevant sections of unintentional murder, provoking others for murder etc. On receipt of autopsy report, further action would be initiated in the matter, he said.

### Auto, taxi drivers postpone strike PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The auto and taxi drivers have The auto and taxi univers have decided to postpone their strike regarding prepaid receipt at Varanasi Junction (Cantt) railway station. Earlier, they had deferred the strike only for 10 days but now they have decided to postpone it till the conclu-sion of Maha Kumbh, the biggest pilgrimage of Sanatan Dharma. Auto Rickshaw Union President

Bhagwan Singh said the strike has been postponed till February 28 on the assurance of regional transport officer so that the pilgrims did not to face any trouble during the Maha Kumbh. He said the DRM Lucknow held detailed talks with RTO Varanasi on the issue of prepaid receipt for auto and taxi stands at Varanasi Junction railway station.

"The DRM told the RTO that he will come to Varanasi after Maha Kumbh and will hold a meeting with the lat-ter", claimed the president of Auto Union.

According to Singh, during the human chain under the Road Safety Fortnight at Harhua Bus Station, the RTO urged the union office-bearers to postpone the strike till February 28. The DRM Lucknow said that a solution will be found by holding a meeting after February 28, he informed. The auto/taxi drivers said if their demands are not heard after February 28, they are ready to go on an indefinite strike and the station administration will be responsible for any difficulty faced by the passengers during this period.

## Implementation of Rajbhasha in office emphasised



BOI zonal chief Ranvir Singh awarding prizes and certificates to winners of Hindi competitions

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Various Hindi competitions were organised among the employees at the zonal office of Bank of India (BOI) on World Hindi Day. Rajbhasha Adhikari Sunita Yadav informed that the first World Hindi Sammelan was organised in Nagpur on January 10, 1975, in which 122 representatives from 30 countries had participated. Former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh had announced to observe World Hindi Day on January 10, 2006. Since then, the World Hindi Day was being celebrated all-over the world which aimed at promoting and publicising Hindi globally and establishing it as an international language. Chairing the programme, zonal chief Ranvir Singh said, "we all need to make more efforts for the implementation of the Rajbhasha in the office and it is also our constitutional duty to work in Hindi. Staff members are encouraged to do more work in Hindi by organising different Hindi competitions".

He awarded prizes and certificates to winners of the competitions. Deputy Zonal Manager Jugal Kishore, senior officebearers and staff members were present on the occasion.

## nation 05



## **CEC** sounds note of caution against fake narratives

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Election Rajiv Kumar on Thursday sounded a note of caution against fake narratives, saying they erode trust in electoral processes, and noted that the misinformation is typically timed to target the vitals of poll process.

Making this assertion at an international conference of election management bodies organised by Election Commission of India, he said while technology offers signif-icant opportunities, it also brings challenges like cybersecurity threats and misinformation. He urged Election Management Bodies to streamline strategies for addressing these technological challenges to effectively mitigate the risks. Sounding a note of caution against fake narratives which

es, he said that such fake narratives are typically timed at

crucial junctures of the election process to target its very vitals. În his address, CEC Kumar also outlined key trends shaping the future of elections, including AI-driven processes, online and remote voting, biometric authentication and increased global collaboration.

He urged the participating poll management bodies to explore the opportunities with technological advancements in making elections more transparent, inclusive and accessible. He underscored the role of election management bodies in not only safeguarding elec-toral processes globally but also expanding their reach and impact. Poll organisations from

Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Indonesia and Kazakhstan placed their concerns on disinformation, misinformation and fake narratives erode trust in electoral process- on social media affecting elec-

toral integrity while making their presentations on their electoral experience in 2024. CEC of Mauritius Abdool Rahman also stressed on the menace of fake news, saying it undermines voters' trust in the poll bodies.

Highlighting a particular case of fake online applications for recruitment of election staff, Rahman expressed concern over the use of technology and social media in intensifying the menace of misinformation and disinformation during elections.

representative of the Electoral Commission of Namibia, while expressing concern over the rising trend of fake news, sought suggestions on tackling fake news on social media.

Commissioner, General Election Commission of Indonesia, Idhan Holik spoke about their experience of using a dedicated WhatsApp channel to tackle misinformation in real



The ECI is hosting the two-day international conference. It brings together representatives from Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of nearly 13 countries and international organisations for discussions on key issues of contemporary election management.

The conference on the theme 'Global Election Year 2024: Reiteration of Democratic Spaces, Takeaway for EMBs' is hosted by the ECI based on the varied experiences of EMBs in conducting elections in 2024, in said the elections, CEC Runnar said the elections were also more inclusive with greater participation especially among women, elderly aged 85+, Persons with Disabilities (PurDo) and the third gender India and the other countries. Nearly 30 representatives from the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of 13 countries including Bhutan, Georgia, Namibia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Ireland, Mauritius, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tunisia, and Nepal are attending. In his address, CEC Kumar also

to safeguarding democratic processes and strengthening election management worldreflected that 2024 was a defining year as a test for EMBs for

reaffirmation of democratic

values amidst challenging and Bhutan's Chief election comcomplexities. He emphasized missioner Dasho Sonam on the critical role of technol-Topgay said the electronic votogy and digital innovations in ing machines provided by India enhancing efficiency, transhave brought process efficiencies during polls in his counparency and voter confidence. He underscored the role of try. He said the EVMs have EMBs in not only safeguarding won the trust of the people in electoral processes globally but Bhutan. also expanding their reach and

Thanking India for providing the EVMs, he lauded the process efficiencies brought in by the machines since their use in the elections in that country. Speaking on digital IDs, Topgay said Bhutan has a bio-metric Unified National ID which is used for voter authentication. Bhutan is exploring the possibility of online voting in future elec-tions, he told the gathering. Besides Bhutan, a limited number of Indian EVMs are used in Nepal and Namibia, EC functionaries said.

Public undertakings BEL and ECIL produce EVMs for the Election Commission.

## Keen on finding solution over disparity | Egyptian Foreign Minister to visit India in High Court judges pension, says SC

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 $T_{\rm Thursday\,said\,it\,was\,keen}^{\rm he\ Supreme\ Court\ on}$ on finding a solution over the issue of disparity in pension to retired high court judges. A bench of Justices B R Gavai, Augustine George Masih and K Vinod Chandran said it wanted to settle the issue once and for all.

"We have been telling it since the beginning that we are keen on finding a solution, not laying down a law," it said. The top court was hearing arguments on a batch of pleas raising the issue of different pension being payable to retired high court judges.

One of the key reasons highlighted before the top court was that the high court judges, who were elevated from the district judiciary, were covered under the New Pension Scheme.



parity.

We want to settle these issues

once and for all," it observed.

The arguments in the matter

were the beneficiaries of the Old Pension Scheme leading to a mismatch in the pension payable to two sets of high court judges.

We know that when you are there, it will all be resolved," the bench told attorney general R Venkataramani on Thursday The bench deliberated over

However, those elevated to uniformity in the pension to It asked authorities to have a

"humane approach" instead of adopting a "legal approach

The bench observed the matter would not be decided on individual cases and whatever the top court might lay down would be applicable to all the high court judges. The top court had also expressed "shock" that some retired high court judges were

refired high court judges were getting a meagre pension ranging between Rs 6,000 and Rs 15,000.

While hearing a separate plea in March last year, the apex court said there cannot be any discrimination in computing the pensionary benefits of retired judges of high courts based on whether they were elevated from the bar or the

would continue on January district judiciary. 28. In December 2024, the top Pensionary benefits of a court said it was "pitiable" that retired high court judge, elesome retired high court vated from the district judijudges were getting a pension ranging between Rs 10,000 and Rs 15,000. ciary, should be computed based on his or her last drawn salary as a high court judge, it said.

### India in the first week of next month to review the overall trajectory of bilateral ties and explore ways to expand coop-eration in areas of trade,

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty is set to visit

Abdelatty will hold wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar covering the entire gamut of bilateral ties as well as the evolving situation in the Middle East following the Israel-Hamas cease-

The two ministers are also set to take stock of implementation of the decisions firmed up during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in 2023, sources said here on Thursday. The two sides will look at shoring up cooperation in a number of areas including trade, investment and agriculture, they said.

While the Egyptian President visited India in January 2023 to grace the Republic Day cele-

"Prima facie case is made out



impact.

Highlighting India's historic general elections with a record

participation of 647 million

voters and over one million

polling stations, CEC Kumar

(PwDs) and the third gender.

CEC Kumar underscored the

importance of collaborative

efforts in capacity building

and global cooperation as vital

continent. The India-Egypt

bilateral trade agreement has

been in operation since March

1978. The bilateral trade has

increased more than five times

in last 10 years. Around 50

Indian companies have invest-

ed in various sectors in Egypt

with a combined investment

exceeding USD 3.25 billion.

A joint statement issued dur-

Egyptian side is considering

Egypt has traditionally been brations as the Chief Guest, Modi travelled to Egypt in June one of India's most important that year, reflecting growing trading partners in the African intensity in the bilateral ties. India and Egypt elevated their ties to the level of strategic partnership and resolved to significantly broadbase the bilateral engagement in areas of defence, security and trade during El-Sisi's visit to India. The two leaders also decided to take the volume of bilateral trade to USD 12 billion in the next five years from around ing El-Sisi's visit to India two USD seven billion recorded years back mentioned that the that year.

the possibility of allocating a special area of land for the Indian industries in the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCEZ). The Suez Canal, connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, is one of the world's busiest trade routes. About 12 percent of global trade passes through the canal

each day. India and Egypt are also looking at deepening cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied services besides strengthening the supply chain of food articles.

The defence and strategic cooperation between India and Egypt has been on an upswing in the last few years. The Indian and Egyptian Armies conducted the first ever joint exercise in January this year.

Egypt had already shown interest in procuring Tejas light combat aircraft, radars, military helicopters and other platforms from India.

In July 2022, the IAF participated in a month-long tactical leadership programme in Egypt with three Su-30 MKI jets and two C-17 transport aircraft.

## Court refuses FIR over M F Husain paintings

### PTI 📕 NEW DEI HI

## investment, shipping and agriculture.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI

fire deal.

A Delhi court has refused to direct an FIR on a plea alleging two paintings of late artist and Padma awardee M F Husain hurt religious sentiments and said no further probe was required.

Judicial magistrate first class Sahil Monga said all the facts and circumstances of the case were within the knowledge of the complainant, the CCTV footage of Delhi Art Gallery, and the paintings in question have already been seized.

"No further investigation and collection of evidences is required on the part of investigating agency at this stage, as all the evidences are in the possession of complainant as well as on record," said the court. The matter, it went on, could proceed before the court as a complaint case and issued notice to Delhi Art Gallery Pvt. Ltd., its CEO and MD Ashish Anand, and Director Ashwani Anand for February 12.

The judge observed police in its action taken report said the ments. paintings in question were seized. The report further said the commission of cognisable offence could not be ascertained, the judge noted. The judge on January 20

ordered the seizure of the paintings displayed at the art gallery and reserved the order

on FIR after hearing argu-

"This is obscenity. Depicted most revered deities in obscene The paintings feature Hindu deities Hanuman and Ganesh. manner a deliberate and malicious insult. Husain may be the greatest artist in the world, but During the hearing on the plea, complainant and advocate he has no right to insult my Amita Sachdeva, said the most deities," she argued. She claimed there was an revered entities of Sanatan

funds.

Dharma -- Hanuman and Ganesh -- were insulted in advertisement and thousands of people saw the painting of "deities being ridiculed".

for exhibiting such offensive paintings for public viewing and hurting religious senti-ments," added Sachdeva. Ordering the seizure, Monga cited the police's action taken report, which said the investigating officer seized the security camera footage and the

art gallery. The report said the art exhibition was held privately and the paintings, including the two in question, were only to display the original work of Husain. "At this stage an application has been moved by complainant for direction to the IO to seize the painting in question. In light of the facts and circumstances mentioned in the said application, the said application is allowed and IO is directed to seize the said painting," the January 20 order said.

Husain, a recipient of Padma Vibhushan, India's secondhighest civilian award, died in 2011.

network video recorder of the

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. Defence Minister Rainath Singh. Union Minister Goyal, MoS Jitendra Singh, and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge during a ceremony to pay tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his birth anniversary, at Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan in New Delhi on Thursday

## CBI closes case against DHFL in 'fake accounts' case

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The CBI has closed the case L against the DHFL and its directors pertaining to 2.60 lakh allegedly fictitious home loan accounts, some of which were used to claim interest subsidies under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, officials said.

After over three years of probe, the agency could not find evidence suggesting a criminal conspiracy which could have led to the creation of such accounts, they said. The irregularities were pointed out in the report of auditor Grant Thornton, appointed by the new board of the scamhit Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL), they said.

The agency has now submitted its final report before a special court in Delhi, which would take a call on whether to accept the closure report or order further alleged in the FIR.



investigation into the matter. The CBI had booked promoters Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan along with the company.

It was alleged that DHFL had opened a fictitious branch in Bandra and fake accounts worth Rs 14,046 crore of home-loan borrowers, who had already repaid their loans, were entered

in the database, they said. A total of 2.60 lakh "fake and fictitious" home loan accounts were created in the non-existent branch from 2007-19 for a total loan worth Rs 14,046 crore, out of which Rs 11,755.79 crore were deposited or routed to several fictitious firms known as Bandra Book firms, the CBI had

## **CBI chargesheets Oxfam**

REAUOFIN

NEW DELHI The CBI has filed a charge sheet against research and advocacy group Oxfam India and its former CEO Amitabh Behar in connection with alleged violations of rules and regulations related to foreign funds, officials said. In its chargesheet filed before

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Husain's paintings.

a special court here, the CBI has named the group and Behar, who is now executive director of Oxfam International as accused.

The FIR against the Indian arm of the global NGO Oxfam was registered in April 2023 based on a complaint from the

Ministry of Home Affairs. An email seeking reaction of Oxfam India remained unanswered till writing of this story. The complaint, which is now part of the FIR, has alleged that though Oxfam India's FCRA registration ceased, it planned to circumvent the law by tak-

MPARTIALITY INT ing other routes to channelise

'Email communication found during IT (income tax) survey by the CBDT shows that Oxfam India has been planning to pressure Indian government for renewal of FCRA through foreign governments and for-eign institutions," it had alleged. "Oxfam India has the reach and influence to request multilateral foreign organisations to intervene on its behalf with the Government of India," it had alleged. had said.

In an earlier statement, Oxfam India had said it is fully com-

pliant with Indian laws. Oxfam India is fully compliant with Indian laws and has filed all its statutory compli-ances, including Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) returns, in a timely manner since its inception. Oxfam India has been cooperating with all government agencies since its FCRA registration wasn't renewed in December 2021," the NGO Indian Navy to showcase three frontline combatants in Republic Day parade tableau

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Indian Navy will showcase its three newly commissioned frontline combatants -- warships INS Surat and INS Nilgiri, and submarine INS Vaghsheer -- in the tableau at the 76th Republic Day Parade on the Kartavya Path in Delhi.

At a press conference held here at Kota House on Wednesday, the Navy unveiled a model of the tableau featuring the thematic tagline, Atmanirbhar Nausena se Rashtra Nirman' (Nation Building through a Self Reliant Navy). Officials said the Navy 's mixed marching contingent and a band will also participate in the ceremonial parade.

Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty, the Controller Personnel Services, highlighted that the tableau will depict the three



platforms commissioned just a week ago in Mumbai, symbolising India's naval prowess and the spirt of 'Atmanirbharta'. On January 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the three frontline naval combatants to the nation during their commissioning at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The commissioning of three major naval combatants

marks a significant leap forward in realising India's vision of becoming a global leader in defence manufacturing and maritime security, the defence ministry had ear-

lier said. INS Surat, the fourth and final ship of the P15B Guided Missile Destroyer Project, ranks among the largest and most sophisticated destroyers in the world.

