



Established 1865 the pioneer

INSIDE MONEY 10 WAVE GROUP, AGRISTO TO INVEST ₹750 CRORE IN UP

www.dailypioneer.com

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

DEHRADUN, MONDAY MARCH 3, 2025; PAGES 12 ₹3

BUCH BOOKED

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Special Court designated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to register an FIR against former chairperson of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Madhabi Puri Buch, three SEBI whole-time members and two top officials of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) for alleged stock market fraud, regulatory violations and corruption.



committed by Buch and Mudhabi Buch and others, involving large-scale financial fraud, regulatory violations and corruption. The allegations pertain to the fraudulent listing of a company on the stock exchange with the active connivance of regulatory authorities, particularly the SEBI, without compliance under the SEBI Act, 1992 and rules and regulations thereunder.

allowing the listing of the company. He said in his application that he had approached the court as the police and regulatory authorities had failed to take action on his complaint. Citing Supreme Court judgements in the past, the Special Court Judge noted: "Considering the gravity of allegations, applicable laws and settled legal precedents, this Court deems it appropriate to direct an investigation under Section 156(3) of CrPC."

were not holding their respective positions at the relevant point of time, the court allowed the application without issuing any notice or granting any opportunity to SEBI to place the facts on record," the SEBI stated in its statement. "The applicant is known to be a frivolous and habitual litigant, with previous applications being dismissed by the court, with imposition of costs in some cases. SEBI would be initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order and remains committed to ensuring due regulatory compliance in all matters," the statement added.



Rescue operation underway after an avalanche hit the Border Roads Organisation camp between Mana and Badrinath on Friday, in Chamoli district PTI

Chamoli avalanche rescue death toll rises to eight

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DEHRADUN

Death toll rose to eight in the avalanche mishap after rescue teams found the body of the last missing person on Sunday. Earlier in the day, the teams pulled out bodies of three labourers from the camp site which was buried in snow after the avalanche on Friday last.

possible inclement weather on Monday, officials said. Three bodies of the missing labourers were found on Sunday, district administration officials said in Gopeshwar. With this, the number of workers who lost their lives in the Mana avalanche mounted to seven. One person is still missing for whom the search is in progress, they said.

Frequent trips abroad land IPS officer in soup

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Andhra Pradesh government on Sunday suspended senior IPS officer PV Sunil Kumar for allegedly making repeated foreign visits without prior permission during the previous YSRCP regime. In a government order, Chief Secretary K Vijayanand stated that Kumar, a DGP-rank officer awaiting posting, had deviated from the travel plan approved by the government during those overseas trips.

BSP rides on Behenji's Maya



BSP supremo Mayawati during a meeting with party's senior office bearers and state presidents at the party office, in Lucknow PTI

also concerning," she alleged. She further indicated that Akash Anand may have been influenced by his wife and in-laws, which posed a potential risk to BSP's future. "After expelling Ashok Siddharth, we have to seriously evaluate the extent of his daughter's influence on Akash. The signs so far are not positive," she said.

In a related decision, Mayawati revealed that her brother Anand Kumar has resolved to marry his children into non-political families. "This step has been taken to prevent any future damage to the party, as was the case with Ashok Siddharth," she said. During the review meeting, Mayawati issued key instructions for future party programs and strategies.

no significance when it comes to the party and the Ambedkarite movement," she asserted. Mayawati emphasised that the party's welfare would always come before personal ties. "For me, the party and movement come first. My brother, his children, and other family members are secondary," she stated.



As the sun sets, Palestinians sit at a large table surrounded by the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings as they gather for iftar, the fast-breaking meal, on the first day of Ramadan in Rafah, southern Gaza strip PTI

On Ramazan, Israel cuts off aid to Gaza

PTI ■ TEL AVIV

Israel stopped the entry of all goods and supplies into the Gaza Strip on Sunday and warned of "additional consequences" if Hamas doesn't accept a new proposal to extend a fragile ceasefire. Hamas accused Israel of trying to derail the existing ceasefire agreement and said its decision to cut off aid was made in coordination with the Trump administration.

dozens of remaining hostages in return for an Israeli pullout and a lasting ceasefire. An Israeli official said the decision to suspend aid was made in coordination with the Trump administration. There was no immediate comment from the United States. Hundreds of aid trucks have entered Gaza daily since the ceasefire began on Jan. 19, and it was unclear what the immediate impact of the aid cutoff would be.

Zoos battling reduced funding

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Photo: The Pioneer

While India's zoos have made "notable" progress in breeding endangered species under conservation programmes that started around a decade ago, a government panel says that persistent gaps in execution, funding and species management hinder their overall success. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA), which is responsible for overseeing and guiding national-level ex situ conservation efforts, constituted a committee in 2023 to review and evaluate the state of conservation breeding programmes in zoos across the country.

improvements in genetic and demographic management practices," it said. The committee said that ₹10.81 Crore was allocated for conservation breeding between 2006 and 2011 and ₹18.13 Crore between 2011 and 2021. Over time, with the decrease in the CZA's funding, zoos now receive limited financial support, mainly for maintenance. "This reduction in financial assistance has had cascading effects on the implementation and sustainability of these programmes," the report said.

managing populations difficult. The committee also highlighted that lack of genetic diversity, improper tracking and poor record-keeping reduce the success of conservation breeding programmes. While some successes, such as Gaur and Indian Chevrotain, demonstrate potential for growth and recovery, they also "expose broader challenges including inconsistent record-keeping, uncoordinated transfers and inadequate husbandry practices," the committee said.

Youths into excessive social media suffer sexual ailments

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Consumption of explicit content on social media—via photos, short videos, and reels—is significantly contributing to sexual health problems among youngsters according to experts at King George's Medical University (KGMU) in Lucknow. The university's psychiatry department has observed a concerning trend, with nearly 90 per cent of patients aged 16 to 25 seeking treatment for sexual health issues identified as heavy social media users. Experts at KGMU attribute this rise to excessive exposure to unrealistic digital content, which is altering brain responses and diminishing sensitivity

toward real-life relationships. Professor Adarsh Tripathi, head of the Sexual and Marital Wellness Clinic at KGMU's psychiatry department, revealed that the outpatient department (OPD) receives 10 to 12 youngsters daily with sexual health concerns, a significant portion of whom exhibit compulsive social media consumption habits. "Most of them spend a large part of their day scrolling through reels, shorts, and explicit images. This continuous exposure conditions their brains to expect exaggerated and often unattainable forms of intimacy, making them less sensitive to real-life relationships," Prof. Tripathi explained.

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

In a bizarre incident, a wedding was cancelled by the bride's family after a groom, and his family here in Gurugram allegedly demanded luxury and ₹73 Lakh as dowry on the wedding day. The groom had asked for a Fortuner car and ₹73 Lakh. According to the bride's family, the groom made the demand on the wedding day during a ritual, and when they refused, the groom had reportedly warned that the wedding would not take place if his demands were not met. The wedding was scheduled for February 25 at a marriage palace in Gurugram's Bhangrola village. According to the groom's family, on February 25, the wedding procession of Chanchal, a bride from Bhangrola village, came

This happens only in India

from the groom Mohit's Judaula village. At around 2 o'clock in the night, when the rituals were being performed at the door of the marriage palace, the groom's family demanded ₹1 Crore and a Fortuner in dowry. At that time the groom's uncle had even warned that he would not commit marriage if his demands were not met. The bride initially thought he was joking, but later, the groom's side was adamant about his demands. According to the bride's father Sevaram, he had sent the marriage invitation 'Lagan' for his daughter on February 23. At that time, he had given a Brezza car in dowry along with

other household items but the bride's family was shocked by the sudden demand of the groom's side on the wedding day. The girl's family tried to convince the groom's side for a long time, but they were not listened to. The village sarpanch also folded his hands in front of them but they did not pay heed and were adamant on their demands. After several hours of prayer, the bride's side broke the marriage, and they stopped the groom's side in the marriage palace itself. They demanded the return of the Brezza car and the money given in the dowry. The bride side had spent more than ₹70 Lakh on wedding expenses. After 15 hours, the wedding

procession returned without the bride. The very next day on February 26, a panchayat of Bhangrola and Judaula villages was held. In this meeting, it was decided that the groom's side would return ₹73 Lakh to the bride's family. Since the groom's side did not have the money, they had to agree on a plot and a house. This amount was given by Manoj Yadav, a resident of Sadharana village after an agreement. To settle the matter, the groom's family mortgaged their four-kanal land in Fazilpur Badli and a two-storey house built in a 220-yard plot in Judaula village. According to the police, the groom, Mohit, is studying MBBS

from a private institute. Chanchal is doing Junior Basic Training (JBT). The bride's father is a constable in Delhi Police and is retired from the Indian Army. "We had received information on February 25 night that an altercation had occurred between the groom's and the bride's family in Bhangrola village during a wedding. The police team reached the spot to sort out the matter. A written agreement has been reached between the two parties and the matter was resolved at their level. No official complaint was made out in this regard," Inspector Virender, station house officer (SHO) of the Kherki Daula Police Station, said.



Eight dead, 46 rescued; Mana operation ends

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The search and rescue operation in Mana ended on Sunday with the authorities succeeding in safely rescuing 46 persons though eight persons died. Forty four labourers of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) were trapped in their container shelters after an avalanche following heavy snowfall in the Mana area near Badrinath in Chamoli district on February 28. The armed forces in coordination with the government started the search and rescue operation shortly after being informed about the disaster. On the third and concluding day of the operation, the authorities stated that 46 workers had been rescued and eight had lost their lives.



Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama said that personnel of the India Army, Indian Air Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, Border Roads Organisation, Uttarakhand Police, district administration and the Health department displayed courage and dedication while undertaking the search and rescue operation. They carried out the operation in inclement weather amidst other challenging circumstances and saved 46 lives though unfortunately, eight lives could not be saved. Dhama added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home minister Amit Shah were consistently taking updates on the rescue operation.

The chief minister further said that the rescued workers who are injured and hospitalised are being taken care of properly, adding that the government is ensuring the best treatment for them. The government fully supports the affected persons and will provide all possible assistance to them, he said. The CM has already directed officials to work on developing a system to monitor the situation in order to prevent similar avalanches and their fatal effect from recurring again.

It is pertinent to mention here that though the majority of the BRO workers trapped following an

avalanche in the high altitude border region of Mana were rescued, questions are being raised by both the opposition and experts. The CM has already directed the authorities to shift both the workers doing roadworks and tourists in high altitude areas prone to avalanches during the next few days. The opposition has criticised the State government for not learning from past disasters while the Bharatiya Janata Party has claimed that its government has performed well in disastrous situations, adding that the opposition should refrain from politicising the sensitive issue.

Rs 5 lakh penalty and 6 years jail for food adulteration

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced strict measures against food adulteration ahead of Holi, including a fine of up to Rs five lakh and imprisonment of up to six years for those found guilty. The FDA commissioner R Rajesh Kumar stated that the FDA has issued a comprehensive standard operating procedure, instructing officials concerned to take immediate and strict action against adulteration. He informed that FDA has launched a statewide campaign to ensure the availability of pure and safe food products, with a special focus on dairy items like milk, mawa, paneer, and khoya ahead of Holi. He stated that authorities are closely monitoring sensitive districts such as Dehradun, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar, where extensive sampling and testing are being conducted. At the Asharodi border in Dehradun, strict inspections are being carried out on in-

coming dairy products. The FDA has directed district magistrates and designated officers to enforce the SOP under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and its 2011 regulations, Kumar said. He stated that actions the FDA will review actions taken during the campaign and habitual offenders will be identified for strict legal proceedings. Officials are required to submit daily reports of enforcement activities to the FDA office in Uttarakhand, he said. The additional food commissioner Tajbir Singh Jaggi stated that the State has been divided into three categories for effective monitoring. The FDA has deployed mobile food testing labs in selected districts like Udham Singh Nagar, Haridwar, Pauri and Almora, among others, for on the spot sampling and analysis, allowing surprise inspections at any time. Jaggi also stated that the FDA is employing decoy operations, enforcement teams and

surveillance to track adulteration. These teams will also educate consumers about adulterated food items. Raids will be conducted based on intelligence inputs and local police will assist in cases where resistance is expected. He said that dairy based and other food products are being sampled and sent to laboratories for testing as their consumption increased during festivals. Businesses operating without valid licenses will be subject to strict legal consequences. The FDA is also monitoring border areas adjacent to Uttar Pradesh and on the spot sample testing vehicles have been deployed to detect adulteration immediately. The FDA has also set a vigilance cell to respond to complaints and take immediate action. Special inspection campaigns are being conducted in Udham Singh Nagar and Haridwar districts as FDA receives maximum adulteration complaints from there, he added.

Police arrest 591 and seize narcotics worth Rs 24.25 crore in two months

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The police have arrested 591 individuals and registered 427 cases against drug trafficking over the past two months in Uttarakhand. The police have also seized about 936.56 kilograms of contraband worth Rs 24.25 crore. This was done under the police's special campaign that commenced in January. This information was disclosed to the di-

house officers and investigating officers being held accountable for any negligence or delay. Besides taking action against 561 individuals in drug trafficking, the police have also booked 26 individuals under the Gangster Act and seized illegally acquired properties worth Rs 1.74 crore from 15 accused. The special drive has now been extended until



rector general of police Deepam Seth in a review meeting which was attended by senior police officials of the State from all districts via video conference. He reviewed the actions taken against crime and criminals with senior officials, including range in-charges and district police chiefs. Seth said that the campaign against crime and criminals will continue, with a focus on arresting wanted and reward-listed criminals involved in drug trafficking. He said that special attention is being given to pending investigations, with station

March 31, 2025. The DGP also instructed officials to conduct a month-long campaign to arrest wanted criminals, execute non-bailable warrants and take action against those with attachment orders. He stated that strict accountability measures have been placed on police officers for any lapses in handling serious crimes. District officials have been directed to enhance police visibility, conduct night patrols, increase security checks at checkpoints and deploy foot patrols in crowded areas.

Activists and citizens protest against large scale tree cutting in Dehradun

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Local activists and concerned citizens of Dehradun held a march on Sunday to exhibit their protest against the large-scale felling of trees in the name of development. According to the event organisers, protestors from 33 organisations gathered near Dilaram Chowk at 7:30 AM and marched towards Centrio Mall, raising slogans related to environmental conservation. They stated that public movements had successfully prevented tree cutting on Khalanga, Canal Road and Cantt Road in the past, bringing relief to residents. They claimed that now new road construction projects in Mussoorie, Rishikesh and Jhajra now reportedly propose the felling of nearly 30,000



trees. Protesters expressed concern over sacrificing trees to reduce travel time by a few minutes. They said that thousands of trees have already been cut along Sahasthradhara Road and those planted by the Forest department among rocks are reportedly deteriorating.

Activists mentioned past instances, such as the Rispana project, where one lakh trees were planted, but none survived. They claimed that less than five per cent of the trees planted in various afforestation efforts remain alive. Environmentalists also alleged widespread corruption in the use of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) funds, stating that Rs10 crore was spent on laptops and mobile phones instead of conservation efforts. The activist Anoop Nautiyal also pointed out the significant transfer of forest land in Uttarakhand over the past 15 years, raising concerns about the future of the region's green cover.

Rain forecast again in State today after two clear days

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

After a couple of days of clear weather, some parts of the State are likely to witness rain on Monday. The State Meteorological Centre has issued a yellow warning (Watch) regarding the possibility of thunder cloud development likely in Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag and Chamoli districts. Further, light to moderate rainfall is likely to occur at many places in Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag and Chamoli districts while very light to light rainfall is likely to occur at a few places in Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts and at isolated places in Dehradun and Tehri districts today. Apart from this, dry weather is likely to prevail in the remaining districts today.



The provisional State capital Dehradun is likely to witness a mainly clear to partly cloudy sky. Thunder cloud development is likely with the possibility of very light rain towards night. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be about 27 degrees Celsius and 12 degrees

Celsius respectively in Dehradun today.

It will be recalled that two to three days of heavy snowfall in the higher reaches and rain in most parts of the State had led to major repercussions as seen in the avalanche at Mana near Badrinath in Chamoli

district, but had also resulted in a noticeable drop in the temperatures across the State. The weather cleared on Saturday and remained warm and sunny on Sunday too. However, the weather is forecast to take to turn now, as stated earlier by the India Meteorological Department.

Meanwhile, the maximum and minimum temperatures recorded on Sunday were 27.2 degrees Celsius and 10.1 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun, 28.5 degrees Celsius and 7.4 degrees Celsius in Pantnagar, 15.9 degrees Celsius and 3.1 degrees Celsius in Mukteshwar and 16.8 degrees Celsius and 4.6 degrees Celsius in Tehri.

Doonites welcome checks on public drinking and drunk driving

PURNIMA BISHT ■ DEHRADUN

Dehradun residents have welcomed the police's action against drinking in public places and drunk driving, saying it has brought much-needed order to the city. Over the past six months, the police have taken action against 5,822 individuals for consuming alcohol in public places and arrested more than 1,858 people for driving under the influence. A total of Rs 17.21 lakh has been collected in fines from violators, as per the police. While the police had been conducting regular checks, the campaign gained significant momentum after a tragic accident near ONGC Chowk on November 11, 2024, in which six young people lost their lives.

The victims were allegedly intoxicated at the time of the crash, prompting authorities to take stricter measures against drinking in open spaces and reckless driving under the influence. According to many locals, the impact of the crackdown has been noticeable, with fewer people drinking in public and fewer intoxicated individuals roaming the streets. Many residents, especially women and young girls, have welcomed this change, saying it has made their daily commutes safer and more comfortable. A class XII student Ashima shared how unsettling it used to be to pass by liquor shops on her way home from tuition in the evening. "We used to walk home from East Canal Road to Sahasthradhara Road.

My friends. It made us uncomfortable but we had no choice but to pass through quietly. Sometimes, some uncles would intervene but we feared retaliation since we had to take that route daily. Now, liquor shop owners do not allow people to linger, saying the police have warned them. I hope

dent Surya Bhatt has also observed a shift in behaviour among his friends and relatives. He claimed that many of them now refrain from drinking excessively at clubs, fearing police checkpoints. "Unfortunately, most people do not follow civic sense unless there is a fear of consequences. The regular

"The police make videos as evidence and it was humiliating. We had no choice but to stop drinking in public spaces," he said. The Dehradun senior superintendent of police Ajai Singh told The Pioneer that the campaign has received an overwhelmingly positive



this continues," she said. A housewife Deepa echoed similar sentiments. She said that her two tenants, both in their late twenties, along with her son, frequently drank in a nearby park on Raipur Road. However, they stopped after being caught and fined by the police in December. "They were ashamed after the incident. I am glad the police took this step because it forced them to reflect on their actions," she said. Sahasthradhara Road resi-

police checks and media reports about arrests and fines have created that fear. It may not be the ideal way to bring change but it is working and I think it should continue," he stated. Meanwhile, 33-year-old Premnagar resident, Subham Thapa (name changed), admitted that he and his friends previously drank in parked cars or secluded areas, as they could not afford bars or drink at home due to family restrictions. However, they have stopped since being caught by the police in January.

response from the community. "We get thank-you messages from parents and senior citizens who appreciate the action against public drinking, as it had started creating chaos in many areas. Of course, some people complain, asking where they will go to drink, but rules are rules. Most violators we find are in Raipur and Premnagar areas. This drive will continue throughout the year," he asserted.



Members of various social and political organisations protest against cabinet minister PC Aggarwal and Assembly speaker Ritu Khanduri Bhushan's statements during the recently concluded Assembly session, deemed anti-pahadi by some. The protestors were prevented from reaching the CM residence here on Sunday