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## **Trump's ultimatum**

Trump's plain talk on the Ukraine war— 'end it or face sanctions'— could mark a turning point in the conflict

n a dramatic intervention, US President Donald Trump has asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to bring an immediate end to the ongoing Ukraine war. Labeling the conflict 'ridiculous,' Trump warned of severe economic sanctions and tariffs against Russia if Putin failed to negotiate peace. The threat marks a sharp escalation in Trump's rhetoric on a war that has already claimed the lives of over a million soldiers on both sides. Speaking on Truth Social platform, Trump reaffirmed his affinity for the Russian people and his respect for Putin but did not shy away from criticising the Russian leader for prolonging the bloody conflict. "We must never forget that Russia helped us win the Second World War, losing almost 60 million lives in the process," Trump said, highlighting historical ties while urging an end to the ongoing devastation. Trump's approach combines a mix of hardline economic threats and diplomatic overtures. In his straightforward message he suggested that the economic repercussions of prolonged conflict



would be catastrophic for Russia. He emphasised that his preference was for a peaceful resolution. The Ukraine war, which began with Russia's invasion in February 2022, has dragged on for nearly three years. The conflict has claimed the lives of nearly a million Russian soldiers and 700,000 Ukrainian troops. These staggering figures underscore the war's devastating impact, making it one of the deadliest conflicts of the 21st century. Economic consequences have also been severe, particularly for Russia. International sanctions, coupled with the strain of prolonged military operations, have left the Russian economy struggling with inflation and stagnation. Trump pointed to these eco-

nomic pressures as a potential leverage point, suggesting that a peace deal is in Russia's best interest. Trump's ultimatum reflects a marked departure from his earlier, more ambiguous stance on the conflict. Trump administration is in direct talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Trump himself plans to engage with Putin directly. He appears intent on delivering on that promise with a mix of economic coercion and diplomatic engagement. Despite the grim reality of the war, Trump's comments offers a glimmer of hope for an early resolution. He has emphasised that both Zelensky and Putin should pursue a deal, suggesting that the leaders' willingness would be pivotal in ending the conflict. Trump's ultimatum to Putin could signal a turning point in the Ukraine war, but the path forward remains fraught with uncertainty. While the economic pressure could incentivise Russia to negotiate, the deep-seated political and territorial disputes fueling the conflict may prove challenging to resolve. As the world watches, Trump's next moveswhether imposing sanctions, brokering a deal, or recalibrating military aid-will shape not only the future of the Ukraine war but also the broader geopolitical landscape. For now, one thing is clear: Trump is determined to make his mark on history by ending a war that has caused untold suffering and reshaped global politics.



## Can suspending commodity derivatives rein in food price



06

pinion

SANJAY RAWAL

The debate over whether speculative trading in futures commodity markets drives food price inflation remains unresolved in India and across Asia

hile there are several concerns in India and across Asia, certain policy and key opinion circles that food price inflation is catalysed or influenced somehow by speculative trading in the futures commodity markets. Even while opinions are divided in policy circles and among economists who have studied and examined the nature of the relationship between food inflation and commodity and derivative futures trading contracts, and no empirical evidence hitherto seems to have been found despite numerous studies undertaken in India. It would be worth mentioning

that a detailed empirical research study conducted by leading researchers from the Indian Institute of Management Udaipur specifically studied three suspension events in India of futures traded commodities, which led the researchers to firmly state that the counterfactual for each of the examined episodes confirms that even in the absence of trading suspensions, food prices or inflationary trends would have followed their dynamic path.

Any upward price volatility could ostensibly be the effects or countereffects of various extraneous domestic or global (especially geopolitical) factors. It is also equally understandable and natural for any governing policy institution to be both fully cognisant and mindful of food price inflationary trends, and the fact that rising food prices can have a cataclysmic effect on food security and thus, by extension could have substantive socio-economic impact.

Successive policy establishments and ecosystems have always been overly cautious, ever since futures trading commodity derivatives exchanges were established in the early 2000s. Despite the mandate of such commodity exchanges fairly and comprehensively that futures trading contracts



concerning these market-driven tools continued to remain, manifesting itself the way of multiple instances of suspensions on certain commodity derivative contracts. While trading suspensions

have been a constant feature since 2007-2008, under the advisement of the price monitoring mechanisms and agencies within the government policy ecosystem, there never has been an occasion when suspensions of commodity trading exceeded more than a year in a single stretch, barring the odd 'sensitive' food commodity. So as a commodity markets expert, with a domestic and world view of ongoing trading in global commodity markets, one begs to specifically ask - Do derivatives trading suspensions really rein in food price inflation? Researchers have constantly

alluded to synthetic control methodologies to apply to their studies for studying specific suspensions, their findings conclude and determine that

there is no empirical evidence

that derivatives suspension

had any impact whatsoever on

On the contrary, from specif-

ic instances studied, such as

those of Bengal Gram (Chana)

in August 2021 and Mustard Seed Derivatives in October 2021, analysis from the said report from IIM Udaipur shows that prices of both commodities, Chana and mustard oil, would have continued on the same price trend path even without the suspension. To specifically quote a potent segment of the said study - it SUCCESSIVE clearly articulates that the conducted research does not find POLICY any role of futures market **ESTABLISHMENTS** trading on price changes, nor does it find any empirical evi-AND dence of the impact of suspension of trade on price behav-ECOSYSTEMS iour in the period after suspen-HAVE ALWAYS sion. Rather, the analysis shows that prices of commodities **BEEN OVERLY** such as mustard oil would have had a similar trend even with-CAUTIOUS, out the suspension. Furthermore, the study finds EVER SINCE that before the suspension FUTURES futures market had a dominant share of 64 per cent in discov-TRADING ering the true and fair price of COMMODITY the mustard seed commodity derivative.

DERIVATIVES The study goes on further to transparent hedging of price articulate that commodity risks, eventually creating a EXCHANGES

derivative suspensions hurt

age the growth of domestic

agri-derivatives markets and

resultantly impact the growth

of price hedging prospects of

the commodity value chain

genuine participants discour-

including CBBOs (Cluster Business Organisations) and FPOs (Farmer Producer Organisations), while consequently hurting the value realisation and income levels of

It also adversely impacts India's position in providing a global price benchmark, despite the country being a major producer and consumer of several agricultural commodities. Needless to say, as an active observer of the Indian agribased commodity trading ecosystem, it behove advocacy and argument that summary commodity suspensions as a method to arrest or contain food price inflation should not be adopted and further the suspension of futures trading contracts of agricultural commodity derivatives must be revoked. In closure, one must say emphatically that the development of the agri-derivatives market is supported in India, which in turn will lead to fair price discovery and

farmers.

Tourists pose for pictures at the Tai Mahal, in Agra

## Al and defence dynamics: Global trends and India's adaptation



India is harnessing AI to enhance national security, counter threats and establish itself at the forefront of the defence innovation landscape

ross-border terrorism and geopolitical tensions, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict and Israel-Iran hostilities, have driven unprecedented defence spending since World War II. To counter these threats, nations are leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to build resilient defence systems. AI enhances national security by enabling robust decision-making to detect, analyse, and address complex threats across multiple fronts

### The Shift Towards AI in Defence

AI is transforming defence strategies, reducing reliance on human personnel. The US military's active-duty personnel are at their lowest levels in eight decades, while the U.K. has seen a 30 per cent reduction since 2000, largely due to AI-driven tools replacing soldiers in high-risk operations. With advancements in IoT and data analytics, experts predict a significant increase in AI-based defence systems globally. India's Al-Driven Defence Evolution



India, a leading G20 nation, Additionally, the 2024 is actively integrating AI into its defence framework launch of India's first AI to counter internal and Data Bank aims to enhance external threats. Initiatives national security through like the 2022 launch of 75 real-time analytics and predictive capabilities. AI in Security and AI-enabled defence products highlight India's focus Surveillance on cybersecurity, automa-AI aids investigation agention, and autonomous sys-

cies in video surveillance tems. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) allocates \$12.6 milanalysing behaviour, comlion annually for AI promunications and psychological patterns to identify jects, including the establishment of an AI center at risks. Using both Strong the Military College of AI (mimicking human cog-Telecommunication nition) and Weak AI the Military College of

(focused tasks), intelligence agencies enhance security, mitigate breaches and safeguard civilians and public institutions.

### Challenges and Future Prospects

Despite promising advancements, AI adoption in India's defence faces challenges, including data privacy, cybersecurity and ethical concerns surrounding autonomous systems. To remain competitive, India must increase investments in research, collaborate internationally and address accountability issues tied to AI-driven military oper-

### ations. Conclusion

By adopting a risk-based regulatory framework, India can ensure the ethical and effective deployment of AI in defence. While challenges persist, the ongoing innovations and strategic initiatives signal a future where India's defence capaand threat detection, bilities transcend traditional methods, embracing AI as a cornerstone of national security.

(The writer is Co-founder & CEO, Innefu Labs; views *are personal)* 

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EARLY 2000S

### **PANIC KILLS PASSENGERS**

food prices.

Madam - Twelve passengers on the Pushpak Express were killed and 55 injured after jumping from the tightpacked unreserved coaches onto the track in panic, fearing a fire (they don't even notice or hear approaching trains), only to be run over by the Karnataka Express near Pachora railway station in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra. Unable to understand when the public will get some sense. Why do they need to wander on tracks even if they had jumped out of a train that they thought was on fire?

Though for this sad mishap we definitely cannot blame the railways from any angle. Even though people may have agreed with me that Indians have lost trust and faith in the railway administration to such an extent that without verifying the rumour, they believe it (smoke that perhaps sparked rumours of a fire) and act accordingly. This shows total distrust of the railways. This is not the first instance; the Jalgaon tragedy revives the painful memory of a similar accident in which 21 women and a boy lost their lives in Mumbai's Goregaon.

On October 13, 1993, passengers on Western Railway's 'ladies special' local between Borivali and Kandivali jumped off a first-class compartment onto the tracks after seeing smoke rise from the undercarriage of their stationary train. Whatever, we all know how our system works. It's the responsibility of people who travel to take care of themselves, not the railway. Yes, it is really tragic for people to lose their lives. It is a big loss to their families. A moment of profound grief and sorrow. . May God give strength to all the deceased family members at this difficult time. May their souls rest in peace. Om Shanti. Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

### **FREEBIES HURT ECONOMY**

Madam—The growing trend of offering freebies during elections, such as in the Delhi Assembly polls, poses significant challenges to both the economy and democracy. Economically, these promis**US withdraws from** sequence to him now. He has washed his hand



n a tearing hurry to make America great again, Trump bombarded his country and the rest of the world with a slew of executive orders. He withdrew the US from the World Health Organisation, alleging that the global agency had mishandled the COVID-19 pandemic. His own handling of the coronavirus catastrophe was dreadful—over 3,50,000 deaths were reported in the US in 2020, the final year of his first term-but those glaring lapses are of no con-

es strain public finances, divert resources from critical sectors, and create an unsustainable dependency culture.

Over time, this undermines fiscal discipline and hampers long-term development. In the democratic sphere, freebies erode accountability, manipulate voter choices, and shift focus away from systemic reforms. They often favour immediate political gains over addressing structural inequalities, weakening institutions, and fostering inequity. While welfare measures are essential for uplifting marginalised groups, they must be carefully balanced with sustainable policies. Policymakers should prioritise structural reforms, economic growth, and targeted welfare instead of indulging in competitive populism. Ultimately, a balanced approach is key to safeguarding both fis-cal health and the integrity of democratic processes

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

### **RUPEE'S FURTHER DECLINE EXPECTED**

Madam — India's Weakening Rupee and its expected Impact on the Indian Stock

positive socio-economic impact for farmers and the agri-ecosystem in India. (The writer is national presi-

dent of Commodity Participants Association of India; views are personal)

of international collaboration to combat any future pandemic. Trump also signed America's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, whose main goal is to limit global warming to 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels.

Last year ended as the planet's hottest on record, and the target looks even more improbable now with the US jumping ship. In an irrational way, the President pardoned 1,500-odd protesters who stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, in a bid to prevent lawmakers from certifying his election defeat. The incident was a big blow to American democracy. In stark contrast, there is bad news for those desperate to sneak into the US, as Trump has declared illegal immigration at the US-Mexico border a "national emergency." It's America First for him-and the world must brace itself for the worst.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

Market and on Companies with Large USD Borrowings and other relevant issues. Rupee's further decline cannot be avoided. RBI's own calculations indicate a large overvaluation of the rupee, so a lot more decline of the rupee against the dol-lar must happen, especially if the US imposes tariffs.

In case of a large and rapid rupee decline, the economy and stock markets could be disrupted. Therefore, economic turmoil is unavoidable. If the rupee becomes significantly weaker against the dollar, the debt and interest repayment burden of these Indian companies will go up. If the rupee is strong, then dollar debt becomes cheaper. So, nobody gained from this RBI pivot of 2022. Short-term strategies can sometimes have long-term consequences. India got into this mess by betting on high GDP growth, which can be the only saviour in this situation. But now the GDP growth itself has slowed.

Jayanthy Subramaniam | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com LUCKNOW | FRIDAY | JANUARY 24, 2025



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## **FIRSTCOLUMN**

### **INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY: CHAMPIONING THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

India's approach balances national priorities with global responsibilities



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

ndia's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar attended the US presidential inauguration earlier this week. President Trump's inauguration by itself is an epochal moment for global international relations. India outlined its foreign policy approach a few days ago, during EAM's address at Nani Palkivala's memorial lecture. He mentioned that India's foreign policy in 2025 reflects a deepening commitment to multilateralism, but also recognises the competitive realities of a shifting global order. The nation has embraced issue-based partnerships with major groupings like the Quad, BRICS, and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). India's ability to balance multiple memberships and partnerships underscores its evolving diplomatic strategy, driven by a pragmatic approach to international relations.

At the heart of India's foreign policy is a strong solidarity with the Global South, rooted in post-colonial values of independence, sovereignty and resistance to external pressures. This unique perspective sets India apart from traditional alliance structures, as it champions the rights of developing nations while pursuing its strategic interests. While India continues to engage in global dialogues, it maintains its core principle of nonalignment and the freedom to choose partners based on national priorities. Recent shifts in India's domestic policies-across politics, economics and security-have influenced its foreign relations.



Notably, India's relationship with the United States has transformed, moving past historical hesitations to embrace a deeper strategic partnership. This cooperation spans security, technology, trade, and science, benefiting both nations. India's diaspora also plays a crucial role, acting as a living bridge to enhance bilateral ties. Despite occasional policy shifts in the US, the foundation for a robust relationship is now firmly established. However, India's engagement with China remains a complex challenge. As the two largest Asian nations with over a billion people each, their dynamic is shaped by historical disputes and differing political systems. The boundary issue, exacerbated by tensions since 2020, continues to complicate bilateral relations. The guiding principles for India's approach to China are mutual respect, sensitivity, and shared interests, with an emphasis on long-term stability and a multi-polar Asia. In the Indo-Pacific, India has extended its Act East policy, fostering deeper relationships with Japan, Australia and ASEAN countries, and strengthening the Quad alliance. This partnership has progressed in areas such as climate action, maritime security, and digital connectivity. Similarly, India's collaboration with Russia remains a pillar of its foreign policy, with growing economic ties and shared strategic interests. India advocates for diplomacy in addressing global challenges, such as the Ukraine conflict, and seeks to provide solutions to global problems, including food security and climate change It has assisted smaller neighbours during crises, including the 2023 financial support to Sri Lanka, reinforcing its role as a regional leader. However, India's relationship with Pakistan remains strained due to ongoing crossborder terrorism. India is also engaged in strengthening ties with Myanmar and Afghanistan, maintaining its people-to-people connections despite political complexities. India's global ambitions are reflected in its increasing role in international organisations. As a proponent of multilateral reform, India has pushed for changes in the United Nations, advocating for greater representation of the Global South. It also leads initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. These efforts highlight India's growing responsibility as a global power, dedicated to addressing pressing issues like climate change, digital governance, and humanitarian crises.