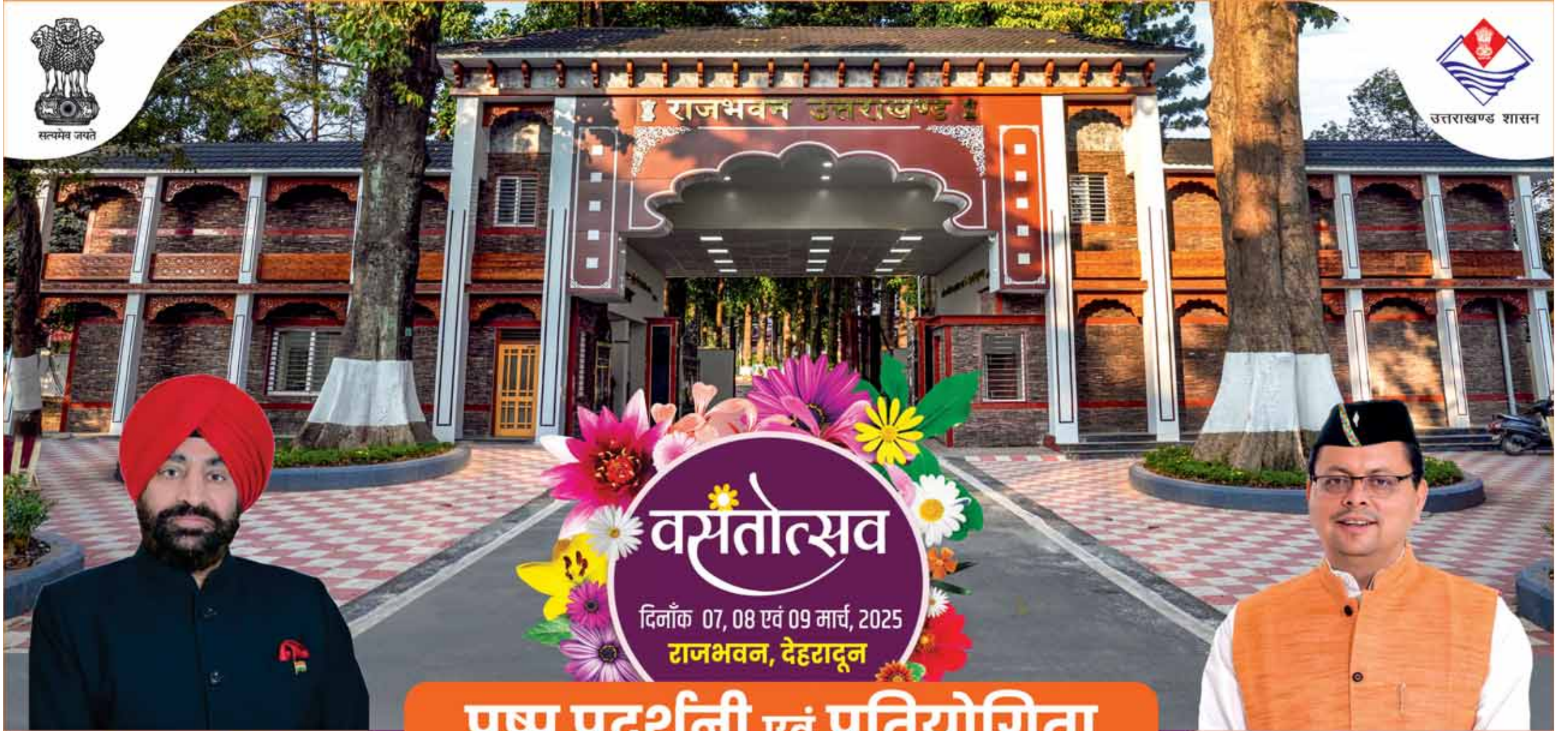
Pioneer photo



सत्यमेव जयते



उत्तराखण्ड शासन



ले ज गुरमीत सिंह

पीवीएसएम, यूवाईएसएम, एवीएसएम, वीएसएम, (से नि)
राज्यपाल, उत्तराखण्ड

पुष्कर सिंह धामी

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

पुष्प प्रदर्शनी एवं प्रतियोगिता

सोशल मीडिया पर जुड़ें #FlowerShowUK2025 #ColoursOfSpring2025 #वसन्तोत्सव2025
LtGenGurmit | Lt Gen Gurmit Singh | Itgengurmitsingh | LTGENERALGURMITSINGH

*** दर्शकों के लिए समय ***

07 मार्च, 2025 को अपराह्न 01:00 बजे से सायं 06:00 बजे तक,
08 एवं 09 मार्च, 2025 को प्रातः 09:00 बजे से सायं 06:00 बजे तक (प्रवेश नि:शुल्क)

माननीय राज्यपाल महोदय की प्रेरणा से विगत वर्ष की भांति इस वर्ष भी वसंतोत्सव-2025 का आयोजन राजभवन, देहरादून के प्रांगण में दिनांक 07, 08 एवं 09 मार्च, 2025 को उद्यान विभाग द्वारा किया जा रहा है, जिसमें पुष्प प्रदर्शनी के साथ-साथ विभिन्न श्रेणियों में प्रतियोगिताओं का भी आयोजन किया जायेगा, जिसका विवरण निम्न प्रकार है:-

Name of Categories	Name of Sub Categories
A. Cut flower competition (including commercial/ hobbyist) (72 Prizes)	
1. Traditional Areas (42 Prizes) (US Nagar, Nainital, Haridwar & Dehradun Districts)	Gerbera Red Group, Gerbera Yellow Group, Gerbera White Group, Gerbera Others Group, Carnation, Rose, Gladiolus Red Group, Gladiolus White Group, Gladiolus Others Group, Orchid, Marigold, Chrysanthemum, Lillium and Any other. (20-30 sticks of each variety will be treated as one entry except Rose, Orchid, Lillium where 03-05 sticks per variety will be treated as one entry)
2. Non Traditional Areas (24 Prizes) (09 Hill Districts)	Carnation, Rose, Gladiolus, Gerbera, Marigold, Orchid, Lillium, and Any other. (10-20 sticks of each variety will be treated as one entry except Rose, Orchid & Lillium where 03-05 sticks per variety will be treated as one entry)
3. Cut Flowers Competition for Specially abled persons (Any Cut Flower) (03 Prize)	Any Cut Flower (10-20 sticks of each variety will be treated as one entry except Rose, Orchid & Lillium where 03-05 sticks per variety will be treated as one entry)
4. Cut Flowers Competition for Women Flower Growers (Any Cut Flower) (03 Prize)	Any Cut Flower (10-20 sticks of each variety will be treated as one entry except Rose, Orchid & Lillium where 03-05 sticks per variety will be treated as one entry)
B. Potted Plant arrangement (12 Prizes)	
(i) Private Nurseries	
a) Small upto 0.50 acre	Combination of all varieties (Minimum 15 potted plants in each will be considered as one entry)
b) Large above 0.50 acre	Combination of all varieties (Minimum 25 potted plants in each will be considered as one entry)
(ii) Hobbyists	Combination of all varieties (Minimum 10 potted plants in each will be considered as one entry)
(iii) Central & State Govt./Private Institution	Combination of all varieties (Minimum 25 potted plants in each will be considered as one entry)
C. Loose Flower arrangement (12 Prizes) (Enthusiasts / Hobbyists including Gardeners / Individual / Group)	
	(i) Fresh Flowers (ii) Dry Flowers (iii) Bouquets (iv) Garlands.
D. Potted Plants other than flowers (06 Prizes)	
	1 Potted Plants (Fruits) 2 Potted Plants (Foliage) (Group of 3 pots of each variety as one entry)
E. Vegetables (09 Prizes)	
	1 Vegetables (Any Commonly Grown Vegetables) 2 Leafy vegetables (Spinach, Rai, Bathua, Methi, Swiss Chard etc.) 3 Exotic vegetables (Celery, Parsley, Red Cabbage, Zucchini, Brussel's Sprout etc.) (Group of 3 pots of each variety as one entry)
F. Cacti & Succulents (03 Prizes)	
	1 Cacti and succulents (Group of 3 pots will be considered as one entry)
G. Bonsai (06 Prizes)	
	(i) Commercial Fruit Trees (ii) Forest Trees (Group of 3 tree pots will be considered as one entry)
H. Terrarium (03 Prizes)	
	(i) Terrarium (One Terrarium as one Entry)
I. Hanging pots (03 Prizes)	
	(i) Hanging Pots (Arrangements of three pots as single entry).
J. Hydroponic Cultivation Technology Demonstration (03 Prizes)	
	(i) Hydroponic Cultivation Technology Demonstration
K. Pots for Gardening (03 Prizes)	
	Pots of any size. (03 pots of any size will be considered as one entry)
L. Honey (09 Prizes)	
	(i) Apis cerana Himalayan Honey. (ii) Wild Forest Honey. (iii) Monofloral Honey (500 gm bottle/Jar as one entry)
M. On the spot photography (03 Prizes)	
	Any two best pictures (size- 6" x 8") of Plants/ Plant parts/ flowers/ Bunches etc. be clicked on 7th march 2025 at Raj Bhawan and displayed by 02:00 pm on 07th March, 2025. Judgment would take place on the same day.
N. Fresh Petal Rangoli (03 Prizes)	
	The participants for individuals above 12 years of age will bring fresh flower petals. The competition will be held on 07th March, 2025 from 09:00 am to 2:00 pm. Each participant will be given two hours to complete rangoli on 1 X 1 mtr Ply Board.
O. Painting competition for School children, specially abled children and street children/rag pickers (18 Prizes)	
	(i) Children of age between 5 to 12 years. (ii) Children of age between 12 to 18 years. (iii) Specially abled- Visually challenged (iv) Specially abled- Mentally challenged. (v) Specially abled- Hearing and speech impaired. (vi) Street children / rag pickers. (The participants will bring their own colors, sheets will be provided by the Department. Competition will held on 07th March, 2025 from 09:00 am to 01:00 pm.)

Postal Stamp competition organized by Postal Department, Dehradun.

वसंतोत्सव - 2025 में स्टॉल के माध्यम से व्यावसायिक गतिविधियाँ संचालित करने हेतु इच्छुक निजी फर्मों/कम्पनियों से शुल्क के रूप में ₹0 9500/- व एनजीओ/एसओएचजीओ से ₹0 4500/- की धनराशि प्राप्त की जायेगी। स्टॉल के माध्यम से पुष्प एवं औद्योगिकी से सम्बन्धित गतिविधियाँ संचालित करने वाली फर्मों/कम्पनियों/एनजीओ/एसओएचजीओ व महिला स्वयं सहायता समूहों को प्राथमिकता दी जायेगी।

- वसंतोत्सव - 2025 में प्रादेशिक विभागों/केन्द्रीय विभागों/संस्थानों/कृषि विश्वविद्यालयों आदि द्वारा संचालित योजनाओं/कार्यक्रमों/तकनीकी का प्रदर्शन अपने-अपने स्टॉल के माध्यम से किया जायेगा।
- वसंतोत्सव - 2025 में विभिन्न संस्थाओं/फर्मों, एनजीओ/एसओएचजीओ तथा महिला स्वयं सहायता समूहों आदि द्वारा भी अपने उत्पाद का प्रदर्शन/बिक्री हेतु स्टॉल लगाये जाएंगे।
- प्रतियोगी अपने प्रदर्शनी तथा सम्बन्धित विभाग अपने स्टॉल को दिनांक 07 मार्च, 2025 को प्रातः 10:00 बजे तक निर्धारित स्थान पर तैयार कर लेंगे, इसके बाद अनुमति प्रदान नहीं की जायेगी। पुष्प प्रदर्शनी का उद्घाटन दिनांक 07 मार्च, 2025 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे किया जायेगा। इसके पश्चात आम जनता के लिए प्रदर्शनी अपराह्न 01:00 बजे से 6:00 बजे सायं तक तथा दिनांक 08 एवं 09 मार्च, 2025 को प्रातः 09:00 बजे से सायं 6:00 बजे तक खुली रहेगी।
- प्रदर्शनी में आगन्तुक पुष्प प्रेमी/फोटोग्राफर द्वारा स्वयं लिये गये पुष्पों के फोटोग्राफ पर आधारित फोटो प्रदर्शनी, आर्ट गैलरी, सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम तथा आम जनता हेतु आयोजन स्थल के नजदीक फूडकोर्ट की व्यवस्था भी की गयी है, जिसमें विभिन्न प्रकार के व्यंजन उपलब्ध होंगे।

अन्य: प्रदेश के सम्बन्धित नागरिकों एवं पुष्प प्रेमियों से अनुरोध है कि दिनांक 07, 08 व 09 मार्च 2025 को उपरोक्तानुसार निर्धारित समय के अनुसार राजभवन, देहरादून में अधिकाधिक संख्या में पधार कर पुष्प प्रदर्शनी का लाभ उठाये। प्रतियोगिताओं में भाग लेने के इच्छुक प्रतिभागी आवेदन पत्र (Entry Form) निम्न पते के साथ ही आयोजन स्थल पर भी नि:शुल्क प्राप्त कर उसी पते या आयोजन स्थल पर दिनांक 07 मार्च को प्रातः 10 बजे तक जमा कर सकते हैं। आवेदन विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://shn.uk.gov.in> से भी डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं। पंजीकरण दिनांक 07 मार्च, 2025 के पूर्वाह्न 10:00 बजे तक ही किये जाएंगे।

Entry Form प्राप्त एवं जमा करने का पता

कार्यालय-मुख्य उद्यान अधिकारी, विकास भवन, सर्वे चौक, देहरादून,
मौ0-9412962728कार्यालय-निदेशक, उद्यान/ अपर निदेशक, उद्यान, राजकीय उद्यान, सार्कित हाउस, देहरादून
मौ0-9634299775

सूचना एवं लोक सम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तराखण्ड द्वारा जनहित में जारी

www.uttarainformation.gov.in | DIPR_UK | UttarakhandDIPR | UttarakhandDIPR



GUEST COLUMN

Why I took a holy dip at the Mahakumbh



Dr Sona Kaushal Gupta

I took a Holy Dip at the Mahakumbh which recently concluded at Prayagraj and felt blessed, happy and empowered doing so. It was a lifetime experience for me and a blend of my faith, beliefs and sentiments. Many raised an eyebrow and asked me how could I do so as a doctor? As a doctor and a psychologist who has read science, biology and mastered medicine and psychology and how the body and mind function, how could I believe in religion and go to the Mahakumbh? Was the water not unhygienic? Were the crowds not intimidating? Does science give me a logical reason to do so? My answer to all these questions was that I have my own personal religious beliefs which I don't have to justify or explain to anyone. As long as I put aside these beliefs when I am working as a counsellor or while treating my patients and as long as my religious beliefs do not interfere with my work, it's fine and acceptable.

Let me try and share my views on this holy dip and how it made me feel more enriched. As a medical doctor and a psychologist I have spent years understanding the human mind, body and guiding people towards being more happy, resilient, healing, loving and being kind to themselves and improving their physical and mental well being. I believe health is a holistic term of mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well being. Yes, my work is rooted in science but I have always believed and advocated that healing is not just about medicine. It is about balance, faith and a deep connection among the mind, body and soul. I am a staunch advocate of the saying, "A doctor treats but god heals".

When I took a holy dip in the Mahakumbh along with lakhs of other devotees, it was not merely a ritual for me but it was a moment of profound reflection and a blend of spirituality, traditional beliefs and science—an experience which left me enriched in ways I had never imagined. The spiritual significance of the Mahakumbh was not just a religious tour and a bath for me. It was a journey within, an energy field full of devotion, surrender and faith. Millions like me took a holy dip in the sacred Ganga believing in the power of devotion and purification not just of the

body but also of the soul.

Faith is an integral part of human existence. It provides us mental strength in adversity, comfort in uncertainty, and resilience when we face great challenges in life. Many people associate

a significant role in our mental and physical well being. Ironically, this is a fact which is acknowledged even by science today. Faith reminds us that no struggle lasts forever and even in our weakest times we are not alone.

transform lives. It's about trusting in something greater than our immediate struggles. Whether it is faith in god, in the universe, in the law of attraction and manifestation, in destiny or in our own ability to overcome obstacles, this inner

conviction has a profound impact on our health happiness and healing. Life as we all know is unpredictable and no one is immune to hardships be it

personal—recover from their emotional trauma and physical ailments much faster. They follow treatment plans more vigorously, maintain hope and find a purpose even in their suffering. Modern research supports the idea that faith has better health benefits. Studies have shown that prayer, meditation and other spiritual practices activate regions of the brain associated with peace and emotional regulation. Faith reduces stress hormones enhances immune function and lowers the risk of depression and anxiety. Faith also teaches people to surrender what they cannot control and lowers their worry and anxiety levels and reinforces our sense of trust in a greater purpose and this psychological shift reduces our stress levels and fosters our emotional well being.

While the holy dip holds a great religious significance, it also has a scientific side to it. The cold water immersion when we dip into the Holy waters of Mahakumbh has been studied for its health benefits also. It stimulates the Vagus nerve which helps reduce stress, enhance our mood and also improves our wellbeing and immunity. The sudden plunge into the cold waters releases endorphins creating a natural sense of calm and well being in us. In the face of constant judgement about

being superstitious or having some guilt which we need to wash off and purify ourselves or the holy water being dirty and unhygienic, for me taking the holy dip was not about all these petty issues but it was about my faith and beliefs. It was about experiencing a moment of stillness amidst all the outer and inner chaos, experiencing surrender and of connection. It reminded me that while we heal others it's imperative to heal our own selves first physically, emotionally and spiritually.

In a world of outer chaos we need to bring in inner calm, to pause, to let go, to believe and to embrace experiences that remind us that beyond science and medicine there exists a force—call it faith, energy, universe or god—that plays a vital role in our well being. Standing on the banks of the Ganga, surrounded by hundreds of devotees, chants and the scent of incense and unwavering faith of millions, I felt a sense of calm surrender, peace and unity of humanity—rich and poor beyond differences of caste, creed or colour. That is why I took a Holy Dip in the Mahakumbh and I will carry its essence with me forever.

(The author is a neuro psychologist, founder of a crisis helpline and designated CBSE counsellor. Views expressed are personal)



faith solely with religion but I believe that its influence extends far beyond the spiritual realm. At its core, faith is about our beliefs. Belief in oneself, in others and in the goodness of life and it plays

Health studies have shown it to be a combination and tool along with medicines to heal the mind and body from our stress and traumas. I have seen firsthand how faith can

conviction has a profound impact on our health happiness and healing.

Life as we all know is unpredictable and no one is immune to hardships be it

er journey. This mindset fosters perseverance and prevents despair from taking hold of us. In my medical practice, I have observed that patients with a strong faith—whether religious or

DLRC children's section sees surge in membership

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The children's section of the Doon Library and Research Centre (DLRC) has received a favourable response, with an increase in membership amounting to 70 members in just 50 days. Notably, this section was inaugurated in August 2024. The children's

library, the DLRC administration organises activities and workshops for children on Saturdays and Sundays. Regarding the success of the children's section library, the section in charge, Megha said that it officially commenced in August 2024, and given that it

In light of the shortened duration of 50 days, the section has experienced a notable success rate regarding children's membership. Initially, only eight members were registered at the section's inception. However, this number has now risen to 70, reflecting signifi-

pass both regular and special categories. Regular membership requires typical students to pay an annual fee of Rs 100, while special membership is provided at no charge for children from NGOs, orphanages, government shelter homes and other organisations. Further, an amount of Rs 500 is collected by the administration as a security deposit, which is refundable.

She informed that to increase engagement and improve facilities, they organise activities and workshops every Saturday and Sunday. She emphasised that the success rate of these initiatives has been commendable; initially, only 32 children participated, whereas the most recent events attracted a total of 537 participants.

It will be recalled that the library was previously designated for teenagers, young adults and senior citizens. However, to enhance the library's offerings, the DLRC has decided to establish a children's reading section for children aged between seven and 15 years.



section library is exclusively accessible to children for reading on Fridays and Saturdays. Further, to enhance interest in

is open only two days a week, it has been operational for about 50 days so far.

cant growth in a brief period. She further said that the membership options available for the children's section encom-

Patanjali to become a global resolution centre, says Pradhan

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Union Education minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that Patanjali will become a global centre for 'resolution' in the future, stating that it will lead in treatment and education in the world. He opined that Patanjali is not simply an institution but an ideology which represents Bharat and plays an important role in nation building. Appreciating the works done by Swami Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna in Yoga and Ayurveda respectively, he said that this is nothing less than a movement. Pradhan was speaking as the chief guest at Abhiyudav, the annual function of the University of Patanjali.

Pradhan opined that Patanjali is serving the nation by merging the ancient traditions of Bharat and modernity. He said that



Yoga and Ayurveda are needed by the world. "Yoga is not limited now to only the aged and ascetics. There is hardly any village or locality in the nation today where Yoga has not reached," he said.

Addressing the gathering,

Ramdev said that the Patanjali institution is moving forward on the base of principles established by sages and ancient traditions. "We dream of making the University of Patanjali an establishment even bigger than Oxford and Cambridge. We will work to expand this

university globally in a major way and strive to make it among the best across the world," he said.

The university's vice chancellor Balkrishna informed in detail about the university and its associate institution Patanjali Research Foundation's works. He averred that Patanjali is also doing considerable work to elicit focus on native Indian heritage.

Addressing his views on the occasion, the State's Education minister Dhan Singh Rawat appreciated the works being done by the University of Patanjali and the Patanjali Research Foundation.

Temperature variance raises viral and upper respiratory infections among children

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The fluctuation in temperature in recent days has led to an increase in cases of upper respiratory and viral infections among children in the city, the doctors said. It has been observed that since the beginning of February, temperature variations have escalated, with some days being sunny and others being rainy. Recently, the higher reaches witnessed snowfall while most parts in the lower altitudes and plains received rainfall, leading to a drop in temperature.

This lasted for two days, followed by two days of clear sunny weather. The State Meteorological Centre has forecast rain in parts of the State again today. This fluctuation has had a direct impact on the health of individuals, particularly children. Doctors have pointed out that these temperature fluctuations are more likely to contribute to viral and other infections in children, as their immunity is typically lower than that of adults.

10 years. Additionally, the occurrence of these cases has become increasingly common within a two-week time-frame. To address such infections in children, parents should focus on enhancing their



hydration, providing boiled water during this period and ensuring a proper nutritional diet. It is also important to encourage children to avoid junk food and to dress appropriately for the weather, she said.