## Budget 2025: A roadmap to empower farmers and reignite rural India



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The Budget must go beyond promises—it must deliver feasible solutions to secure livelihoods, strengthen rural demand and bridge the rural-urban divide

inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman gears up to present the Union Budget 2025-26 on February 1, the nation stands at a pivotal crossroads. With GDP growth projected to dip to a four-year low of 6.4 per cent in FY 2024-25, the spotlight turns to revitalising the rural economy, a cornerstone of the country's consumption-

driven progress. The urgent call for agricultural reforms has grown louder, fueled by ongoing farmer protests, including the fast-unto-death by 70-year-old farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal at Punjab's Khanauri border, which has captured national attention, demanding a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP). Agriculture, which employs nearly 45 per cent of the country's workforce and sustains over 60 per cent of its rural population, is at a breaking point. Stagnant productivity, declining incomes, and policy neglect have left farmers in crisis. This Budget cannot be limited to lofty promises-it must deliver practical solutions to secure livelihoods, strengthen rural demand, and narrow the rural-urban divide. Revitalising agriculture is not just an economic necessity but a moral obligation to foster inclusive growth. Here's how Budget 2025 can introduce transformative measures to bolster the agricultural sector and ensure rural spending-currently contributing 60 per cent of total consumption -fuels India's economic resurgence.

1. Boost Agriculture Budget and Research

The allocation for agriculture and allied sectors constitutes only 3 per cent of the Union Budget, which needs to be raised to at least 7.5%. Unspent funds in this cat-egory should be carried forward to address critical gaps in research, education, and infrastructure for crop storage and processing. Investing in agricultural research institutions to develop climate-resilient crop varieties and sustainable farming techniques can enhance productivity. Encouraging public-private partnerships in agrarian innovation can further drive

the sector's growth. **2. Provide Legal Backing to MSP** The persistent demand for Minimum Support Price (MSP) with legal guarantees highlights the sector's vulnerabilities. Implementing the MS Swaminathan Commission's recommendation of setting MSP at C2 (comprehensive cost of production) +50 per cent and granting it legal status can ensure private buyers do not exploit farmers. This reform would not put a significant financial strain on the government but could protect farmers from distress sales. Furthermore, creating a robust monitoring mechanism to enforce MSP and extending its coverage to more crops can improve farmers' incomes. Enhancing the transparency of procurement processes through digital platforms and integrating MSP enforcement with local market committees can also make the system more reliable. 3. Enhance PM-KISAN Support The Rs 6,000 annual support to around 10 crore small and marginal farmers under NEEDED FINANCIAL PM-KISAN to help meet their working capital needs, unchanged since its launch in 2018, has not kept pace with inflation. However, with inflation averaging 6 per cent over the past six years. The government should consider doubling this support to Rs 12,000 annually to address farmers' growing financial needs.



amid rising input costs for seeds, fertilisers, and irrigation. 4. Transform the Kisan Credit

Card (KCC) The KCC scheme provides shortterm loans with an interest subsidy for up to Rs 3 lakh. However, the rigid repayment schedule often forces farmers to rely on private moneylenders to meet short-term cash requirements.

A more farmer-friendly approach would be to convert KCCs into running overdraft accounts, LACK A increase the credit limit to Rs 10 ROBUST lakh, and cap interest rates at 4 per cent. Removing usage restrictions SOCIAL SECURITY on loans would further empower

farmers to make long-term agri-A NON- simplifying the KCC application NET. CONTRIBUTORY through rural outreach programs

curement prices set by cooperatives like Amul. Additionally, incorporating milk and eggs into the mid-day meal scheme can improve farm incomes while tackling malnutrition among children. Promoting cattle insurance schemes and increasing budgetary allocation for veterinary services can enhance livestock productivity. Encouraging the adoption of modern technologies like artificial insemination and genetic improvement can further boost the sector's contribution to rural livelihoods. 7. Reform Fertiliser Subsidy Policies The current system treats fertilis-

er subsidies as farmer benefits but deducts the subsidised amount while calculating MSP. This practice lowers farmers' actual remuneration. MSP calculations should instead consider the market price of inputs, ensuring fairer returns for farmers. The government could also promote balanced fertiliser use by incentivising organic farming practices and providing subsidies for bio-fertilisers. A shift towards a direct benefit transfer system for fertiliser subsidies can reduce leakages and ensure benefits reach the intended beneficiaries.

small-marginal farmers, who be legally mandating private dairies vest losses and natural calamities to match or exceed the milk proprehensive and farmer-friendly. 9. Reassess Inflation Control

Policies Policies like export bans, stock limits on agricultural produce, and the Food Corporation of India (FCI) dumping grains at below-market prices undermine farmers' profitability. These interventions should be re-evaluated to balance inflation control with fair returns for farmers. Encouraging exports of surplus produce and ensuring better storage infrastructure can reduce post-harvest losses. Developing a decentralised agricultural pricing system driven by real-time market data can align domestic policies with global demand trends. A Vision for Fairness and Growth India's agricultural sector has long been the backbone of its economy, yet farmers have faced systemic neglect and economic disparity. Over the last decade, the government has written off Rs12.30 lakh crore in big corporate loans, while farmers continue to struggle under mounting debt (Rs 18 lakh crore) and policies that fail to guarantee fair prices for their produce. The 2025 Budget presents an opportunity to correct these imbalances. By addressing these critical issues, the government can improve farmers' lives, spur rural demand, catalyse GDP growth and lay the foundation for a more equitable and sustainable agricultural future. It's time to honour the farmers who feed the nation by delivering the support they deserve. (The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman( of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)

# INDIA'S FARMERS

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

This increase could significantly impact

PENSION OF can improve access to create Expanding the scheme to include sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and farm labourers can promote MONTH FOR financial inclusion in agriculture. 5. Introduce a Pension Scheme for Small Farmers SMALL AND

MARGINAL India's farmers lack a robust social security net. A non-contributory FARMERS AGED 60 pension of Rs3,000 per month for small and marginal farmers aged 60 and above, owning up to 2 hectares of land, could provide AND ABOVE, **OWNING UP TO 2** much-needed financial security. HECTARES OF Contributions from state governments could further augment this scheme. Implementing such a LAND, COULD PROVIDE MUCHpension system can alleviate poverty among elderly farmers and reduce their dependence on family support. 6. Strengthen Animal Husbandry SECURITY

and Dairy Sectors:

Livestock contributes over 25 per cent to agricultural GDP but suffers from fluctuating milk prices and restrictive cattle rearing and trade policies.

A simple yet impactful step would

8. Simplify Crop Insurance

The PM Fasal Bima Yojana requires farmers to navigate complex procedures to claim compensation. The government should shoulder the entire premium initially, including the state's share, and simplify the claim process. This would reduce the administrative burden on farmers while ensuring timely compensation for crop losses.

Leveraging technology like satellite imagery and AI-driven risk assessment models can streamline the verification process and minimise disputes. Expanding insurance coverage to include post-har-

## Pioneering community-led groundwater management for a sustainable future

The Atal Bhujal Yojana, designed to address India's growing groundwater crisis, shifts the focus to a community-driven approach

I neering government initiative spearheaded by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, in collaboration with the World Bank. This innovative program marks a significant departure from traditional top-down approaches to water management, instead empowering communities to take the lead in sustainable groundwater management

A Bottom-Up Approach to Water Security Atal Jal has been implemented across 8,203 Gram Panchayats, 229 blocks, and 80 districts in Karnátaka, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

he Atal Bhujal Yojana, By directly engaging with marginalised farmers, the poor, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minorities, and other vulnerable groups, the scheme promotes inclusive development and social equity.

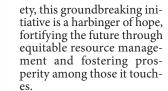
The core objective of Atal Jal is to increase groundwater availability and ensure its long-term sustainability. By bolstering groundwater resources, the programme

aims to enhance agricultural productivity and build resilience against the growing threats of climate change. Atal Jal is more than just a water management proseven states: Gujarat, gramme; it is a catalyst for social and economic transformation. By empowering communities and prioritising gender equity, the

SHANTANU GARG

scheme is paving the way for a more prosperous and sustainable rural India. As this groundbreaking initiative continues to unfold, it offers a beacon of hope, illuminating a future where water security and equitable development go hand-inhand.

With its transformative impact reverberating through every layer of soci-



The Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal) is a comprehensive initiative that goes beyond technical solutions to address the pressing issue of groundwater depletion. It is a multifaceted programme that combines technical interventions with social and behavioural change strategies.

**Empowering Communities** A key aspect of Atal Jal is its focus on gender equality and community empowerment. By involving women in decision-making processes and capacity-building



programmes, the scheme empowers them to play a crucial role in sustainable water use.

Women are encouraged to participate in meetings, training and leadership roles, ensuring that their perspectives and needs are

considered. Atal Jal employs innovative approaches to engage with communities. Through a variety of activi-

ties, including rallies, community meetings, competitions, and social media campaigns, the scheme raises awareness about groundwater issues and promotes sus-

tainable practices. The programme also recognises the importance of educating the next generation and conducts essay and drawing competitions in

schools. To further enhance its impact, Atal Jal utilises technology to monitor groundwater levels and disseminate information. The Atal Jal mobile app provides stakeholders and the general public with access to information about groundwater resources and management practices.

### A Sustainable Future

Atal Jal's well-defined sustainable strategy involves training community resource persons and collaboration with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. This systematic approach ensures the long-term sustainability of the program and empowers communities to make informed decisions about water use.

The success of Atal Jal is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the team behind the initiative. By combining technical expertise with a strong focus on social and behavioural change, Atal Jal is poised to become a model for future groundwater management programmes.

(The writer is Programme Coordinator, the Green Evolution, India, Nepal, Bangladesh & Coalition for Food Systems Transformation preparing water budgets in *in India; views are personal*)

## nation 08



## Seven Nepalese among 13 dead | Local MLA urges faster action in Maharashtra train tragedy



said.

evening.

themselves.

People gather after a train mishap, in Jalgaon of Maharashtra on Wednesday.

### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

As many as seven of the 13 persons who died in a train accident in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district hailed from Nepal, an official said on Thursday. Yuvaraj Patil, district information officer, said 11 of the 13 victims have been identified, and seven of them belonged to Nepal. The Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police have jointly initiated an inquiry into the train tragedy. Thirteen passengers of the Mumbai-bound Pushpak Express, who got off the train after an alarm chain-pulling incident, were run over by the Karnataka Express heading from Bengaluru to Delhi on

the adjacent tracks in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district on Wednesday evening. "Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP)

initiated an inquiry after the tragedy on Wednesday to find out what caused passengers to pull the alarm chain and alight the Pushpak Express,"

Swapnil Dhanraj Nila, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO), Central Railway, said. Asked if the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) will also investigate the incident, Nila

said, "The order for a CRS enquiry hasn't been issued Ínitial reports suggested that a

rumour of fire caused panic among Pushpak Express' passengers who alighted and waited at the adjacent track for a few minutes when the speeding Karnataka Express mowed many of them down. Ministry The Railwav clarified that no spark or smoke emanated from any part of the coach. "We are trying to find out who spread the rumour and what caused Lachchiram, said, "A fire the passengers to come out of rumour was spread in the

train. We saw smoke inside the train," a railway official the bogie. When the train slowed, we hastily stepped down and the train got Lachchiram Khataru Pasi from Nepal was among those seven persons. His family not only had to bear the grief of his death, but also go through the extremely traumatic empty.'

As they stepped down, the other train moving in the opposite direction process of identifying him approached within a couple of approached within a couple of minutes. Before they could comprehend what was happening, everyone started running helter-skelter to save from mutilated body parts. The tragedy took place when some passengers of the Mumbai-bound Pushpak Express got off the train after their lives while there was no an alarm chain-pulling incident and were run over by place to escape, he said. Out of the injured persons, 10

the Karnataka Express on the adjacent tracks on Wednesday were undergoing treatment --nine at Pachora civil hospital and one at a medical facility Pasi's companions, who survived the tragedy, narrated how they remained huddled in Jalgaon city. The others who suffered minor injuries were discharged, an official in the cramped space between said.

Dilip Kumar, Executive Director, Information and the two trains to save Dilip Publicity, Railway Board, denied that any spark or fire inside the coach caused passengers to pull the alarm chain.

## over Jammu mystery illness

### MOHIT KANDHARI 📕 JAMMU

Aday after the District Administration in Rajouri declared the remote Badhaal village as a 'containment zone,' ruling party MLA from the Budhal Assembly segment, Javed Iqbal Choudhary, on Thursday alleged that critically ill patients are suffering due to a 'dual power centre' and a lack of coordination between different agencies on the ground.

The National Conference MLA claimed that the samples collected by the central teams from the remote Badhaal village are yet to be transported out of Rajouri to their final destinations in Pune, Lucknow, and New Delhi. He also demanded a permanent arrangement for HeliTaxi services in either Jammu or Rajouri to shift critically ill patients without wasting precious time. Raising the issue of shifting

three sisters from GMC Jammu to PGI Chandigarh, the National Conference MLA alleged that despite airlifting the three siblings from Rajouri

via a special flight arranged by the office of the Divisional Commissioner Jammu, the office of GMC Principal failed to make the necessary arrangements in time to shift them to PGI Chandigarh late Wednesday evening. He demanded a high-level probe to determine who prevented the timely shifting of patients with severe symptoms of a 'mysterious disease.' So far, 17 villagers, including 13 children, have died due to the mysterious illness in the remote Badhaal village of Rajouri.

was informed about the airlifting of three children with Meanwhile, the district signs and symptoms of the mysterious illness from GMC authorities on Thursday shifted around 200 villagers from the Rajouri to GMC Jammu at containment zone in Badhaal approximately 6:30 PM. The to an isolation ward at GMC Rajouri. An 11-year-old patient authorities were also notified about the availability of beds at identified as Saima Kousar, PGIMER Chandigarh. with similar symptoms, was Dr. Gupta further added, "The GMC Jammu authorities immediately readied fully equipped critical care also admitted to GMC Rajouri on Thursday evening. Medical Superintendent of GMC Rajouri, Dr. Shamim Choudhary, said that doctors Shamim equipped critical care ambulances and dispatched them to the technical airport in are currently assessing her health condition. "We will start Jammu for the immediate treatment after the team of doctors thoroughly examines transfer of these patients to PGIMER Chandigarh by road."

### Sena seeks Bharat Ratna for Bal Thackeray her and monitors her," he said. related development, Principal of

### TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBA

GMC Jammu, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, responded to the allegations of NC MLA Javed Iqbal Choudhary, claiming that the patients could not be shifted to PGI Chandigarh late As both factions of the Shiv Sena celebrated the birth anniversary of the party founder, the late Bal Thackeray, on Thursday, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena demanded Wednesday night because administration that the late Thackeray be posthumously awarded the conveyed their inability to accept the children due to the country's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna. In a written statement issued

another

In

PGIMER

unavailability of beds.

On the day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid on Thursday, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta stated that GMC Jammu tributes to the late Bal Thackeray on his 99th birth anniversary, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Nirupam advocated for the "bestowal" of the Bharat Ratna on the late leader, the supreme of the united Shiv Sena. He said that if the Modi government conferred the country's highest civilian honor on Thackeray, it would be a fitting tribute to the Sena patriarch ahead of his centenary celebrations, which

will begin next year (2026). Balasaheb (January 23, 1926 November 17, 2012) founded the Shiv Sena on June 19, 1966. Along with Thackeray, Raut demanded that freedom fighter Veer Savarkar be honored with the Bharat Ratna as well.