"In light of the recent and ongoing fluctuations in temperature, children have become more susceptible to health concerns. Currently, there has been an increase

in cases of upper and lower respiratory infections, fever and viral illnesses, which include coughs and colds among children. Additionally, many children are experiencing symptoms such as vomiting and loose stools," stated pediatrician at Sri Mahant Indresh Hospital, Dr Vishal Kaushik.

He further added that the infection and viral cases are particularly prevalent among children aged five to 10 years, with severe cases now increasingly seen in children under one year of age. He advised that to prevent these issues, parents should ensure their children remain hydrated and receive a well-balanced diet. Rather than treating the infection at home, it is crucial to consult a doctor immediately. Further, if a child is affected by such an infection, parents

should refrain from sending them to school, as the infection can easily spread to others through droplets. He also emphasised that teachers should be vigilant in observing signs of this type of infection among students during school hours.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE

IMANJEET KAUR W/o of No JC-512131A Rank NB SUB Name BIKRAM SINGH presently R/o 278 Baba Budha ji Avenue Rimond City Amritsar -I Punjab-143001. I have changed my Name MANJEET KAUR TO MANJIT KAUR and DOB 17.02.1986 TO 07.04.1982 VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 01 MAR 2025 BEFORE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, DEHRADUN (UK).

Disclaimer

The Pioneer does not take responsibility for the content for the advertisement (Display/Classified) carried in this newspaper. The paper does not endorse the same. Readers are requested to verify the contents on their own.

For advertisement booking 9045057787, 8909212518 Email: pioneerdoon@gmail.com

नगर पालिका परिषद, मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला टिहरी गढ़वाल

पत्रांक 1049 / निविदा सूचना / 2024-25 निविदा सूचना दिनांक 01.03.2025

नगर पालिका परिषद, मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला, टिहरी गढ़वाल द्वारा वर्ष 2024-25 में निकाय निधि/राज्य वित्त आयोग के अन्तर्गत निकाय पंजीकृत टेकेदारों से निकाय क्षेत्रान्तर्गत स्पीड ब्रेकर लगाये जाने, चौम्बर ठीक किये जाने व नालियों के ऊपर जाल लगाने के कार्य की सीलबन्द निविदा निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर दिनांक 17.03.2025 को अपराह्न 1.00 बजे तक आमन्त्रित की जाती है, जो कि उसी दिन सांय 3.00 बजे निविदा समिति के समक्ष खोली जायेगी, निविदा के कार्य का विवरण एवं शर्तें नगर पालिका की वेबसाईट www.nppmunikireti.in कार्यालय नगर पालिका परिषद मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला के सूचना पट्ट एवं निर्माण अनुभाग में देखी जा सकती है, निविदा, निविदा खुलने की तिथि से 30 दिनों की अवधि के लिए वैध रहेगी। निविदा फार्म व शर्तें नगर पालिका परिषद मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला कार्यालय से दिनांक 15.03.2025 को कार्यालय दिवस में मध्यान 12.00 बजे तक निर्धारित शुल्क जमा कराकर प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं, निविदा आमन्त्रण की तिथि पर अवकाश होने पर अगली तिथि पर निविदा की जायेगी, निविदा के साथ सलग्न एफ०डी०आर०/सी०डी०आर० एवं अन्य समकक्ष रूप में शुल्क जमा करने से पूर्व ही कार्यालय में जमा करानी अनिवार्य होगी, बिना एफ०डी०आर०/सी०डी०आर० के निविदा प्रपत्र जारी नहीं किया जायेगा। किसी भी अथवा समस्त निविदाओं को स्वीकार/अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार अध्यक्ष निविदा समिति में निहित है।

अधिसूची अधिकारी नगर पालिका, परिषद, मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला नगर पालिका, परिषद, मुनिकीरेती-ढालवाला अध्यक्ष



www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

A clash of diplomacy and dignity

A dramatic Oval Office face-off between Trump and Zelensky, marked by sharp exchanges, underscores global political instability

In a high-stakes meeting that captured global attention, President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky clashed in a dramatic showdown at the White House. What began as cordial greetings quickly spiraled into an explosive exchange, leaving Zelensky visibly humiliated on the world stage—even as his defiant stance earned him renewed backing from European leaders. The encounter marked the first in-person meeting between Trump and Zelensky since Trump's return to power in January. Early on, smiles and handshakes gave way to heated words as US Vice President JD Vance pushed for a diplomatic resolution to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. Vance's remarks underscored a fundamental point: the need for serious diplomacy to end the war, while also implicitly contrasting Trump's previous approach with that of past administrations. However, as the dialogue unfolded, Zelensky's pointed references to the long history of inaction—citing the annexation of Crimea and subsequent military struggles—sparked



a vehement rebuttal. In a sequence of rapid-fire exchanges, Trump dismissed Zelensky's critiques and reminded him of the overwhelming military support provided by the United States, arguing that without this aid, Ukraine's resistance could have crumbled in days. Despite the abrasive tone and what many saw as a public humiliation, Zelensky's resistance during the meeting resonated far beyond the confines of the Oval Office. While Trump's unconventional style and bombastic rhetoric further alienated many European policymakers, Zelensky's defiant posture emerged as a symbol of unwavering national resolve. European leaders, long critical of Trump's erratic diplomacy, viewed

the exchange as evidence that Ukraine needed to assert its own dignity in the face of American grandstanding. Moreover, Trump's harsh social media post demanding Zelensky "come back when he is ready for peace"—served not only as a dramatic moment of political theatre but also as a catalyst for European unity in support of Ukraine. Zelensky's refusal to be cowed sends a powerful message to both his domestic audience and international supporters. The Zelensky US visit might strengthen Ukraine's negotiating position and ensure a more coordinated effort to counter Russian advances. Trump's return to a more unpredictable form of diplomacy has underscored deep-seated divisions within the international community. His blunt dismissals and confrontational tactics risk undermining the credibility of traditional US diplomatic channels, potentially destabilising long-established alliances. In contrast, Europe's reaction suggests a pivot towards a more measured, collective response that prioritises multilateral engagement over unilateral posturing. This divergence could reshape how global conflicts are addressed in the future, signaling a shift away from "big talk" and towards pragmatic, alliance-based strategies. The Oval Office showdown will likely be remembered as a defining moment in the ongoing Ukraine war and in the evolution of American foreign policy.

PICTALK



A farmer prepares an agricultural land for paddy cultivation, in Nadia

PTI

Breakthrough 'Bedi cooling turban' a glimmer of hope for brain stroke

This innovative device selectively cools the brain—bypassing the complications of whole-body hypothermia—and comes in handy in the treatment of brain stroke

At the recently concluded 71st Annual Conference of the Indian Association of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Sciences, Dr Harinder Singh Bedi, Director of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Sciences at Park Grecian Hospital in Mohali, presented a groundbreaking technique designed to protect the brain from oxygen deprivation during surgery. Nicknamed the "Bedi Cooling Turban," this innovative method is a trailblazer in more ways than one.

It is well known that lowering the temperature of an injured organ can help reduce damage. However, the brain presents a unique challenge because whole-body cooling introduces its own set of complications, and in brain surgery, only the brain needs to be cooled. Even a brief period of oxygen deprivation can result in devastating consequences, such as a massive stroke.

Dr Bedi conceived the idea during intensive brainstorming sessions and set out to cool only the brain. Drawing on his vast experience, he designed a unique cooling



turban made of plastic tubes arranged in a coil. Once the patient is anaesthetised, the device is placed around the head and cold, sterile water is pumped through the coils using a specialised machine, cooling the brain while leaving the rest of the body unaffected.

To date, this device has been successfully used in 48 cases to repair blockages in brain arteries, preserving brain function throughout. Dr Bedi refined his surgical skills in advanced cardiovascular techniques at Escorts Heart Institute and St Vincent

Hospital in Sydney, where he managed cases using whole-body cooling (hypothermia) to preserve organ function. At the conference, the technique received an enthusiastic response from 1,700 national and international expert delegates.

Dr Rajneesh Malhotra, Cardiac Director at Max Hospitals, expressed particular enthusiasm, suggesting that the technique be applied to more clinical cases to further safeguard patients' brain function. He noted that innovations like this empower Indian surgeons to tackle

A new era for rural revival and inclusive growth

With a sharp focus on strengthening infrastructure and boosting holistic rural development, the UP budget underscores a visionary and inclusive agenda

The Budget presented by the BJP's double-engine government in Uttar Pradesh will go a long way in strengthening infrastructure and further boosting the holistic development of rural areas. The state government's mammoth budget of Rs 8,08,736 crore for the all-round development of the state reflects the inclusive and visionary approach of the government, taking full care of the poor, disadvantaged, youth, women empowerment and Annadatas. This budget is 9.8 per cent higher than last year's, indicating the government's pro-development agenda. Under the Prime Minister's vision of a developed India, special emphasis has been placed on rural areas.

The mainstay of the economy of the state is the rural sector and the government has been continuously working towards ensuring that the benefits of the schemes reach the deprived sections of the society. Believing in the credo of self-reliance, the government has been focusing on fortifying the development arcs of villages to make them self-reliant as they will play an important role in creating a strong Uttar Pradesh. While over 96 lakh rural families have benefited under the State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM), on the other hand, financial transactions worth Rs 31,103 crore have been facilitated through 39,556 Banking Correspondent Sakhis. Until now, more than two lakh women have become "Lakshmi Didi," helping them become self-reliant. Uttar Pradesh is also the first state in the country to guarantee concrete houses to the poor.

Fulfilling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," the state government has already constructed more than 3.6 million houses in resolution. Providing further impetus to the cause, a provision of Rs 4,882 crore has been made in the Budget for the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural). Also, an amount of Rs 1,200 crore has been proposed under the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana



(Rural). While the Prime Minister's empathetic leadership has ensured a roof over the heads of the poor, the state's economy has also been flourishing.

The government's efforts have ensured the economic growth rate of the state has been recorded at 11.6 per cent, which is higher than the national GDP growth of 9.6 per cent. Once considered a "BIMARU" state, the estimated gross domestic product (GSDP) of the state has now risen to Rs 27.51 lakh crore, doubling from 2017-18. In line with this momentum, Uttar Pradesh's economy is expected to reach Rs 30 lakh crore in the next fiscal, which will significantly contribute towards making the state a \$1 trillion economy.

Along with the ramping up of infrastructure, Uttar Pradesh is now witnessing a revolution in the transportation sector.