### "Like Mahatma Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Balasaheb Thackeray never occupied any constitutional office, but he was regarded and respected as a leader in his own right-not only in the country but across the world. On the occasion of the upcoming Republic Day (January 26) celebrations, we demand that the government declare the names of both late Thackeray and Veer Savarkar for the Bharat Ratna," Raut said.

'We have never asked for anything for Balasaheb Thackeray ... However, this is the desire not only of Shiv Sainiks but of the people of Maharashtra, India, and Hindus around the world. All the party MPs have also made a similar plea today," Raut added. Taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah after they paid homage to Balasaheb on X, Raut said that conferring the Bharat Ratna on the Shiv Sena founder would be the true tribute to the late Shiv Sena chief.

"Before late Balasaheb's centenary year begins, it is fitting that he be awarded the Bharat Ratna. You could not give the Bharat Ratna to Veer Savarkar. If you give the Bharat Ratna to Balasaheb, it will also be an honor for Veer Savarkar,' Raut stated.

Sheila Dikshit ji, not the false

propaganda and PR model of Modi and Kejriwal," Rahul

said ahead of the Assembly

Rahul could not address a

public meeting in the Sadar

Bazar Assembly constituency

on Wednesday due to his ill

health and appealed to people

via a message read out at the

polls.

### you are representing the Bar, we are hearing out," it said. The top court said though NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Thursday raised concern over a large numbers of lawyers marking their appearance in cases, and their argued when asked to. names running into several pages, whereas an order was

only a few pages. A bench comprising Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma said if a

lawyer was assisting the court "effectively" it had no problem in adding the appearance.

"Names of lawyers go into 10 pages and the order will go

Supreme Court Association would submit a proposal to regulate the issue.

## plea by the associations seeking a direction to its administration regarding uniform guidelines to allow all

advocates present and appearing in a particular case to mark their appearances. In an order passed on September 20 last year, the top

court said advocates-onrecord could mark the appearances of only those lawyers who were authorised to appear in the court and argue on a particular day of

"You are right; 30-40 names

ensure that genuine people who are here and their names

The top court was hearing a

should be added," he said.

### MEA Jaishankar talks deportation of Indians in US Poll chai-naastha fixed by EC

### From page 1

"Because you also know that when something illegal happens, many other illegal activities get joined onto it, which is not desirable. It is certainly not good deportation of some 1,80,000 reputationally. So, with every Indians in the US who are country, and the US is no either undocumented, or have him exception, we have always maintained that if any of our

said. The minister was responding to a query on news reports that India is working with the Trump administration for the

open to their legitimate on, and a resulting sensitivity return to India," Jaishankar which is there, but we have been consistent, we have been very principled about it and that remains our position. I conveyed that clearly to

Secretary (of State, Marco) deportation of some 1,80,000 Rubio," he said. "At the same time, I also told that, while we stand all of this, and I unde

Recounting the horror, Shaukat Ali, a worker from

Nepal who was travelling with

beneficial mobility. "If it takes 400-odd days of waiting period to get a visa, I

don't think the relationship is well served by this. He (Rubio) also noted that point," he said. "But while I've seen some

numbers... I caution vou about them because for us, a number is operative when we

### From page 1

We take the itemized list from the previous election and calculate the new prices using the consumer price index. The list cannot be exhaustive, and the rates of various miscellaneous items, which are not mentioned in it, are accounted for as per the bill, the maximum retail price mentioned on it, or the fair market price, whichever is higher," said an election official.

### Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Supreme Court Bar Supreme Association (SCBA). Sibal submitted the SCBA and the Advocates-on-Record hearing.

into only a few pages. We are not passing any orders on how the names of advocates should be included in the order. Since

SC to address lawyer appearance regulations PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

cannot be given. But some reasonable, fair procedure to many lawyers appeared with the arguing counsel, nobody "Or we would have clearly said you have no locus. Whoever is attached with the lawyer, their names are there. It cannot be done like that. When we see they are assisting you effectively, their names are there. We will pass the orders," the bench told senior advocate

citizens are there illegally, and to the United States. I do autonomous processes, it is in

overstaved their visas.

"This position is not unique also accept that these are

can actually validate the fact that the individual concerned if we are sure that they are our understand that right now our mutual interest to is of Indian origin," Jaishankar citizens, we have always been there is a certain debate going facilitate legal and mutually added.

expense registers, expenditure observers, appointed by the EC, prepare a "shadow" register, and both are required to be updated be announced on February 8.

While the candidates maintain their own candidate for assembly elections. As many as 699 candidates have filed nominations for the 70 seats of the Delhi Assembly. The results will

regularly. Sometimes, there is an informal arrangement where the candidate compares

their daily register with the expenditure observers' shadow register and corrects any

anomalies. Overall, the EC's maximum limit

on election expenditure for assembly seats for

each candidate is Rs 40 lakh. For Lok Sabha

elections, the limit is Rs 95 lakh. The

expenditure limit has increased over the years.

In 2019, the limit was Rs 70 lakh per candidate

for the Lok Sabha election and Rs 28 lakh per

### Doubts raised in Saif Ali attack case **Rahul Gandhi cancels two** Differential pricing: Uber, rallies on consecutive days building-related footage and his spine, had managed to The family should come the person arrested in recover from the grievous forward and disclose this Ola, Apple under scanner The knife attack on the actor connection with the crime.

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This intervention was not the first of its kind; the department had previously issued a notice Consumers had reported performance issues with iPhones following updates to iOS 18 and later versions. The department examined these grievances and requested a response from Apple to address the concerns raised by users.

Uber, and Apple highlighted a BluSmart.

broader effort to ensure that

companies adopt fair practices and do not exploit consumers. The actions taken by the CCPA were expected to had previously issued a line to Apple due to complaints reg-istered on the National Consumer Helpline. bring clarity and resolution to these issues while reinforcing consumer trust in digital platforms and technology services.

India is one of Uber's biggest markets outside the United States and Canada, where it is locked in a fierce battle with SoftBank-backed Ola, local rival Rapido, as well as all-The notices issued to Ola, electric ride-hailing app

had taken place between 2 am "The media is claiming that and 2.30 am on Thursday, after the person seen in the Saifattack related CCTV footage a failed attempt of a burglary.

After his admission to the and the person arrested for the crime are not the same. The Lilavati Hospital, the actor had Mumbai police should come undergone a surgery for removal of a knife stuck in his clean and issue a clarification spine and also plugging the leakage of spinal fluid. During in the matter. They should present the truth to the a surgery carried out on him public," Maharashtra Congress immediately afterwards, the chief Nana Patole said. doctors attending on Saif removed a 2.5-inch piece of

In a related development, two ruling MahaYuti leaders -Sanjay Nirupam of the Shinde Meanwhile, the Opposition Congress on Thursday jumped into the raging controversy over the identities Shiv Sena and BJP Minister Nitesh Rane - have questioned as how the Bollywood actor, who had sustained six bullet of the person seen in Saif wounds including the one in

injuries so fast. Nirupam, who is the deputy leader of Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, said that though he had full sympathies for Saif Ali Khan and his family, he had had sincere doubts as to how the actor could recover so fast. "The way Saif Ali Khan came

out of the hospital, it appeared as if nothing had happened four days ago... I want to ask the doctors, can a person whose operation lasted for 6 hours come out in such good shape within 4 days?," Nirupam asked. "It should be revealed how

deadly the attack was and how badly the actor was injured.

because, after this incident, such an atmosphere was

created in Mumbai that the law and order of Mumbai has collapsed, the Home Ministry has failed, the Maharashtra government has been ruined, and every citizen in Mumbai is unsafe," Nirupam said.

Echoing the doubts expressed by Nirupam, Rane – Rane, who is the Ports and Fisheries Minister in the BJP-led MahaYuti Cabinet, said: "When I saw Saif Ali Khan coming out of the hospital, I doubted whether he had been stabbed six days ago or was he acting. He was dancing while

walking".

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On Wednesday, Gandhi was scheduled to hold a campaign rally near Inderlok Metro Station in the Sadar Bazar constituency, but he canceled it. The Congress maintained until the last minute that Gandhi would be addressing the rally, but later announced, towards the end of the public meeting held near the Inderlok metro station, that he would not be able to attend.

His message was read at the campaign event, in which he urged voters to choose Congress in the February 5 elections. Rahul had skipped the 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan rally Samvidhan' rally in Karnataka's Belagavi on Tuesday. He was also scheduled to hold a padayatra on Monday in the New Delhi in Assembly constituency in support of party candidate Sandeep Dikshit, who is contesting against AAP national convener Arvind Keiriwal.

rally to ensure the party's victory in the polls. Due to his ill health, Gandhi also could not travel to Karnataka's Belagavi for the 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan' rally on Tuesday.

Earlier, his political program in the New Delhi constituency was also called off.

Earlier this month, Rahul launched a blistering attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, saying there is no difference between the two leaders and that they do not want backward classes, Dalits, tribals, and minorities to get their due share.

Specifically targeting Kejriwal Meanwhile, Rahul shared a video montage on Facebook at his first public meeting for highlighting issues such as inflation, unemployment, pollution, and corruption. He the Delhi Assembly polls, Rahul said that the AAP convener was following strategy said Delhi now wants the "real "Modi's of development model" of former chief minister Sheila propaganda false and promises," despite rising Dikshit and not the "false pollution, corruption, and propaganda and PR model" of inflation in the national Prime Minister Narendra Modi and AAP convener capital.

He also promised a caste survey in Delhi if Congress formed the government in the national capital.

Rahul had praised the work done under three successive Dikshit-led Sheila governments and asserted that neither Kejriwal nor the BJP could match the Congress' track record.

### BJP **CMs corner**

Janakpuri

constituencv

rule in Delhi.

knife from Saif's spine.

### From page 1

"Near the Jamia Millia in Delhi, acres of land belong to the irrigation department of UP. AAP leaders have settled illegal Bangladeshis there. I requested the Delhi government to stop the Illegal occupation but when they did not cooperate I had to send bulldozers from UP," Yogi said, in a public address in Janakpuri.

Hitting out at the AAP over Yamuna river, he asked the AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal to take a bath in Yamuna river with his ministers like he took a dip in sewer. He added that the dirty Yamuna river flows from Delhi to Mathura and Vrindavan, causing trouble to the saints there.

He also called the AAP an 'ATM' of lies. "They do not want to work for the betterment of people. They only have one job: to tell lies through social media, tweets and press conferences. The time they waste by becoming an ATM of lies, if they had utilized this time to do the work for the people then the face of Delhi would have changed. They have changed Delhi into a 'kudaghar' (garbage dump)," the UP CM said.

"If he can betray his guru Anna Hazare, he can also betray the people and the country. I can confidently say Sangam with his cabinet that the people of Delhi will ministers and blamed him for no longer fall for his changing the river into a dirty statements anymore," he added.

On AAP's 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana' scheme, Yogi attacked the AAP for not undertaking any work for the excise policy case among

beautification of temples in 'scams' that allegedly took Delhi. "They forgot the Valmiki priests. AAP does place during the AAP's two consecutive terms. The party not have Ravidas temple cut the pockets of everyone in priests in their agenda. Even Delhi during its tenure, he today, they are playing their divide and rule policy. People have already decided that charged. The AAP government broke all records of corruption during its 10-year rule in they will make BJP win since the Lok Sabha election when they gave us their 100 per

during its 10-year rule in Delhi, Nadda told the gathering. "The one who becomes the darling of the cent support," he said. He also addressed two more public meetings in Karol Bagh and Muslim community while indulging in corruption in every department, has also assembly committed a scam of 100 Nadda also held two rallies in crores in the Waqf Board," he Delhi at Uttam Nagar and said.

Shakur Basti. Addressing a public meeting in west Delhi's Nadda called AAP national convenor and former chief Uttam Nagar, Nadda launched a blistering attack minister Arvind Kejriwal a 'liar'. "He lies with so much on the AAP, alleging that the party broke all records of innocence on his face that if a competition of lying is organised at the national corruption during its 10-year level, he will come first. But and the people of Delhi will give a The Union minister listed the

the assembly polls," the BJP leader said. Nadda said this election is for the future of

Delhi and the voters should keep that in mind.

Meanwhile, Yadav also addressed two rallies at Madipur and Rohini. In his address at Madipur, the Chief Minister said that the AAP supremo keeps lying. "He said he will not form any political party, take any bunglow or security. He has a skin thicker than that of a buffalo," he said.

Attacking the former Chief Minister, Yadav accused Kejriwal of being so hungry for power that he did not even resign even though he was arrested.

Spearheading the BJP's campaign in Delhi, Dhami held two road shows in Palam Delhi Cantt constituencies with several befitting reply to the AAP in supporters coming out to

support him.

would form a "double-engine government" in Delhi, ensuring the effective implementation of central government's schemes like Ayushman Bharat.

Delhi will vote on February 5 and the counting of votes will take place on February 8. While AAP seeks a third consecutive term, the BJP is aiming to return to power in the national capital after

During the road show in Delhi Cantt, Dhami accused the AAP government of failing to deliver on key issues. "The AAP government has not worked in the last 10 years. They failed to provide clean water, engaged in corruption in every scheme, and built their Sheesh Mahal with public money," he said. He asserted that the BJP

Arvind Kejriwal. "Bad construction, dirt, inflation,

unemployment, pollution, and corruption-the truth of Delhi is in front of the public," the former Congress chief said in his Facebook post in Hindi. "Delhi now wants the same more than 25 years. real development model of

## world 09



## **Trump threatens Russia with tariffs, sanctions** House passes immigrant detention bill

### PTI WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has warned his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to end the 'ridiculous war' in Ukraine or face high tariffs and further sanctions. Trump, who was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, said this on Truth Social on Wednesday, a social media platform owned by him.

Trump called out Russian President Putin by name in the social media post, arguing that he always had a good relationship with the leader, but that it was time to settle "this ridiculous War!'

Asserting that he is looking to hurt Russia, Trump said he wants no more lives to be lost in the war. "Let's get this war, which never

would have started if I were President, over with! We can do it the easy way, or the hard way - and the easy way is always better. It's time to "MAKE A DEAL." NO MORE LIVES SHOULD BE LOST!!!" Trump said.

"I love the Russian people, and always had a very good rela-tionship with President Putin - and this despite the Radical Left's Russia, Russia, Russia HOAX. We must never forget

that Russia helped us win the Second World War, losing almost 60,000,000 lives in the process," he said.

He also warned that if there was not a ceasefire deal soon, he would "have no other choice" but to impose tariffs, taxes and sanctions on "anything being sold by Russia to the United States, and various

other participating countries." "All of that being said, I'm going to do Russia, whose Economy is failing, and President Putin, a very big FAVOUR. Settle now, and STOP this ridiculous War! IT'S ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE. If we don't make a "deal," and soon, I have no other choice but to put high levels of Taxes, Tariffs, and

Sanctions on anything being sold by Russia to the United States, and various other participating countries," Trump said making an open appeal to the Russian leader. The Biden administration has

already imposed numerous sanctions on various Russian economic sectors, including its oil and energy sectors earlier this month, in an effort to cut off its revenues to fund the war in Ukraine.

Trump has for months called for a ceasefire in Ukraine, urging both sides to negotiate.

Russian forces invaded Ukraine in early 2022, and both sides have sustained heavy losses in the nearly three years of fighting since. During his campaign, Trump

repeatedly said he could settle the war between Russia and Ukraine in one day if he was elected president. He would go on to claim that Putin would never have invaded had Trump been president, the National Public Radio reported.

On Tuesday, Trump said he is ready to meet Putin anytime, but at the same time, he warned that he would likely impose sanctions on Russia if the latter does not come to the negotiations table on the issue of Ukraine.

"It sounds likely," Trump told reporters when asked if the US will impose additional sanctions on Russia if Putin doesn't come to the negotiation table.

Trump also said that Ukraine's President Zelensky told him that he would like to have peace.

He's told me that he wants to have peace very strongly, but it takes two to tango. We'll see what happens. Anytime they want, I'll meet. I'd like to see that end. Millions of people are

being killed. It's a vicious situation," he said.

The Republican-led House on Wednesday gave its final approval to a bill that requires the detainment of unauthorised immigrants accused of theft and violent crimes, marking the first legislation that US President Donald Trump can sign as Congress, with some bipartisan support, swiftly moved in line with his plans to

crackdown on illegal immigration. Passage of the Laken Rilev Act, named after a Georgia nursing student who was murdered last year by a Venezuelan man, shows just how sharply the political debate over immigration has shifted to the right following Trump's election victory.

PTI WASHIGNTON

Immigration policy has often been one of the most entrenched issues in Congress, but a crucial faction of 46 politically vulnerable Democrats joined with vulnerable Republicans to lift the strict proposal to passage on a 263-156 vote tally.

"For decades, it has been almost impossible for our government to agree on solutions

for the problems at our border and within our country," Senator Katie Britt, an Alabama Republican, said.

She called the legislation "perhaps the most significant immigration enforcement bill" to be passed by Congress in nearly three decades. Still, the bill would require a

massive ramp-up in US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's capabilities, but it does not include any new funding. Meanwhile, the new president

has launched a slew of executive orders intended to seal off the border of Mexico to immigration and ultimately deport millions of immigrants without permanent legal status in the US.

On Wednesday, Trump also cancelled refugee resettlement while his administration signalled intentions to prosecute local law enforcement officials who do not enforce his new immigration policies.

Republican congressional lead-ers have made it clear they intend to follow suit, though their toughest challenge will be finding a way to approve the funding to actually implement

Trump's hard-line plans. "What he's doing is kick-start-ing what will ultimately be our legislative agenda," said House Speaker Mike Johnson. House Republicans initially passed the legislation last year with support from 37 Democrats in a move that was intended to deliver a political rebuke to then-President Joe Biden's handling of the southshoplifting. ern border.

It then languished in the Democratic-controlled Senate. This year, Republicans, now with control of both congressional chambers, have made it their top priority. When it came before the Senate, 12 ing to state attorneys general to sue the federal government Democrats voted in favour of passage, and when the House voted on a version of the bill earlier this month, 48

one.

The bill also gives legal stand-

for harm caused by federal

That gives states new power in setting immigration policy

when they have already been trying to push back against presidential decisions under

both the Trump and Biden

immigration decisions.

administrations.

Democrats supported it. The vast majority of US adults favour deporting immigrants convicted of violent crimes, according to a recent survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Democrats unsuccessfully pushed to have that provision stripped from the bill in the However, only about 37 per cent of US adults are in favour of deporting immigrants who Senate, saying it would inject even more uncertainty and have not been convicted of a

partisanship into immigration crime."While the bill is not perpolicy.

fect, it sends a clear message that we think that criminals Ultimately, even the Trump should be deported," said Rep administration is likely to Tom Suozzi, a New York Democrat who has called on struggle to implement the new requirements unless Congress his party to support tougher immigration enforcement. follows up later this year with funding. Republicans are currently Under the legislation, federal authorities would be required

strategising how to push their priorities through Congress to detain any migrant arrested or charged with crimes like through a party-line process known as budget reconcilia-The scope of the proposal was widened in the Senate to also include those accused of tion. They have put the cost of funding Trump's border and deportation priorities at roughassaulting a police officer or crimes that injure or kill somely USD 100 billion.

Trump has "laid out the largest domestic logistical undertaking of our lifetimes — that being the deportation of the vast majority of illegal aliens present in the United States", Ken Cuccinelli, who directed US Citizenship and Immigration Services during Trump's first presidency, recently told a Senate panel.

Cuccinelli said it would require a surge of immigration judges, prosecutors and other staff, but Trump has also paved the way to use military troops, bases and other resources to carry out the mass deportations.

### Firefighters struggle to control Bid to block Trump's cancellation of birthright citizenship in federal court massive blaze north of LA

### AP CASTAIC

Firefighters fought to main-tain the upper hand on a huge and rapidly moving wildfire that swept through rugged mountains north of Los Angeles and resulted in more than 50,000 people being put under evacuation orders or warnings.

The Hughes Fire broke out late Wednesday morning and in less than a day had charred nearly 16 square miles (41 square kilometers) of trees and brush near Lake Castaic, a popular recreation area about 40 miles (64 kilometers) from the devastating Eaton and Palisades fires that are burning for a third week. Though the region was under a red flag warning for critical fire risk, winds were not as fast as they had been when those fires broke out, allowing for firefighting aircraft to dump tens of thousands of gallons of fire



A helicopter drops water on the Hughes Fire along Castaic Lake in Castaic, Calif. Wednesday. AP/PTI

Red

helped found.

Musk, an early OpenAI investor and board member,

sued the artificial intelligence

company last year alleging it

had betrayed its founding aims

as a nonprofit research lab

benefiting the public good

rather than pursuing profits. Musk has since escalated the

dispute, adding new claims and asking for a court order

that would stop OpenAI's plans to convert itself into a for-prof-

it business more fully. A hear-

ed his own rival AI company, xAI, that is building its own big

Tennessee. Musk says it faces

OpenAI and its close business

partner Microsoft, which has

supplied the huge computing

resources needed to build AI

Tech news outlet The

Information first reported on

systems such as ChatGPT.

California federal court.

flag warning

retardant on the latest blaze. By from the situation we were in 16 days ago," Los Angeles County Fire Chief Anthony Wednesday night, about 14% of the Hughes Fire had been contained. "The situation that Marrone said Wednesday odav is verv different we're in evening.

Friday in LA and Ventura counties. Officials remained concerned that the Palisades and Eaton fires could break their containment lines as firefighters continue watching for hot spots. More than 31,000 people have

been ordered to evacuate from the Hughes Fire, and another 23,000 are under evacuation warnings, LA County Sheriff Robert Luna said. There were no reports of homes or other structures burned. Parts of Interstate 5 near the Hughes Fire that had been closed reopened Wednesday evening. A 30-mile (48-kilometer) stretch of the major north-south artery had been closed for emergency vehicles, to move equipment and to prevent accidents due to smoke billowing across it. Crews on the ground and in water-dropping aircraft tried to prevent the wind-driven fire from moving

### Washington (AP): A federal judge in Seattle is set to hear the were extended through 10 a.m. first arguments on Thursday in a multi-state lawsuit seeking to block President Donald Trump's executive order ending the constitutional guarantee of birthright citizenship regardless

of the parents' immigration status. US District Judge John Coughenour scheduled the session to consider the request from Arizona, Illinois, Oregon and Washington. The case is one of five lawsuits being brought by 22 states and a number of immigrants rights groups across the country. The suits include personal testimonies from attorneys general who are US citizens by birthright, and names pregnant women who are afraid their children won't become US cit-

izens. The order, signed by Trump on Inauguration Day, is slated to take effect on February 19. It could impact hundreds of

thousands of people born in the country, according to one of the lawsuits. In 2022, there were about 255,000 births of citizen children to mothers living in the country illegally and about 153,000 births to two such parents, according to the fourstate suit filed in Seattle. The

US is among about 30 countries where birthright citizenship — the principle of jus soli or "right of the soil" — is applied. Most are in the Americas, and Canada and Mexico are among them. The lawsuits argue that the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution guarantees citizenship for people born and naturalised in the US, and states have been interpreting the amendment that way for a

century. Ratified in 1868 in the aftermath of the Civil War, the amendment says: "All persons born or naturalised in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the

State wherein they reside." Trump's order asserts that the children of noncitizens are not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and orders federal agencies to not recognise citizenship for children who don't have at least one parent

who is a citizen. A key case involving birthright citizenship unfolded in 1898. The Supreme Court held that Wong Kim Ark, who was born in San Francisco to Chinese immigrants, was a US citizen because he was born in the country. After a trip abroad, he faced being denied reentry by the federal government on the grounds that he wasn't a citizen under the Chinese Exclusion Act. But some advocates of immigration restrictions have argued that case clearly applied to children born to parents who were both legal immigrants. They say it's less clear whether it applies to children born to parents living in the country

egally

Aaron said.

The school has about 2,000 stu-

station to reunite with his son,

a 10th grader, who was being

held in the auditorium with

other students on Wednesday

afternoon. He first heard of the

shooting from his son who

lecad

The active duty forces will join

### Pentagon sending active duty troops to help secure US-Mexico border

Washington (AP): The Pentagon on Wednesday said it has begun deploying 1,500 active duty troops to help secure the southern border in the coming days, putting in motion plans US President Donald Trump laid out in executive orders shortly after he took office to crack down on immi-

gration. Acting Defence Secretary Robert Salesses said the Pentagon will provide military aircraft to support Department of Homeland Security deportation flights for more than 5,000 detained migrants and the troops will assist in the construction of barriers.

The number of troops and their mission may soon change, Salesses said in a statement.It remains to be seen if they will end up doing law enforcement, which would put American troops in a dramatically different role for the first time in

### UK targets Apple, Google with new digital market powers

London (AP): Google's Android and Apple's iOS are facing fresh scrutiny from Britain's competition watchdog, which announced investigations Thursday targeting the two tech giants' mobile phone ecosystems under new powers to crack down on digital market abuses.

The Competition and Markets Authority said it launched separate investigations to determine whether the mobile ecosystems controlled by Apple and Google should be given "strategic market status" that would mandate changes in the

companies' practices. The watchdog is flexing its newly acquired regulatory muscles again after the new digital market rules took effect at the start of the year. The CMA has already used the new rules, designed to protect consumers and businesses from unfair practices by Big Tech companies, to open an investi-gation into Google's search ads business.

The new investigations will examine whether Apple or Google's mobile operating systems, app stores and browsers give either company a strategic position in the market. The watchdog said it's interested in the level of competition and any barriers preventing rivals from offering competing products and services.

The CMA will also look into whether Apple or Google are favouring their own apps and services, which it said "often come pre-installed and promi-nently placed on iOS and Android devices".

Google's YouTube and Apple's Safari browser are two examples of apps that come bundled with Android and iOS, respectively.

Elon Musk clashes with **OpenAl CEO Altman** 

### AP WASHINGTON

 $E_{\rm OpenAI\,CEO\,Sam\,Altman}^{\rm lon\,Musk}$  is clashing with over the Stargate artificial intelligence infrastructure project touted by President Donald Trump, the latest in a feud between the two tech billionaires that started on OpenAI's board and is now testing Musk's influence with the new presi-

dent. Trump on Tuesday had talked up a joint venture investing up to \$500 billion through a new partnership formed by OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, alongside Oracle and SoftBank.

The new entity, Stargate, is already starting to build out data centres and the electricity generation needed for the further development of fastevolving AI technology.

Trump declared it "a resounding declaration of confidence in America's potential" under his new administration, with an initial private investment of \$100 billion that could reach five times that sum.

But Musk, a close Trump adviser who helped bankroll his campaign and now leads a government cost-cutting initiative, questioned the value of the investment hours later. "They don't actually have the

an OpenAI data center project called Stargate in March 2024, money," Musk wrote on his indicating that it's been in the works long before Trump social platform X. "SoftBank has well under \$10B secured. I have that on good authority." Altman responded Wednesday to say Musk was "wrong, as you surely know" and inviting Musk to come visit the first site in Texas that is already under

construction. "(T)his is great for the country. i realize what is great for the country isn't always what's optimal for your companies, but in vour new role i hope you'll mostly put (America) first,"

time that the project was "supported by a multibillion-dollar investment" but didn't disclose Altman wrote, using a US flag its backers.

announced it.

### emoji to represent America. The public clash over Stargate

A female student was killed and another student was is part of a years-long dispute between Musk and Altman that began with a boardroom wounded on Wednesday in a shooting in a Nashville high rivalry over who should run OpenAI, which both men school cafeteria, police said.

The 17-year-old shooter, who was also a student at Antioch High School, later shot and killed himself with a handgun, Metro Nashville Police spokesperson Don Aaron said during a news conference. Police identified him as

Solomon Henderson. Police chief John Drake said the

shooter "confronted" a 16year-old female student in the cafeteria and opened fire, killing her. Police identified her as Josselin Corea Escalante.

ing is set for February in a Drake said police are looking into a motive and whether the The world's richest man, whose students who were shot were companies include Tesla, SpaceX and X, last year starttargeted.

AP SYDNEY

The male student who was



Teen fatally shoots female student,

Students wait to get off a bus at a unification site following a shooting at the Antioch AP/PTI High School in Nashville, Tenn., Wednesday.

wounded suffered a graze, and was treated and released from the hospital, Drake said. Another student was taken to

a hospital for treatment of a

facial injury that happened during a fall, Aaron said. There were two school resource officers in the building when

the roughly 2,500 US National Guard and Reserve forces already there. There are currently no active duty troops working along the roughly 3,219-km border. self at Nashville high school: Police Personnel started moving to the

border earlier Wednesday, according to a military official 11 am (local time), Aaron said. They were not in the immedibriefing reporters on the conate vicinity of the cafeteria and dition of anonymity to provide by the time they got down there additional details on the deploythe shooting was over and the gunman had killed himself, ment.

The troops will include 500 Marines from Camp Pendleton in California, and the remain-

der will be army personnel. dents and is located in Antioch, a neighbourhood about 16 km Troops have done similar duties southeast of downtown in support of Border Patrol Nashville. At a family safety centre close to a hospital, offiagents in the past, when both Trump and former president cials were helping shocked par-ents to reunite with their chil-Joe Biden sent active duty troops to the border. dren. Dajuan Bernard was waiting at a Mapco service

Troops are prohibited by law from doing law enforcement duties under the Posse Comitatus Act, but that may change. Trump has directed through executive order that the incoming secretary of defence and incoming homeland security chief report back within 90 days if they think an 1807 law called the Insurrection Act should be invoked.

was a little startled", Bernard said. His son was upstairs from the cafeteria but said he heard the gunfire. the shooting happened around

### data center in Memphis, Thousands line up for whiff of flower smelling like gym socks unfair competition from

The rare unfurling of an T endangered plant that emits the smell of decaying flesh drew hundreds of devoted fans to a greenhouse in Sydney on Thursday where they joined three-hour lines to experience a momentous bloom -- and a fragrance evoking gym socks and rotting garbage. Tall, pointed and smelly, the

Another company - Crusoe Energy Systems - announced in July it was building a large corpse flower is scientifically and "specially designed AI data center" at the northwest edge of known as amorphophallus titanum — or bunga bangkai in Abilene, Texas at a site run by Indonesia, where the plants are energy technology company Lancium. Crusoe and Lancium found in the Sumatran rainforest.

said in a joint statement at the But to fans of this specimen, she's Putricia — a portmanteau of "putrid" and "Patricia" eagerly adopted by her followers who, naturally, call themselves

Putricians. For a week, she has graced a stately and gothic display in front of a purple curtain and wreathed in mist from a humidifier at the Royal Sydney Botanic Garden. Her rise to fame since has

been rapid, with up to 20,000 admirers filing past for a moment in her increasingly pungent presence. No corpse flower has bloomed at the garden for 15 years.