The North-South Corridor Plan will be implemented keeping in view road connectivity and highway expansion. Under this, Rs 200 crore has been provided for the widening and construction of roads. A budget of Rs 2,900 crore has been proposed for the widening of roads. Also, a provision of Rs 1,450 crore has been made



THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY CONSTRUCTED MORE THAN 3.6 MILLION HOUSES IN RESOLUTION. PROVIDING FURTHER IMPETUS TO THE CAUSE, A PROVISION OF RS 4,882 CRORE HAS BEEN MADE IN THE BUDGET FOR THE PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJANA (RURAL)

for the construction of bridges and railway over-bridges to ease traffic congestion. The incredible growth has taken into account the need to further bolster youth empowerment and job creation. A budget of Rs 1,000 crore has been allocated under the Chief Minister's Youth Entrepreneur Development Scheme. Under the Swami Vivekananda Yuva Sashaktikaran Yojana, 49.86 lakh smartphones/tablets have been distributed to promote smart education. Free coaching is also being provided to the youth through the Abhyudaya Yojana. Renewable energy and artificial intelligence have been given special emphasis to ensure that youngsters do not fall behind. While the Artificial Intelligence City will be set up in Lucknow, plans are underway to set up a 500 MW solar power plant which will entail a cost of Rs 2,500 crore. Prime Minister Narendra Modi places special emphasis on ensuring the wellbeing of farmers and wants to ensure they do not fall behind in these changing times. In line with this, Annadatas have been placed at the top of the priority list in the mission of achieving the goal of 'Viksit Bharat'.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, Rs 79,500 crore have been distributed to farmers while Rs 496 crore have also been disbursed under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. The state's sugarcane production capacity has also increased from 72 tonnes to 85 tonnes per hectare, boosting the income levels of farmers. The recently presented Budget will not only take the development of the state to new heights but will also transform rural India. From roads to digital infrastructure, farmers to industry, and women empowerment to a bright future for the youth, this Budget has been able to ensure that the needs of every section of society are taken care of. With the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and schemes aimed at boosting the rural economy and infrastructure, Uttar Pradesh is rapidly moving towards fulfilling the dream of a self-reliant India. I am confident that this Budget will realise the vision of 'growth and progress' of UP and propel the state towards the exalted status of the most developed state in the country. (The writer is Deputy Chief Minister of UP; views are personal)



KESHAV PRASAD MAURYA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FINDING FUNDS FOR FREEBIES

Madam — Aprosop of the article 'Finding money for freebies: BJP faces an uphill task' (March 1), the statistical analysis and approach towards the funding of freebies is very realistic and compels the new BJP government to salvage the economy of the Capital. It is really challenging to mobilise the whopping revenue expenditure of Rs 20,100 crores on the promised direct cash transfer of Rs 2500 per month to women, Rs 3150 crores on cash assistance to the pregnant women, Rs 2500 crores on LPG cylinder subsidy, and Rs 30000 crores on education. Central funding of Rs 55000 crore is imperative. These figures are staggering and more than half the revenue expenditure budget of the Delhi state government. Many of the beneficiaries may not be deserving and needy of the freebies, but it can't be debated now and one section of people is providing resources for the others. Since it is a double-engine government, the central funding is a certainty.

However, the other state governments will expect the same level of funding from the Union government. However, the local municipal corporations must be asked for self-reliance and mobilise their own resources. There should be separate autonomous development authorities for Dwarka, Rohini and East Delhi. Earlier arrangements of separate MCDs for North, South and East Delhi were doing well and should be restored. The Delhi government should raise circle rates and stamp duties for properties as the market values have risen phenomenally. Liquor shops should be under government control without any licenses to private vendors and more taxes should be imposed on liquor consumption. New mandis, commercial, and industrial complexes should be constructed for raising additional resources.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

SEBI GETS NEW CHAIRMAN

Madam — Tuhin Kanta Pandey, the former Finance and Revenue Secretary, was appointed as the new chairman of the SEBI. The new appointment is crucial as the for-

Decriminalise Indian politics



It is with reference to the editorial "Lawbreakers as Lawmakers." It is time to eradicate the influence of criminality in Indian politics. The rising number of elected representatives with criminal backgrounds in Parliament and State Assemblies is a matter of deep concern to all law-abiding and right-minded citizens. The increasing trend is dangerous and has steadily been eating into the vitals of democratic polity along with the growing corruption of a humongous

nature. Good governance gets seriously undermined when, for instance, criminals, gangsters, or mafia dons become the political bosses of bureaucrats and subvert the system to serve their interests. In 2005 the Supreme Court ruled that a sitting MP or MLA will be disqualified from contesting the election if convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more by a court of law.

The growing dependence of political parties on criminals for muscle power and electability must be stopped. It is high time all political parties came together and developed a consensus on keeping criminals—some with serious charges including kidnapping, rape, murder, grave corruption and crime against women—out of the system.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

US-UKRAINE TALKS FAIL

Madam — The abrupt failure of US-Ukraine talks underscores a troubling low in American diplomacy. Trump's insistence on securing indefinite rights to Ukraine's rare minerals in exchange for past aid—while rejecting Zelensky's request for security guarantees—was a blatant betrayal of trust. The talks' undiplomatic nature, with raised voices, Trump walking out and Zelensky skipping lunch, further damaged relations.

This shift signals that US commitments are now transactional, undermining credibility and emboldening adversaries like Russia. Such treatment of a war-torn ally weakens global trust in the US, proving that administration changes do not necessarily maintain the nation's moral or strategic responsibilities or commitments. The fallout from this episode will have lasting consequences on international alliances and geopolitical stability.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur



FIRST COLUMN

DEALING WITH EXAM ANXIETY

Embracing positive thinking, smart study habits and relaxation can make exams a breeze



SAKSHI SETHI

Examinations are integral to the educational system and are designed to assess students' knowledge, understanding and skills. However, for many students, exams are a source of significant anxiety, leading to stress, reduced performance, and even physical or emotional distress. Overcoming exam anxiety requires a combination of psychological strategies, effective study techniques, and a supportive environment. By adopting a proactive approach, students can transform their exam experiences from overwhelming to manageable.

There is no denying that exam anxiety is real, but so is one's resilience. The anxiety can stem from various factors, including fear of failure, high expectations from parents or teachers, past negative experiences, or inadequate preparation. Symptoms of exam anxiety range from nervousness, restlessness and even difficulty concentrating to physical manifestations such as headaches, nausea and rapid heartbeat. Recognising these symptoms is the first step in overcoming exam-related stress. Dealing with exam stress can be a heavy load and can often make an individual feel lonely. A crucial aspect of managing exam anxiety is cultivating a positive attitude toward examinations. Students need to view exams as opportunities to demonstrate their learning rather than threats to their self-worth. A growth mindset can improve only through effort and practice and can significantly reduce anxiety. Use of positive affirmations such as "I am prepared" or "I can handle this challenge" can boost confidence. Additionally, normalising mistakes and failures as part of the learning process can help students overcome the fear of underperformance. One of the primary reasons for exam anxiety is inadequate preparation. Implementing effective study strategies can enhance confidence and performance. Creating a well-structured study schedule can help prevent last-minute cramming and ensure thorough coverage of subjects. Active



learning techniques, such as summarisation, mind mapping and teaching concepts to peers can also help retain information better. Practicing with past exam papers and taking mock tests can familiarise students with the exam pattern, reducing uncertainty and nervousness. Relaxation techniques can significantly reduce exam-related stress and improve focus. Deep breathing exercises, mindfulness meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation can help calm the mind before and during exams. Engaging selves in physical activities such as yoga, stretching, or even a short walk can release tension and improve concentration. Ensuring adequate sleep, maintaining a balanced diet, and staying hydrated contribute to overall wellbeing, making students more resilient to stress. A supportive environment at home and school plays a vital role in alleviating exam anxiety. In today's competitive environment, it becomes important for parents to encourage their children rather than pressurise them with unrealistic expectations. Study groups and discussions with peers can provide moral support and motivation, making exam preparation a less isolating experience.

What plays the most vital role is on the day of the exam, where students, by following simple yet effective strategies, can stay calm and focused. Following strategies such as arriving early, taking deep breaths, and engaging in light stretching before entering the examination hall can help reduce nervousness. Managing time effectively by allocating specific minutes to each question can help prevent panic. If anxiety arises during the exam, taking a few moments to pause, taking deep breaths, and refocusing can help prevent stress from escalating. Exam anxiety is a common challenge faced by students, but it can be effectively managed through self-awareness, positive thinking, strategic preparation, relaxation techniques, and a supportive environment. Ultimately, overcoming exam anxiety is not just about securing good grades but also about developing resilience and lifelong learning skills.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Is Forest Rights Act driving deforestation?



B K SINGH

Despite its noble intent to secure the livelihoods of tribals, the Forest Rights Act has inadvertently opened the door to rampant deforestation and widespread encroachment

The law has been enacted to confer rights over the use of forest lands by individual tribal or forest dwellers under their occupation on the prescribed cutoff date. Besides the individual rights, there is also provision for community rights over certain forests for benefits of collection of usufructs like beedi leaves, minor forest produces, grazing, fishing etc. and rights can also be conferred to the communities for sustainable management of forest resources.

But the rights can be granted only when they are in actual possession of the forest land or have been enjoying the usufructs or sustainably managing the forest resources on or before 13-12-2005 for tribal and three generations (75 years) before this date for other traditional forest dwellers (OTFDs). Despite opposition from foresters, conservationists and environmentalists the law was enacted by the UPA government supported by left parties in 2005. This was followed by notifying the rules and the implementation from January 1, 2008.

Dipak Sarmah who succeeded me as the head of Karnataka Forest Department on my superannuation has observed on page 154 of his book titled, 'Forests Of Karnataka - Why And How Of Where They Are', "Most of the benefits that had accrued in the forests since the 1980s by way of forest consolidation due to implementation of Forest (Conservation) Act appear to have been nullified as a result of the implementation of the Forest Rights Act. The ominous signs of fragmentation and loss of forests are already discernible in a number of states as evident from the biennial India State of Forest Reports published by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.

A clearer picture will emerge in about a decade or so, by which time we would come to realise the true impact of the Forest Rights Act on our forests. But it may be then too late to retrieve the losses. Foresters alone cannot prevent the unauthorised removal of trees and the destruction of forests. Villagers set fire to burn the wood and grab the land. Forests are perpetually subjected to encroachments with the support of local leaders. Even if police presence is ensured and the community's resistance is bulldozed while removing encroachments, the problem resurfaces and lands are again grabbed. Political leaders question the removal of cultivation when land is devoid of tree growth. Fresh plantations are damaged and the forest area is re-encroached. Practically all encroachments till 25th October 1980, when the Forest (Conservation) Act came into operation were already regularised by the Union Government.

The Act was operational from 2008 with the new cutoff date of 13-12-2005. It was only the vote bank; the OTFDs were brought in to benefit from the legislation though their encroachments till 25th October 1980 were regularised. It can be understood that OTFDs cannot have more than a generation-old encroachment on the new cutoff date, yet a floodgate of forest destruction was opened for them. Without having any consideration for the ecological security of the country, OTFDs went on a rampage, cleared the fresh tree growth, occupied lands and claimed rights. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the nodal agency for implementation took up several reviews to monitor the progress of the



FOREST AREAS GIVEN FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF GRAM SABHAS HAVE BEEN DEVASTATED, DEGRADED AND FRAGMENTED. THERE ARE PATCHES OF BAMBOO FORESTS IN MEDHA LEKHA GRAM SABHA WHERE ALL BAMBOO CLUMPS WERE CLEARED IN ONE STROKE IN 2012

states, further diluting the provisions in 2012 to ignore the only scientific evidence of satellite imagery interpretation among the evidence to be relied on in support of the claim. The claims of the tribal community, who had only to prove the occupation as of December 2005 were easily acceptable initially, but that too is now two decades old. Left-leaning forces and NGOs fought for claim cases of individual forest rights (IFR), community forest rights (CFR) and rights to manage the forest resources sustainably. This has accelerated the deforestation. IFRs have already been granted to 2.2 million tribal and OTFDs, covering nearly 5 million ha of forest land. Several activists have written articles in newspapers and magazines showing a satisfactory performance over the grant of IFRs and suggesting the states focus their attention on CFRs and grant of forest rights for sustainable management to avail the provisions that have been neglected by the states so far. The estimates of the activists suggest that 30 million hectare forest lands comprising more than 40 per cent of the total forest area can be granted for CFRs and sustainable management. They further argue that if this is done, it has the potential to secure the rights and livelihood of 200 million people including 90 million tribal. Local press in Hyderabad has recently brought out that seven lakh acres of forests have been occupied in 2022-23 and claims over four lakh acres for tribal were approved in Telangana before the 2023 Assembly election. State machineries have accepted the claims overlooking the reports of the concerned divisional forest officer. J Ramesh, Nature Friends

Environmental Development Society, Hyderabad, accused the state of pressuring officials for recognition of rights to ineligible individuals resulting in large-scale deforestation leading to the scam of unprecedented proportion.

There are reports from Rampachodavaram Forests division, Rajamundri (AP) that tribal department officials are granting rights in Papikonda National Park for money. A retired IFS M Padamanaba Reddy has filed a PIL for the scam. In February 2019, just before the Lok Sabha polls, states moved the Supreme Court to review its order of eviction of rejected IFR claims and allow them to re-verify. The court accepted it, but so far the states have not concluded and continue to accept the fresh claims. What signal does it send down the line?

The Act has provided unlimited time for filing claims and deforestation and bringing the land under plough can continue. No one has any concern about the ecological security of the country. It is to be understood that all rejected claimants are in occupation of the forest land, where they have already been successful in deforesting and clearing the area. More rejected claims are encouraged, and more deforestation takes place.

The only place where the CFRs and rights to manage the forests sustainably have been granted is the Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra. Section 3-1 (i) of FRA 2006 is relevant here, where rights can be granted to villages of Gram Sabha who have the experience of managing the area sustainably. Further the requirement of Section 4 (3) of the Act is also

essential for the grant of rights i.e. they should have the resource as on 13-12-2005 for tribal and 75 years before this date for OTFDs. Management rights have been granted in many Gram Sabhas of Gadchiroli overlooking both the provisions.

Activists are taking this example all over the country and pressing for a repeat of this. This has been frequently quoted example in articles and papers. What these authors have been hiding is the destruction of forests. Forest areas given for the sustainable management of Gram Sabhas have been devastated, degraded and fragmented.

There are patches of bamboo forests in Medha Lekha Gram Sabha where all bamboo clumps were cleared in one stroke in 2012. Forest officers were physically prevented from entering the area. Bamboo has not responded well to the clear feeling. The fresh regeneration is bushy and does not yield any usable bamboo culm. It yielded certain culms every four years when it was managed by the Forest Department.

The management of Medha Lekha Gram Sabha has not been sustainable and the area has not yielded culms in 2016, 2020 and 2024. Taking a cue from Madha Lekha, other Gram Sabhas have also started clear felling and over-exploitation of the resource. Further, the revenue realised from the sale proceeds has not been ploughed back for fresh regeneration activities and the management has become completely unsustainable.

(The writer is Retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Karnataka; views are personal)

The integral role of phygital in shaping India's rural economy

The emerging phygital model—merging the tangible strengths of traditional systems with the efficiency of digital innovation—is redefining growth

With over 1.4 billion inhabitants, India's economic landscape has evolved dramatically in recent years. Yet, while urban centres boom, the nation's rural heartland—home to around 908.8 million people as of 2022—continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the country's potential. Although initiatives like Digital India have ushered the country into a digital era with 806 million active internet users by February 2025, technology alone cannot resolve deep-seated infrastructural challenges. This is where the phygital model—a fusion of physical and digital elements—steps in to bridge the divide and ensure balanced growth. A New Era: The Phygital Approach



SAMEER MATHUR

Phygital combines the tangible benefits of traditional systems with the efficiency of digital technology, creating a hybrid framework that enhances accessibility, empowers local businesses, and fosters inclusive growth. In rural regions, where infrastructural deficits and resource limitations persist, phygital strategies are not about replacing established

methods but rather integrating them with modern digital solutions. This approach is proving transformative across key sectors such as banking, commerce, agriculture, healthcare, and public services.

Driving Financial Inclusion For years, traditional banking models have struggled to serve India's vast rural expanses. High operational costs, challenging geography, and low financial literacy have hampered efforts to bring modern financial services to remote communities.

While FinTech has broadened access through digital banking, a fully digital approach can alienate those who lack familiarity with smartphones or online transactions. The phygital model addresses these gaps by merging digital convenience with physical touchpoints.

Systems like Aadhaar-enabled Payment Systems (AePS), micro-ATMs, and local banking correspondents empower rural residents to conduct transactions, access credit, and secure subsidies without the need for continuous internet connectivity. In many villages, Customer Service Points (CSPs) provide essential in-person support, guiding users as they gradually transition to digital financial solutions. Furthermore, partnerships between FinTech companies and local kirana stores or post offices have effectively transformed these outlets into mini banking hubs.

This integration allows people to withdraw cash, pay bills, and transfer money within their



locality, bypassing the need to travel long distances to bank branches and operating beyond standard banking hours. The result is a significant leap forward in achieving comprehensive financial inclusion.

Reinvigorating Rural Commerce

E-commerce has revolutionised urban shopping by altering customer habits and payment methods, but rural

consumers still rely heavily on cash transactions. A completely digital model often fails to resonate with these communities. Instead, the phygital model has emerged as an effective alternative by combining the reach of online platforms with the trust of local, physical commerce. Local kirana stores are increasingly functioning as pick-up points for online orders, ensuring that digital transactions are accessible even to those without digital payment capabilities.

Assisted commerce kiosks further support rural shoppers by helping them browse products, place orders, and make payments—often in cash—thereby bridging the gap between digital platforms and traditional retail.

Transforming Agriculture Agriculture remains the backbone of India's rural economy, providing livelihoods for more than 42 per cent of the population and contributing around 18.2 per cent to the nation's GDP. However, farmers have long contended with issues such as limited market access, dependence on intermediaries, and unpredictable weather. Phygital solutions are beginning to address these challenges by integrating digital tools with conventional agricultural practices. Platforms like eNAM enable farmers to compare prices and market their produce directly, thus reducing reliance on middlemen. At the same time, traditional mandi networks continue to play an essential role in the trading process.

By ensuring that digital marketplaces and physical trading hubs operate in tandem, the phygital approach provides farmers with a more balanced and effective route to market. **Enhancing Essential Services** Beyond commerce and agriculture, phygital innovations are making significant strides in healthcare and public service delivery. Rural communities have traditionally faced barriers to accessing quality healthcare. Now, telemedicine kiosks supported by trained health workers enable remote consultations with specialists, while mobile health units equipped with diagnostic tools bring medical care directly to remote areas. (The writer is Managing Director and Founder of Roinet Solution; views are personal)

UK, France, Ukraine agree to work on ceasefire plan for war in Ukraine

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer says Britain, France and Ukraine have agreed to work on a ceasefire plan to present to the United States.



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer (right) greets French President Emmanuel Macron as he arrives for a summit on Ukraine at Lancaster House in London, on Sunday. AP/PTI

The prime minister told the BBC he believes the US president wants a durable peace in Ukraine. He repeated his assertion that American security guarantees will be needed to make it stick.

The meeting at Lancaster House, a 200-year-old elegant mansion near Buckingham Palace, follows a charm offensive last week to engage with Trump at the White House to put Ukraine at the centre of negotiations and tilt his allegiances toward Europe.

Europe has been uneasy since Trump initiated direct peace talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who had been isolated by most Western leaders since invading Ukraine three years ago.

to take a leading role in implementing any credible peace deal," said Rachel Ellehuus, director-general of Royal United Services Institute, a defence and security think tank.

Private lunar lander Blue Ghost aces moon touchdown

PTI ■ CAPE CANAVERAL (US)



A private lunar lander carrying a drill, vacuum and other experiments for NASA touched down on the moon Sunday, the latest in a string of companies looking to kick-start business on Earth's celestial neighbour ahead of astronaut missions.

Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost lander descended from lunar orbit on autopilot, aiming for the slopes of an ancient volcanic dome in an impact basin on the moon's northeastern edge of the near side.

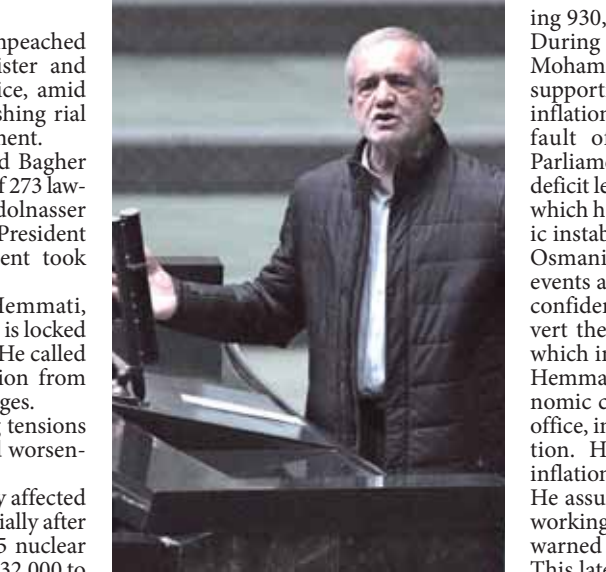
providing extra stability, according to the company. Launched in mid-January from Florida, the lander carried 10 experiments to the moon for NASA. The space agency paid USD 101 million for the delivery, plus USD 44 million for the science and tech on board.

moonwalkers, who got it caked all over their spacesuits and equipment. On its way to the moon, Blue Ghost beamed back exquisite pictures of the home planet. The lander continued to stun once in orbit around the moon, with detailed shots of the moon's gray pockmarked surface.