"The fact that they open very rarely, so they flower rarely, is obviously something that puts them at a little bit of a disad-vantage in the wild," said garden spokesperson Sophie Daniel, who designed Putricia's kooky and funereal display. "When they open, they have to

hope that another flower is open nearby, because they can't

self-pollinate." There are thought to be only 300 of the plants in the wild and fewer than 1,000 worldwide - including those in cultivation. Among them is Putricia, which arrived at the

garden seven years ago. When her flower was spotted in December she was just 25 centimeters (10 inches) high. By Thursday, she was 1.6 metres (5 feet 3 inches) tall -and her flower spike was slowly opening like a pleated skirt around a majestic central tuber, the yellow-green outer curling to reveal a burgundy centre. As excitement grew in Sydney about the moment of her bloom, garden staff erected crowd barriers, giving the Victorian greenhouse the air of a rock concert. Fans trod a red

carpet to view Putricia from behind velvet ropes in a display inspired by Queen Victoria's funeral, the Rocky Horror Picture Show and the oeuvre of the late director David Lynch. Inside, fans took selfies and leaned in for a sniff — an increasingly perilous prospect as Putricia's odor developed. One young woman raised her hands and bowed as though in worship. On social media, garden staff performed a viral dance to Chappell Roan's sum-mer hit HOT TO GO! against a backdrop of the stately plant. It was difficult to say why the regal, mysterious and stinky flower had attracted such a following -- but perhaps the answer lay in the "reverence" viewers felt in the presence of

"such an amazing living being,"

Daniel said. Along with her real-life visitors, Putricia's online fandom has been rapid, global and deeply strange -- if much less smelly. A 24/7 live stream established by the botanic garden drew close to a million views in less than a week and a shared language of memes and inside jokes sprang

Frequently deployed acronyms included WWTF, or we watch the flower, WDNRP - we do not rush Putricia - and BBTB, or blessed be the bloom. "Putricia is a metaphor for my life," wrote one poster, who did not elaborate. Commenters on social media made plans to hurry to the garden as the plant opened. In just 24 hours, Putricia's bloom -- and her stench -- would be gone.



## **Growing geo-economic fragmentation** can decrease global GDP: WEF report

### PTI DAVOS

Growing geo-economic fragmentation can decrease global GDP by up to \$5.7 trillion, giving it a bigger blow than the financial crisis of 2008 or the COVID-19 pandemic, a new study showed on Thursday. India and some other

LUCKNOW | FRIDAY | JANUARY 24, 2025

emerging economies can bear the biggest burden in the most extreme fragmentation scenario, it cautioned.

Countries are increasingly using the global financial and trading systems to advance geopolitical objectives through sanctions, industrial policies, and other economic measures, the World Economic Forum said while releasing the report here during its Annual here units Meeting 2025. The Navigating Global

System Financial Fragmentation report estimated that fragmentation resulting from statecraft policies could cost the global economy \$0.6 trillion to \$5.7 trillion – up to 5 per cent of global GDP – due to reduced trade and cross-border capital flows as well as lost economic their geopolitical objectives -

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

evidenced by a 370 per cent

rise in sanctions since 2017,

industrial policies and discussions about the creation

The report called on policy-

makers to adopt economic

development and resilience in

the global economy. The impact of fragmentation

on inflation rates and GDP

growth depends heavily on the

policies adopted by global

subsidies,

financial

fosters

sustainable

with

parallel

along

architectures.

cooperation,

statecraft that

leaders, WEF said.

of

efficiencies.

It could also increase global inflation by more than 5 per cent in a very high fragmentation scenario, it added. The report, developed in collaboration with Oliver Wyman, showed that the economic impact of rising geo-economic fragmentation could surpass the disruptions caused by the 2008 financial

the pioneer

crisis or the COVID-19 pandemic. have been Countries the increasingly using financial system to advance

With a principled approach, policymakers can advance appropriate policies for their economies and societies while mitigating unintended effects on areas like cost of living and GDP growth, it added. In the most extreme fragmentation scenario, a full

economic decoupling between Eastern and Western blocs would force unaligned countries to trade exclusively with their most significant partner, economic i cautioned.

These nations could see GDP growth drop by over 10 per cent – nearly double the global average - with India, Brazil, Turkiye, and emerging economies in Latin America, Africa and South-East Asia bearing the greatest burden. "Fragmentation not only fuels inflation but also negatively impacts economic growth prospects, particularly in emerging markets and developing economies that depend on an integrated financial system for their continued development," said Matt Strahan, Private Markets Lead.

gainers.

&

World Economic

affect global trade, instigate



Discretionary and Healthcare

went up 1.28 per cent each. On the other hand, Energy,

Bankex and Oil & Gas were

Overall, the market breadth

was positive as 2,119 stocks advanced while 1,842 declined and 106 remained

The market capitalisation of

unchanged on the BSE.

₹2,75,359.24 crore

by

BUDGET

trillion.

the only laggards.

Stock markets extended gains for the second day on Thursday helped by buying in IT, consumer durables and commodity stocks amid a largely positive trend in global markets.

In a volatile trade, the 30share index rose by 115.39 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 76,520.38. The barometer started on a negative note dropping by 202 points to a low of 76,202.12. The index pared losses later and climbed 338.55 points or 0.44 per cent to hit a high of

76,743.54. The broader NSE Nifty rose by 50 points or 0.22 per cent to end at 23,205.35.

From the Sensex pack, UltraTech Cement, Mahindra Mahindra, Sun Zomato, Pharmaceutical, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Tata Motors, Titan, ITC and Bajaj Finance were the major

Ĭn contrast, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HCL Technologies, PowerGrid, Reliance Industries, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, IndusInd Bank, Nestle India and Axis Bank were among the laggards. "Uncertainty lingers whether

the trade tariff measures will

higher inflation. and currencies volatility. The trend holds a declining momentum YTD with a pause today contemplating the upcoming 2025 budget, which has a muted expectation," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit

Financial Services, said. Meanwhile in-line Q3 results showcasing QoQ growth to the indices suggesting that Q4 will be much better, Nair said. In broader markets, the BSE smallcap index rose 0.67 per cent and midcap gauge

gave up its losses after a surge led by gains in IT helped the jumped 1.78 per cent. Among BSE sectoral indices, indices recover. The sector's sentiments were further Consumer Durables rose the most by 1.95 per cent, Commodities by 1.86 per cent, Focused IT by 1.79 per cent, Information Technology by 1.51 per cent, Services 1.42 buoyed surrounding President Donald Trump's privatesector investment plan for AI per cent and Consumer infrastructure.

"However, the gains experienced a holdback driven by concerns over moderation in earnings," Ameya Ranadive Chartered Market Technician, CFTe, Sr Technical Analyst, StoxBox, said.

An overall positive trend was also seen throughout the broader market. Sectorally, IT remained the key gainer, led by a positive earnings outlook and optimistic sectoral view, Ranadive added.

On the stock-specific front, UltraTech Cement gained approximately 6 per cent during the latter part of the trading session, led by positive earnings. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading in positive territory while Seoul was quoting in the negative. US markets ended higher in overnight deals on Wednesday.

BSE-listed companies rose by Global oil benchmark Brent to ₹4,24,63,686.80 crore or \$4.91 crude fell 0.34 per cent to \$78.73 a barrel.

Institutional "Despite a tepid start during Foreign Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹4,026.25 the day, the benchmark soon Wednesday, on crore according to exchange data. On Wednesday, the 30-share optimism BSE Sensex surged 566.63 points to close at 76,404.99 and the NSE Nifty climbed 130.70 points to settle at 23,155.35.

### Budget should announce tax Indian Energy Exchange net profit Significant progress in talks rises nearly 17 per cent in Q3 on India-EU FTA: Official cuts for individuals: Barclays

### PTI NEW DELHI

 $I_{(\rm IEX)~on~Thursday~posted~a}^{\rm ndian~Energy~Exchange}$ nearly 17 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 107.29 crore, mainly driven by higher revenues.

The company had reported a consolidated net profit of ₹91.80 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2023, a BSE filing showed. Its total income rose to

₹160.53 crore in the quarter from ₹141.21 crore a year ago. The Board of Directors has also approved the payment of an interim dividend of ₹1.50 per equity share, having a face value of ₹1 each for 2024-25. The record date for ascertaining the name of members/beneficial owners entitled to receive the interim dividend is Friday, January 31, 2025.

during the quarter, IEX d an e ectricity traded volume of 30.5 billion units (BU), marking a 15.9 per cent year-on-year rise and traded 26.52 lakh Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), recording a 31 per cent growth.



According to the statement, The company said its adequate availability of fuel in this quarter led to higher (net profit) for 9M FY25 this quarter led to higher liquidity on the exchange platform, as the sell quantum increased by 62 per cent (year-on-year) in the dayahead market, leading to softening prices. For Q3 FY25 (October-

traded a total volume of 162 December 2024), prices in the lakh MMBtu for Q3 FY25 compared to 84 lakh MMBtu day ahead market averaged IEX, in a statement, said that ₹3.71/unit, a decline of nearly in Q3 FY24, a growth of 93 26 per cent year-on-year. per cent. These prices presented

### PTI NEW DELHI

Forum.

 $T_{\text{progress}}^{\text{here is a significant}} \underset{\text{in the}}{\text{significant}}$ negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between India and European Union (EU), an official said on Thursday.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was in Brussels last week to meet European Commissioner for Trade Maros Sefcovic to take stock of the progress of the negotiations.

"Good progress is there on India-EU FTA. There is a significant progress in talks," the official said, without divulging more details. During the meeting between Goyal and Sefcovic, the two sides agreed to build a commercially meaningful trade agenda and work towards a mutually beneficial trade pact.



10th round of talks between India and the EU, which is scheduled from March 10-14 in Brussels In the ninth round, both sides

discussed trade issues covering goods, services, investment and government procurement along with necessary rules such as rules of origin, SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary), and technical barriers to trade. In June 2022, India and the 27nation EU bloc resumed the negotiations after a gap of over eight years. It was stalled in 2013 due to differences over

several issues. The total trade

## PTI NEW DELHI

The government in FY26 Budget should announce an "effective" personal income tax cut to support consumption and demand, Barclays said on Thursday. In its FY25-26 Union Budget preview, Barclays said the key ask from the Budget, to be presented on February 1, is to taxpayers. growth support while adhering fiscal to consolidation path.

Îndia Chief Barclays, Economist, Aastha Gudwani said in a quest to support consumption, the finance minister should provide an effective personal income tax of taxes. rate cut by further tweaking The new tax regime exempts income up to ₹3 lakh. Those the tax slabs. This is unlikely to have a sizable fiscal cost. earning annually between ₹3-

"That said, improved tax buoyancy will likely make up 7 lakh pay 5 per cent tax, Rs 7for revenue foregone under (20 per cent) and above ₹15 this announcement. We think lakh (30 per cent). a boost to consumption is needed, especially with private Barclays said another

since 2022 despite lower global crude prices. Barclays said customs duty announcements in Budget will be pivotal to understand government's response to tariffs under Trump 2.0. Given the uncertainty that

Trump 2.0 brings along with, slower global trade and a fragmented world order is a lucrative for more and more reality India needs to prepare for. "We thus expect multiple In the last Budget, the government had increased

tweaks in customs duty standard deduction for structure, especially on items salaried taxpayer to ₹75,000, where dumping concerns from China are rising (eg, steel, glass, basic metals). We and deduction on family pension for pensioners to Rs 25,000 under the new tax expect a modest increase in regime, which offers lower rate customs duty collections in FY25-26 FY24-25 VS

Gudwani said. Barclavs expects the government to overachieve the fiscal deficit target for current 10 lakh (10 per cent), ₹10-12 fiscal by 20 basis points, at 4.7 lakh (15 per cent), ₹12-15 lakh per cent of GDP and 2025-26 deficit to be pegged at 4.5 per cent of GDP or about ₹16.3 lakh crore.

opportunity for discoms and commercial and industrial consumers to meet their demand at a competitive price and replace their costlier power by procuring through exchanges, it stated.

for Q3 FY25 was ₹ 8.3 crore compared to ₹7.4 crore in Q3 FY2<sup>4</sup>, a rise of 13 per cent. For the nine months till December FY25, IGX PAT rose 18 per cent year-on-year to ₹22 crore.

ne profit

March.

managers,

companies

officials.

The

producers Gazprom Neft and

Surgutneftegas, the blacklisting of 183 vessels involved in Russian energy

exports, and curbs on dozens

of oil traders, oilfield service

providers, tanker owners and

sanctions

announced at a time when

Indian refiners had started to

negotiate for March cargoes.

BPCL Director (Finance)

Vetsa Ramakrishna Gupta

told in an analyst call on

Thursday that Russian oil

"we are not getting sufficient

in the overall basket of crude

oil it processes into fuels like

petrol and diesel, falling to 20 per cent in March from 31

insurance

were

and energy

(April to December 2024)

increased by 22.8 per cent to

₹312.1 crore from ₹254.1

crore in the year-ago period. On the gas market front, the

Indian Gas Exchange (IGX)

after tax for IGX

both the teams to develop a mutually beneficial agenda for trade and investment and a robust FTA in an expedited manner to meet global challenges.

The meeting came ahead of the

The two leaders have also

outlined political directions for billion in 2023-24. India exported \$75.18 billion in goods and \$31.13 billion in services to the EU, while the EU exported \$63.44 billion in goods and \$31.35 billion in services to India.

growth," Gudwani said. new tax regime, making it

investment also now awaiting option to boost disposable the increase in demand Barclays expects Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to announce changes to the

income and purchasing power while containing inflation, could be a reduction in excise duty for fuel. general government debt-to-Retail prices for fuel have GDP fall to the 60 per cent remained almost constant

Barclays said it awaits the debt consolidation roadmap from FY26-27 onwards to see by when the finance minister sees target.



## Rupee falls 12 paise to settle at 86.47 against US dollar

### PTI NEW DELHI

The rupee declined 12 paise to settle at 86.47 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday amid the strengthening American strengthening American currency and continuous outflow of foreign funds. However, positive domestic equity markets and lower crude oil prices supported the Indian currency at lower level, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign

exchange, the rupee opened at 86.46 and moved between high of 86.38 and low of 86.52 against the greenback during the session. The local unit settled at 86.47 (provisional) against the US dollar, registering a loss of 12 paise from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee appreciated 23 paise to close at 86.35 against the dollar. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the rupee declined on a strong US

weak crude oil prices and positive domestic markets

cushioned the downside. "Investors may remain cautious ahead of Bank of Japan's monetary policy tomorrow. BoJ is expected to hike interest rates by 25 bps. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of ₹86.20-86.80," he said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.07 per cent higher at 108.04.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was down 0.16 had been booked for January and February in the previous per cent to \$78.87 per barrel two months but for March in futures trade. In the domestic equity cargoes". market, the 30-share BSE The company saw Russian oil

Sensex climbed 115.39 points, or 0.15 per cent, to settle at 76,520.38, while the Nifty rose 50 points, or 0.22 per cent, to 23,205.35.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital markets dollar and recovery in the on Wednesday, offloading US treasury yields. FII shares worth ₹4,026.25 outflows too weighed down crore, according to exchange the local unit. However, data.

### wide-ranging $T^{he}_{\ \ sanctions\ imposed\ by\ the}_{US\ on\ the\ Russian\ oil\ sector}$ have started to dent nearterm oil flows to India with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) saying not enough cargoes are available for The US on January 10 issued sweeping sanctions targeting the Russian energy sector. The measures include sanctions on Russian oil

available in the market and the company would look at alternatives such as the Middle East to replace the lost volumes from Russia. Russia made up for just 0.2 per cent of all oil imported by India in the year ended on March 31, 2022. India, however, became the second biggest buyer of Russian crude oil since Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022, with purchases rising to almost 40 per cent of the country's total oil purchases. The rise was primarily because Russian crude oil was available at a discount to other internationally traded oil due to the price cap and the European nations shunning purchases from

Moscow. In 2024, Russian crude imports to India averaged 1.7 million barrels per day, making the OPEC+ producer its largest supplier. Gupta said the discounts on

per cent in the October-December quarter, he said. Russian oil made up for 34-35 per cent of all oil that Russian oil have shrunk to \$3-3.2 per barrel from \$3.5-4 BPCL processed at the start of the current financial year at the start of the fiscal and in April 2024. \$8.5 in fiscal year 2023-24. He said there is enough oil This month, India has

decided to shun deliveries made by tankers that have been sanctioned by the US in

> Russia used these tankers to ship oil to countries like India and China after the Group of Seven (G7) countries in 2022 imposed a \$60 a barrel price cap on exports by the Kremlin. This cap, introduced to limit Moscow's revenues to fund its war in Ukraine, meant that Western shipping and insurance services were not available for any oil cargo that was priced more than

used the so-called shadow fleet, insured by its own companies. This fleet has now been sanctioned.

to finish.

Sanctioned Russian tankers will not be allowed to dock at Indian ports, the source said, adding that the only exception would be for Russian oil cargoes booked before January 10, provided they unload by March 12. The sanctions sent global oil prices to \$83-84 a barrel but Gupta saw this as a temporary phenomenon and oil should settle in the \$75-80 range soon.

In the worst-case scenario, Russian crude, which India was getting at a discount, will not be available at a discount, he added.

In an attempt to restrict funds for Russia's war machine, The Group of Seven rich nations, the European Union and Australia put an embargo on Russian crude and introduced a \$60 per barrel price cap in December 2022. Over the next 12 months, the price cap and embargo had a significant impact on revenues and forced Russia to find new markets and ways to transport its oil. Russia did this by offering deep discounts on its Urals

grade crude. In the first year of the sanctions, Russia was losing, on an average, 23 per cent of its Urals crude export revenues every month due to the price cap and embargo. This figure has fallen sharply to a mere monthly average of 9 per cent in the second year of the cap. This is because Russia built a network of 'shadow' tankers, which could trade its oil above the cap to new markets in nonsanctioning countries.

## Gold hits fresh all-time high of ₹82,900 per 10 grams

### PTI NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose ₹170 to hit fresh record high of ₹82,900 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid a positive global trend, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal had closed at ₹82,730 per 10 grams on Wednesday.

In about one year, the precious metal surged ₹20,180 or 32.17 per cent to ₹82,900 per 10 grams from ₹62,720 per 10 grams on February 23, 2024.

Extending the gains for the seventh straight session, gold of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by  $\overline{170}$  to hit an all-time high level of  $\overline{82,500}$ per 10 grams. The metal had finished at Rs 82,330 per 10 grams in the previous trading session.

Gold of 99.9 and 99.5 per cent purity grew ₹2,320 each in the last seven trading sessions. However, silver prices declined ₹500 to ₹93,500 per kg from the previous close of ₹94,000 per kg on Wednesday. Bullion traders attributed the rise in precious metal prices to heightened demand by jewellers and retailers, along with a strong trend in the international markets. In futures trade on Thursday, gold contracts for February delivery rose₹19 or 0.02 per

cent to trade at ₹79,583 per 10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

However, silver futures declined ₹422 or 0.46 per cent to ₹91,522 per kg from the previous close of ₹91,944 per



kg on Wednesdav. In the overseas markets, Comex gold futures fell \$13.20 per ounce or 0.48 per cent to

\$2,757.70 per ounce. "Gold prices traded flat-tonegative on Thursday, weighed down by a recovery in the US dollar and Treasury yields," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

The US Dollar index and Treasury yields traded up after the positive close in the previous session, which caps the further upside in gold and prompts some selling in the gold price on Thursday, Gandhi added.

According to Augmont's Head Research Renisha of Chainani, Gold is on the verge of hitting record highs and could do so within the next day or two. The remarks made by newly elected US President Donald Trump on tariffs are driving the bullish

momentum. Silver Comex futures quoted 1.03 per cent lower in the Asian market hours at \$31.10 per ounce.

Further, Chainani, said, "Trump announced that his government was considering levying a 25 per cent tax on Canada and Mexico".

the latest round.

\$60 per barrel. To circumvent that, Russia

There is a wind-down period until March 12, which will allow for existing contracts

"For the first two months, there will be no disruption. Within two months we will probably see new arrangements emerging in terms of oil coming to India," a senior government source



www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/

t the age of 86 years, veteran journalist Rami A Chhabra made a debut in novel writing with her book Becoming the Storm'. She had been India's one of the first

few women journalists who broke the glass ceiling to straddle the media space in the national capital. *Chhabra* 

had also been a prominent face in women's movements. She also led South Asian

women's movements. Her reports also formed the basis for some of the measures of government for

empowerment of women. Having spent decades in the women's movements in South Asia, *Chhabra* aptly has given centre stage to a woman's tryst

the

# **IBOOKS**

### LAUNCH NEW



Udaan, a poetry collection by Padamijt Sehrawat, was launched by Kapil Dev, inspiring hope and resilience through uplifting verses and life lessons, says **SAKSHI PRIYA** 

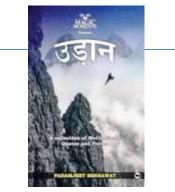
book is a doorway to (( countless worlds, and poetry is the rhythm that brings those worlds to life." This sentiment was at the heart of an event at the India International Centre in New Delhi, where Padamjit Sehrawat's poetry collection, Udaan, was launched. Former Indian cricket captain and World Cup winner Kapil Dev unveiled the book, sharing profound thoughts on passion and success.

"When passion becomes your profession, the concept of struggle disappears. Passion brings joy, not hardship," said Kapil Dev at the event. He emphasised the importance of self-awareness, adding, "True success lies in recognising yourself before seeking to impress others." His remarks captured the essence of the evening, celebrating the resilience and inspiration found in poetry.

The title Udaan, meaning "flight," beautifully encapsulates the core message of Sehrawat's poetry. It urges readers to rise above challenges, embrace courage, and view life with optimism. The collection consists of poems that delve into themes of hope, personal growth, and inner strength. Each verse offers a fresh perspective, guiding readers to see struggles not as obstacles but as stepping stones toward self-discovery.

Sharing his inspiration, Sehrawat said, "My poems reflect the lessons life teaches us. They aim to guide readers toward resilience and optimism, no matter the circumstances." His words reflect the nce of *Udaan*, making it more than a collection of poems, it becomes a companion for those navigating life's uncertainties. Padamjit Sehrawat is a man of many talents, which enriches his work. A former cricketer who competed in prestigious tournaments like the Ranji Trophy and Deodhar Trophy, he has also built a reputation as a cricket commentator for international sports





channels. Beyond sports, he is a singer, musician, and motivational speaker. These diverse experiences infuse his poetry with unique perspectives, blending creativity and depth to connect

with readers on a personal level. *Kapil Dev* brought his characteristic humour to the launch, remarking, "There's no bigger thief than a cricketer, they steal runs! But even this is a positive theft." He compared this light-hearted analogy to the uplifting nature of Sehrawat's poetry which encourages readers to focus on life's brighter side. Udaan offers readers a chance to rise beyond obstacles and discover strength within themselves. The book reminds us that challenges can be transformed into opportunities for growth and hope. The collection is a journey of reflection and empowerment, making it a must-read for those seeking positivity and motivation.

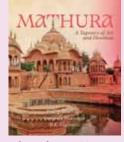
## WOMEN'S FIGHT FOR IDENTI 'Becoming the Storm' Stands Witness to India's Tryst

with Modernity, writes DEEPAK KUMAR JHA

READ



Book: Job Charnock and The Potter's Boy Author: Madhurima Vidyarthi Publisher: Niyogi Books Price: ₹595



Book: Mathura: A Tapestry of Art and Devotion Author: Goswami, Sangeeta Bhatnagar, Pradip Bhatnagar Publisher: Niyogi Books Price: ₹850



RAJNISH KARKI Book: Timeline India: Rediscovery of the Chronology of A Ten Millennia Civilization Author: Rajnish Karki Publisher: Rupa Publication Price: ₹795



Book: Around Varanasi in Assi days Author: Raja Venkateswara Publisher: Rupa Publication Price: ₹395

> THICH NHAT HANH

with modernity. With Indu as the protagonist of the novel, Chhabra takes readers on a journey that saw women of India battling conflicts of traditions with modernity. *Chhabra* headed an NGO Streebal which worked against early marriages and dowry. In the 1970s, several women organisations had come passing away of Nehru and the together to fight against dowry. Her campaigns for empowerment of women find resonance in her fictional accounts of the conflicts between modernity and tradition. Importantly, Chhabra's accounts of Indu's fight for identity are set in the backdrop of India also gaining strength in the early years since Independence. Yet, the backdrop to Indu's tales is also set by India's three wars in and quick succession - 1962 with Ĉhina, 1965 with Pakistan, and the 1971 War of

*Chhabra* takes readers through the sombre mood in Delhi in the wake of the All India radio breaking the news that China attacked in NEFA (North East Frontier Area). The NEFA is now called Arunachal Pradesh.

Independence of Bangladesh.

The author brings back memories of the outpouring of emotions all across the country in the wake of China attacking India. She states in the book that the people voluntarily flocked to the railway stations to offer their moral support to the personnel of the Indian army who were transiting to the eastern and the western sectors of the border with China. The final moments of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru also find rich mention in the book. Having witnessed history from the close quarters, Chhabra gives accounts of the

subsequent scenes at his residence as the people queued up to pay their last respects to the departed leader. Chhabra recalls in the book Indira Gandhi "holding herself steadily while her eyes had turned red as she stood in one corner when the people paid their respects to the late Nehru". The author's accounts of Indu also essay India's transformation in the 1960s the 1970s. The industrialisation of India is also set in the backdrop as Indu deals with her marriage and new home where she suffers setbacks from her expectations through her inlaws.

The people also rushed to partake in the Chhabra has given vivid descriptions of the Delhi industrialisation of India with the stock market tales also



ABOUT THE BOOK Book: Udaan Authored by Padamjit Sehrawat

**ABOUT THE BOOK** Book: Becoming the Storm Author: Rami Chhabra Publisher: Occam Price: ₹899

which has been published by BluOne Ink a so sensitise readers to concerns of women. True, intra-family conflicts have several dimensions. A balance in tradition and modernity will be sane advice for one embarking on a married life. "Becoming the Storm' is, thus, a story that is still playing out in the lives of many people.

finding space in the novels of

the veteran journalist. In

essence, the conflict between

tradition and modernity has

never ceased. The book

spotlights a woman's

perspective on the issue. It is

indeed true that the women

have a lot more to gain to

claim their rightful places in

all walks of life. The fact that

crimes against women still

remain at worrisome levels

testify to the concerns of

Chhabra expressed in her

debut novel. It's indeed creditworthy that *Chhabra* made a debut into novel

writing at an age of 86 years.

The book brings alive the

charm of Delhi in decades

after India's Independence.

cantonment area where the

protagonists lived and also of

Connoisseurs of Delhi's

history will find the book

valuable, for it brings

authentic first hand accounts

of the national capital from

decades when the city went

into transformation in major

ways. Besides, the book,

Chowk.

Chandni



Book: The Diamond That Cuts Through Illusion Author: Thich Nhat Hanh Publisher: Aleph Book Company **Price:** ₹399

t was during the 2020-2021 hospitalisation due to the Covid-19 pandemic I read Death - An Inside Story, authored by Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev of Isha Foundation. I was in the ICU of Kochi Medical College and had the unfortunate experience of watching other patients being rolled out after they succumbed to the pandemic. The book by Sadhguru helped me to get rid of whatever apprehension I had about death. Sadhguru, in his characteristic style, convinced the readers that death too is a beautiful experience as birth.

This time around during my sojourn in hospital, I had two books with me, both authored by Swami Mukundananda. The books were Nourish Your Soul and Spiritual Secrets from Hinduism (both published by Rupa Publications) and gave me good company even as the nurses were struggling to find the veins in my body to jab the high-power antibiotics into the system every six hours or so. Mukundananda (64) holds a B.Tech degree from IIT-Delhi and an MBA from IIM Calcutta and had worked



ABOUT THE BOOK Book: Nourishing Your Soul Author: Swami Mukundananda Publisher: Rupa Price: ₹395

## NDIA'S SPIRITUAL ICC Swami Mukundananda's Nourish Your Soul beautifully explores the inspiring lives and journeys of eleven Indian sages, says KUMAR CHELLAPPAN



as a corporate chieftain for a few years before renouncing materialistic life to become a disciple of Jagadguru Kripaluji Maharaj, a renowned spiritual leader. What makes Swami Mukundananda different from other authors is the ease and élan with which he communicates his thoughts to the readers without hurting anybody and taunting any religions. While evangelists and preachers proselytise people by addressing them as sinners and kafirs, Mukundananda does not discriminate against people based on their religion or ideology. For him, all are equal and his mission is to spread the real Good Word. The book Nourishing Your Soul is about the life and times of 11 great Indian sages and the sufferings undertaken by them in their journey while crossing the ocean of life. All of them are enslaved to the Supreme Being and never dreamt of any luxury or well-being for themselves

other than peace and prosperity throughout the universe. He has carefully selected the sages and monks who attained spirituality through their prayers, deeds, words and commitment. The chances of the present generation of Indians having heard about them are quite remote, as our 'ace' historians successfully succeeded in wiping out even the last vestiges of these great men and women from our academic curricula for obvious reasons like national integration and communal harmony.

Meerabai, Adi Shankaracharya, Soordas, Tukaram, Kabirdas, Ravidas, Andal, Ramanujacharya, Purandara Dasa, Vallabhacharya and Tyagaraja are the sages and seers who have been featured in this collection. The author has presented a crisp and sharp account of these persons and the readers are moved to tears when they come across the sufferings and dedication experienced by

them in their path to eternal sainthood. According to Mukundananda, saints are the embodiment of purity and goodness, being endowed with God's infinite love and grace. "Their mere presence makes a place holy. Elevated devotees transform wherever they go into a pilgrimage site, for they hold God in their heart," says the author in the introduction to the book. "Eleven remarkable God-centred saints who graced the land of Bharat," is how Mukundananda describes the characters he has selected to feature in this parade. The book begins with the life story of Meerabai, the bhakti-saint who lived in the 16th century. For our generation, Radha and Meera were the embodiment and epitomisation of love, dedication and devotion. Meera, popularly known as Meerabai, is unique in all respects as her love for her Giridhar Gopal is filled with selflessness. She knew very well that she would never be able to serve her

master and lover in human form. Despite this truth, she was committed in her devotion and love and she wrote hundreds of poems like Payo Ji Maine Ram Ratan Dhan Payo... a bhajan/hymn which retains its charm and lyrical beauty even today.

Adi Shankaracharya, the Kaladi-born monk who held the famous Shankara Digvijaya Yatra along the length and breadth of the subcontinent and unified Bharat society through his teachings and lyrical compositions, should be a source of enlightenment and inspiration to ordinary mortals. Shankara taught the world that the science of mind management was the most useful skill in life. The Kanakadhara Stotra, composed by Acharya in praise of Goddess Lakshmi, and the Ganesha Pancharatnam Stotra, penned by the saint philosopher way back in the 8th century, remain unparalleled and take

listeners on a one-way flight to heaven. The lyrics by the mystic get life and emotion when they are rendered by the likes of M.S. Subbulakshmi and M.L. Vasanthakumari.

The debate between Shankaracharya and Mandan Misra on the relative merits of Mimansa and Advaita viewpoints, in which the former demolished the concept of the so-called Dravidian philosophy, is enthralling.

Bhaja Govindam - described as a wakeup call to a soul in slumber. The exotic poetic beauty and perfection of composition elevate Bhaja Govindam to a state of devotional bliss.

Space constraints prevent me from elaborating about all the saints who feature in this collection. But if I fail to mention Saint Tyagaraja (1767-1847), one of the Trinity of Carnatic Music, it would be an unconscionable sin. Tyagaraja, the saint and composer of Carnatic hymns and kritis (poems), a proof of his adoration and salutation to Lord Rama, should be heard to enjoy them. Born at Tiruvaiyaru on the banks of the River Kaveri, Tyagaraja is described as the most famous son of this landscape. His parents were Rama Brahmam and Sitamma. When Tyagaraja wrote and sang Sitamma Mayamma, Sri Ramudu Matandri, he was celebrating his earthly parents as well as proclaiming Sita and Rama to be his parents (It Happened Along the Kaveri by Padma Seshadri and Padma Malini Sundararaghavan - Niyogi Books). One gets the feeling that this world is a beautiful place because of the hymns and bhajans composed by the likes of Meera Bai and Saint Tyagaraja. Nourishing Your Soul is not an ordinary work; it is the much-needed energiser and nourisher of the mind and shows to the world that Bharat was a Vishwa Guru even before the advent of AI, satellites and the internet.

## sports 12



## **Gukesh becomes highest-ranked Indian** in FIDE rankings, displaces Erigaisi

### PTI NEW DELHI

Continuing his rapid rise, world champion D Gukesh dethroned compatriot Arjun Erigiasi to become the highest-ranked Indian chess player, at fourth, in the latest FIDE rankings on Thursday. Gukesh, 18, achieved the feat when he logged his second victory in the Tata Steel Tournament in Wijk Aan Zee (Netherlands) defeating defeating Vincent Keymer of Germany. Gukesh, who was awarded the Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna recently, has amassed 2784 rating points, while Erigaisi, who was the highest-ranked Indian for a long time, has slipped to fifth with 2779.5 rating points.

Norway's Magnus Carlsen continues to be the undisputed world No.1 with 2832.5 points, followed by United States' Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura (2802) and



December last year.

Fabiano country-mate Caruana (2798) Gukesh has been in sublime

He took a break from the game to attend to functions form ever since he beat China's Ding Liren to clinch and festivities back home and

skipped the World Rapid and Blitz Championship in New the world title in Singapore in York.

On his return to the board, Gukesh has not lost a single

game in Wijk Aan Zee. He has two victories and three draws so far in the tournament with

eight rounds still to go. Erigaisi had became India's top-rated player in September last year and in December achieved his peak rating of 2801, which had made him the 15th-highest rated player in history and only the second Indian after five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand to beach the 2800 threshold.

threshold. Erigaisi, who was a part of India's triumphant journey in the Chess Olympiad in Budapest last year, had gone to the World Rapid and Blitz Championship in New York hoping to secure a Candidates berth but returned home disappointed.

The 21 year old is struggling in the ongoing Tata Steel Tournament, having garnered just one point so far, while Gukesh has 3.5.

## U19 T20 Women's World Cup: India outclass Sri Lanka, enter Super Six

### PTI KUALA LUMPUR

Opener G Trisha's composed 49 and pacers' excellent new ball spell fashioned India's lopsided 60-run win over Sri Lanka and their entry into the Super and their entry into the Super Six of the ICC U19 T20 Women's World Cup as Group A toppers here on Thursday.

On a spiteful pitch, Trisha's 44-ball knock (5x4, 1x6) was worth its weight in gold as it guided India to a competitive 118 for nine.

Pacers VJ Joshitha and Shabnam then tore through the Lankan top-order to reduce them to nine for four in 3.2 overs, and run out of Manudi skipper Nanayakkara an over later had them reeling at 12 for five.

Sri Lanka were eventually restricted to 58 for nine in 20 overs as India finished the group engagements with allwin record in three matches. There was not much life left

Young guns prove PSG can deliver in

Champions League without Mbappé



in Sri Lanka's chase once the spinners were introduced, and India's assortment of left-arm orthodox tweakers did the mopping up job to perfection.

Rashmika Sewwandi (15, 12b, 2x4) looked in good touch for the while she lasted, but mounting asking rate forced her to take chances against Parunika Sisodia, and got caught in the

deep. maturity.

### picked up stunning figures of 5/5 against Malaysia in the previous match, dismantled the lower order without much ado. Earlier, India's batting too went through stormy seas but Player of the Match Trisha held together the defending champions with exemplary

Champions

League: Ban

on Feyenoord

fans in France

Feyenoord supporters have been banned by French

authorities from traveling to

In an order published

confrontation" between fans of

Lille hosts Feyenoord on

January 29 at the Stade Pierre-

The French authorities said

Feyenoord's travels are often

behavior of certain supporters

or individuals claiming to be

supporters of this team," and

they cited several examples of

risk of

PTI PARIS

and serious

the two teams.

Maurov.

innings. Sisodia (2/7) was the pick

among spinners as she and

her colleagues Ayushi Shukla and Vaishnavi Sharma, who

It was also the only double digit score in the Lankan

## Irfan Pathan backs Shami's delayed return, says team will make right call



### PTI KOLKATA

PTI MUMBAI

Former pace bowling all-rounder Irfan Pathan believes India made the right decision delaying by Mohammed Shami's international return following a prolonged injury lay-off by not fielding him in the first T20I against England here. Shami was not included in

India's playing XI for the first T20I against England here on Wednesday, despite proving his fitness in practice sessions and domestic cricket for Bengal. All eyes were on Shami's return

after a 14-month injury lay-off, but India opted for a threepronged spin attack instead, a decision that paid off as they bowled out England for a meagre 132 before cruising to the target in 12.5 overs with seven wickets in hand. three formats.

Irfan said Shami is experienced enough to take an honest assessment of his body. "When you've been such a

seasoned campaigner and are among India's top 10 bowlers, you understand your body's limits well," said Irfan at a promotional event here.

"Shami always provides honest feedback to the team management, and decisions are made through mutual communication. Recovery at

the highest level takes time, especially after playing consistently. I believe he and the team management will make the right call at the right time.'

Having undergone surgery and rehab following an ankle injury sustained during the 2023 ODI World Cup, where he finished as India's top wicket-taker, Shami had made an impressive

return in domestic cricket representing Bengal across all

Shami has been chosen in India's white-ball rubber squad against England consisting five T20Is and three ODIs which will act as a build up to the Champions Trophy next month, where the team's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's inclusion is subject to fitness. Bumrah suffered a back niggle in the gruelling five-match Test series in Australia and could not bowl in the second innings of the fifth Test in Sydney, and in this context Shami's availability for the Champions Trophy is crucial to India's prospects.

Irfan also expressed concerns over the lack of a pace-bowling backup in the Champions Trophy-bound squad suggesting that Mohammed Siraj could have been included given Bumrah's uncertain fitness.

Paris Saint-Germain finally showed it can shine in the Champions League without star Kylian Mbappé, rallying from 2-0 down in the second half to beat Manchester City 4-2 for a crucial victory Wednesday. The win moved PSG out of the elimination zone in the competition's new-look format

PTI PARIS

and dumped City in it with one game to play. PSG needs only a draw at Stuttgart next week to advance.

"I feel pride this evening, against such a team, against PSG's re-designed attack finally clicked with four different scorers rather than relying too heavily on one to

Bradley Barcola, a 22-year-old winger, scored one goal and set up another for France

teammate Ousmane Dembélé, and 20-year-old midfielder Joao Neves headed in the third before striker Gonçalo Ramos rammed in the fourth in

stoppage time. "The more competition we have, the happier I am," Enrique said. "That means that no player can think of their position as untouchable."

A far cry from the Galacticos era when PSG was top-heavy with stars like Neymar, Lionel Messi and Mbappé but still fell

Arsenal and Bayern Munich. Enrique said before facing City that the solution up front would come from more teamwork rather than hoping another player can emulate Mbappé, who scored 44 goals last season and helped PSG

reach the Champions League semifinals.

City manager Pep Guardiola acknowledged his team was

outplayed. "We have to accept it. In transitions we could not cope

with them, they were faster," he said. "I give credit to PSG. Lille for next week's final Champions League group game between the two clubs. When one team is better I have no problem to accept it. All of them they played really good. It's not a specific (player). Wednesday, France's interior ministry said there was a "real

Mbappé's move to Madrid forced Enrique to improvise with his lineups all season.

This time, 19-year-old winger Désiré Doué played as a makeshift striker even though center forward Ramos was available for this game where both wealthy state-backed teams - the United Arab Emirates (City) and Qatar (PSG) - were at risk of failing to marred by "public order disturbances due to the violent advance to the knockout stage. City led 2-0 after 53 minutes but PSG were level by the hour mark after some inspirational play down the left from Barcola.

fan violence. Justifying its decision, the ministry added that 3,600 fans - 500 of whom were identified as being dangerous - had planned to travel to Lille, although only 2,600 seats had been allocated to the Dutch

club. "Of the 1,000 supporters who

## against such a team, against such a manager, against such good players," PSG coach Luis Enrique said. "It was a complete performance today."

make the difference.

Messi and Mbappé but still fell short on the big stage. Still, the French team has struggled for goals in the competition since Mbappé's offseason departure for Real Madrid, netting just six in six games before City's visit and being blanked in defeats to Arsenal and Bayern Munich

India's batting stars disappoint on Ranji return, Jadeja shines Saurashtra which Mumbai first Ranji game since 2023.

decade, hoping to get some

The high-profile return of India's stars in Ranji Trophy ended up as a damp squib with the likes of Rohit Sharma, Rishabh Pant and Shubman Gill falling cheaply bowling on the opening day of their respective matches across different venues.

Veteran all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was the only one who stood out among the battery of Indian stars as he took a five-wicket haul for Saurashtra to dismiss Pant's Delhi for 188 on a Raikot turner.

However, it was a forgettable outing for the rest as they made the slow walk back to the hut following early dismissals.

Following a dismal run in Australia, Rohit returned to Ranji Trophy for defending champions Mumbai after a

next month's Champions Trophy.

But it was not to be at least in Mumbai's first innings against Jammu and Kashmir at the BKC ground here. on Thursday, unable to click in the face of some hostile off Umar Nazir, Rohit (3) got a leading edge which was caught by J&K skipper Paras Dogra at mid-off.

His India opening partner Yashasvi Jaiswal (4) too fell cheaply for Mumbai. The southpaw was pinned in front of the wicket by Auqib Nabi, who made the most of the fresh wicket to move the new ball dangerously off the surface.

Named in the squad for the Champions Trophy, Shreyas Iyer (11) was caught at mid on off pacer Yudhvir Singh. While the turnout to watch the India cricketing stars at

the stadium was low, those in nearby buildings, who

0 DREAM

were watching the action from their office floors, returned to work soon after the 37-year-old Rohit was chairs could be seen. dismissed.

Mumbai were eventually Anticipating fan interest, the bowled out for a paltry 120 Mumbai Cricket Association had made temporary seating in 33.2 overs. The team left

arrangements for about 500 out their in-form teenage people at the BKC. The opener Ayush Mhatre to accommodate the stars. turnout, however, was not too high and some empty The 17-year-old Mhatre has

struck two hundreds and a half century this season, including a 93-ball 148 in their previous game against

won by five wickets earlier this month.

This is the only Ranji game that Rohit, Jaiswal and Iyer are expected to play given that the ODI series against England is due to start early next month and they would be joining the Indian ranks for it.

Pant fizzles; Jadeja shines In Rajkot, Pant showed up for Delhi in a first-class game for the first time since the 2017-2018 season and his stay in the middle did not last long. The flamboyant left-hander

was dismissed for 1 off 10 balls by veteran Saurashtra left-arm spinner Dharmendrasingh Jadeja. left-arm He attempted a sweep only to be caught at deep square

leg. India all-rounder Jadeja took no time to be in thick all cricketers to spare time of things as he accounted for five of Delhi's batters in his for domestic cricket.

cs from Gill No fire either

have nevertheless planned to In Bengaluru, Punjab captain Shubman Gill (4) travel without a stadium admission ticket, it is feared was caught behind in the that some will try to force their game against Karnataka. The team was skittled out for a mere 55 with the pace duo of Abhilash Shetty and Vasuki Koushik sharing seven wickets between them to destroy the visitors. Gill fell to Shetty in the

fourth over of the innings. The India stars made themselves available for Ranji Trophy after the BCCI made the contracted players' participation in domestic cricket mandatory, following the 1-3 series loss in Australia that opened a debate on the players' conduct and commitment to red-ball cricket.The Board had to issue a 10-point disciplinary diktat, urging

worth more than 103 million

dollar after largely being in the shadow of Haaland over

Marmoush is the latest in a

the last two years.

way into the stadium," it said. Later Wednesday, Fevenoord's match against Bayern Munich was stopped for seven minutes after kickoff because of poor visibility from clouds of smoke after fans lit flares and fireworks behind one of the goals. In May 2022, there were violent

clashes in France between Marseille and Feyenoord fans outside the Stade Velodrome stadium before the return leg of Conference their Europa League semifinal.

One video showed a Marseille supporter apparently unconscious on the ground as he was helped by fellow fans, while another showed two groups charging at each other shortly before kickoff just outside the stadium.

## Man City takes spending this week to \$150 Million by signing Egypt's Omar Marmoush

### PTI MANCHESTER

Reeling from a damaging loss in the Champions League, Manchester City took its spending this week to around \$150 million by signing Egypt forward Omar Marmoush from Eintracht Frankfurt on Thursday in a move that provides some belated back-up to star striker Erling Haaland. The 25-year-old Marmoush joined City for a reported 70

million euros (\$73 million), Vitor Reis from Palmeiras for a combined \$77 million. City will hope the new back into turmoil when the team collapsed to a 4-2 loss

at Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League on Wednesday to plunge to the brink of elimination with one game left in the revamped first stage.

Marmoush is second to Bayern Munich's Harry Kane in the list of top scorers in the German league this season, with 15 goals from 17 games for Frankfurt. He was not in the squad for the 2-0 win over following the arrivals of Borussia Dortmund amid young defenders Abdukodir negotiations with City, and Khusanov from Lens and went on the field after the game for an apparent farewell in front of Frankfurt's fans.



season, which was thrown rapid rise to stardom for from Frankfurt on a free Wolfsburg, where he'd only before. It's not yet clear how Marmoush would fit into August in a deal reportedly Pep Guardiola's tactics. His performances this best season have come as part of a two-striker formation alongside former Paris Saint-Germain forward Hugo Ekitiké, but Guardiola prefers a lone striker in Haaland. Marmoush can play in wide

roles and has generally done so for Egypt's national team, but less successfully than in a central role. He has six goals and three assists in 35 goals and unce down games for his country. In that sense, Marmoush seems a like-for-like

move this month. Guardiola has said the club replacement for Julian Alvarez, the versatile is looking to bring forward future signings to this current transfer window Argentina forward who left City for Atletico Madrid in because of injury problems

this season that have rocked his team's campaign. The biggest of those is

Rodri, the Spain midfielder and Ballon d'Or winner who is out for the season with an ACL injury. City also has been hit with

string of Frankfurt strikers to make lucrative moves to top European clubs, but they injury issues at centre back, haven't always settled. Frankfurt sold Luka Jovic to with Ruben Dias, John Stones and Nathan Ake all Real Madrid in 2019 but he having time out of action. was back on loan just 18 That explains the moves for months later and is now at Khusanov and Reis, who Guardiola says are ready to come into the team Milan. Randal Kolo Muani left Frankfurt in 2023 for PSG, where he is mostly a immediately if required. bench player and might Not only is City struggling

in the Champions League, the team is in fifth place in its Premier League title defense - 12 points behind leader Liverpool having played one game more.

signings can ignite its The move to City caps a Marmoush, who signed transfer in 2023 from

scored five goals the season

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