Iran's parliament fires minister of economy over plummeting rial, mismanagement

PTI ■ TEHRAN

Iran's parliament on Sunday impeached the country's economy minister and voted to remove him from office, amid growing concerns over the crashing rial and accusations of mismanagement.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during an open session of parliament for impeachment of his Finance Minister Abdolnasser Hemmati, in Tehran, Iran, on Sunday. AP/PTI

ing 930,000 rials for each dollar. During the impeachment proceedings, Mohammad Qasim Osmani, a lawmaker supporting Hemmati, argued that rising inflation and exchange rates were not the fault of the current government or Parliament.



As the sun sets, Palestinians sit at a large table surrounded by the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings as they gather for iftar, the fast-breaking meal, on the first day of Ramadan in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip. PTI

US moves naval fleet to S Korea following missile tests by North

PTI ■ SEOUL

A US aircraft carrier arrived in South Korea on Sunday in a show of force, days after North Korea test-launched cruise missiles to demonstrate its counterattack capabilities.

Pope gets visit from Vatican secretary of state

PTI ■ ROME

A stable Pope Francis had a visit Sunday from the Vatican secretary of state as he continued his recovery from double pneumonia, the Vatican said, but again skipped his weekly noon blessing to avoid even a brief public appearance from the hospital.



A nun prays at the Vatican at the time when Pope Francis would usually bestow his blessing in Rome. AP/PTI

The Sunday appointment delivering the Angelus prayer in person. He could have done so from his 10th floor hospital suite at the Gemelli hospital if he were well enough.

of danger. He was eating and drinking and continued his respiratory physiotherapy, and spent 20 minutes in his private chapel down the hall on Saturday, the Vatican said.

Syrians begin fasting during Ramazan without Assad family

PTI ■ DAMASCUS

Some restaurants and coffee shops in Syria were closed during the day on Saturday while others opened as usual as observant Muslims began fasting during the holy month of Ramazan, the first since the fall of Assad family rule in the war-torn country.

government under former insurgent leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, has been in control and many fear that the country could turn into an Islamic state, although al-Sharaa has so far promised to respect religious minorities.

with a US-brokered ceasefire that went into effect in late November. In the Gaza Strip, a fragile ceasefire deal, which has paused over 15 months of war between Israel and Hamas, nears the end of its first phase, and many Palestinians ate their first iftar in the middle of the rubble where their houses used to be.

US court rules head of watchdog agency must keep his job

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The head of a federal watchdog agency must remain in his job, a judge in Washington ruled on Saturday, saying President Donald Trump's bid to remove the special counsel was unlawful.

US District Judge Amy Berman Jackson sided with Hampton Dellinger, who leads the Office of Special Counsel, in a legal battle over the president's authority to oust the head of the independent agency that's legally headed back to the US Supreme Court.

Dellinger sued Trump last month after he was fired, even though the law says special counsels can be removed by the president "only for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office," Jackson, who was nominated to the bench by Democratic president Barack Obama, quickly reinstated Dellinger in the job while he

pursued his case. Jackson rejected the Trump administration's claims that the special counsel's removal protections are unconstitutional because they prevent the president from rightfully installing his preferred agency head.

The judge said allowing the president to remove the special counsel at will would have a chilling effect on his crucial duties, which include guarding the federal workforce from illegal personnel actions, such as retaliation for whistleblowing.

"The Special Counsel is supposed to withstand the winds of political change and help ensure that no government servant of either party becomes the subject of prohibited employment practices or faces reprisals for calling out wrongdoing — by holdovers from a previous administration or by officials of the new one," Jackson wrote in her decision.

The Justice Department quickly filed court papers indicating it will challenge the ruling to Washington's federal appeals court. The case has already gone up once to the Supreme Court, which previously temporarily allowed Dellinger to remain in his job.

The ruling comes as Dellinger is challenging the removal of probationary workers who were fired as part of the Trump administration's massive overhaul of the government. A federal board on Tuesday halted the terminations of several probationary workers after Dellinger said their firings may have been unlawful.

"I'm glad and grateful to see the court confirm the importance and legality of the job protections Congress afforded my position," Dellinger said in a statement on Saturday. "My efforts to protect federal employees generally, and whistleblowers in particular,

from unlawful treatment will continue."

The judge said the special counsel has a "unique status and mission," which requires independence from the president to ensure he can carry out his responsibilities. The office investigates whistleblower claims of reprisal, can pursue disciplinary action against employees who punish whistleblowers and provides a channel for employees to disclose government wrongdoing.

"If I don't have independence, if I can be removed for no good reason, federal employees are going to have no good reason to come to me," Dellinger told reporters outside Washington's federal courthouse after a recent hearing.

The Office of Special Counsel is also responsible for enforcing the Hatch Act, which restricts the partisan political activities of government work-

ers. Dellinger's firing came as Trump administration employees have touted their support on social media for his policies even though the Hatch Act is meant to restrict political advocacy while on duty.

The Justice Department employed sweeping language in urging the Supreme Court last month to allow the termination of the head of an obscure federal agency with limited power. Acting Solicitor General Sarah Harris wrote in court papers that the lower court had crossed "a constitutional red line" by blocking Dellinger's firing and stopping Trump "from shaping the agenda of an executive-branch agency in the new administration's critical first days."

Dellinger was appointed by Democratic President Joe Biden and confirmed by the Senate to a five-year term in 2024.

Yawning wealth gap widening inequalities in China: Report

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's wealthiest individuals continue to grow richer, widening economic inequalities in the country despite the ruling Communist Party's efforts to control private businesses and implement policies aimed at boosting people's incomes, a report here said.

The combined wealth of the 5.12 million families in China with over six million yuan (USD 824,000) in assets was stated to be about 150 trillion yuan (over USD seven trillion) in 2024, according to a report published by the Hurun Research Institute.

Of this, the wealthiest 130,000 families accounted for 58 per cent in 2024, which is up from 56 per cent a year earlier, the report said.

China's per capita disposable income was stated to be 41,314 yuan (over USD 41,314) last year, up 5.3 per cent from 2023, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported, citing the report.

Analysts have warned that Beijing needs to work harder to narrow the wealth gap in society more broadly as it tries to ignite a private sector-led economic recovery, the Post reported on Sunday.

The country is grappling with weak consumption and a languishing property sector, where the rich park most of their assets.

Much of the economic strain is being felt by those in the mid-

dle and lower-middle classes, it said.

As a result, the overall consumption essential to halt the economic slowdown grew by just 3.5 per cent last year, a rate that was slower than the 5 per cent rise in GDP, suggesting that the income and wealth gaps were holding back spending. The growing inequality was reflected in the national Gini coefficient, which was 0.467 in 2022 when the National Bureau of Statistics last updated the number.

A Gini coefficient of 0 reflects perfect income and wealth equality, while 1 reflects maximal inequality, where a single individual has all the income while all others have none.

The yawning wealth gap was also apparent in data from Shenzhen-based China Merchants Bank (CMB), one of the country's biggest domestic wealth management-focused lenders.

CMB said that about 2.3 per cent of its accounts held roughly 81 per cent of the total private banking assets at the institution in 2023, representing a highly unequal distribution, the Post reported.

The Hurun report is published ahead of the upcoming annual Parliament session of the National People's Congress (NPC), which begins its two-week-long session from March 5, during which several legislations to boost the country's economy were expected to be approved.

The NPC would meet along with the advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), to deliberate on the state of the economy and the country's strategic challenges arising out of US President Donald Trump starting a second stint in power.

Trump said he planned to slap new 10 per cent tariffs on goods from China, escalating trade fights with Beijing.

Already, Chinese goods were hit by 10 per cent tariffs by Trump earlier this month. During his election campaign, he threatened to slap 60 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods to address US concerns over fentanyl, a potent opioid drug blamed for widespread drug addiction in the US.

In a bid to boost the sagging economy, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Feb 17 held a rare meeting with the country's top corporate leaders, including e-commerce giant Alibaba founder Jack Ma, and urged them to unleash their talents to shore up sagging business confidence in the country to reverse the economic slowdown.

Xi's meeting with leaders of the top corporate houses came amid a severe ebb in private sector morale prompted by a volatile mix of economic issues, including heightened geopolitical tensions with the US and harsh regulatory crackdowns on some of the country's business firms.

Prez Trump signs order designating English as official language of US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has signed an executive order designating English as the official language of the United States.

The order allows government agencies and organizations that receive federal funding to choose whether to continue to offer documents and services in language other than English. It rescinds a mandate from former President Bill Clinton that required the government and organizations that received federal funding to provide language assistance to non-English speakers.

"Establishing English as the official language will not only streamline communication but also reinforce shared national values, and create a more cohesive and efficient society," according to the order signed by Trump on Saturday.

"In welcoming new Americans, a policy of encouraging the learning and adoption of our national language will make the United States a shared home and empower new citizens to achieve the American dream," the order also states. "Speaking English not only opens doors economically, but it helps newcomers engage in their communities, participate in national traditions, and give back to our society."

More than 30 states have already passed laws designating English as their official language, according to US English, a group that advocates for making English the official language in the United States.

For decades, lawmakers in Congress have introduced legislation to designate English as the official language of the US, but those efforts have not succeeded.

Within hours of Trump's inauguration last month, the new administration took down the Spanish language version of the official White House website.

Hispanic advocacy groups and others expressed confusion and frustration at the change. The White House said at the time it was committed to bringing the Spanish language version of the website back online. As of Saturday, it was still not restored.

The White House did not immediately respond to a message about whether that would happen. Trump shut down the Spanish version of the website during his first term. It was restored when President Joe Biden was inaugurated in 2021.

Anti-DOGE protests at Tesla stores target Elon Musk's bottom line

PTI ■ BOSTON

Demonstrators gathered outside Tesla stores across the US Saturday to protest the automaker's billionaire CEO, Elon Musk, and his push to slash government spending on behalf of President Donald Trump.

The demonstrations are part of a growing backlash in North America and Europe to Musk's disruptive role

up at showrooms everywhere and boycotting Tesla and telling everyone else to get out, sell your stocks, sell your Teslas."

Musk is taking direction from Trump to slash federal spending and sharply reduce the workforce, arguing that Trump's victory gave the president and him a mandate to restructure the US government. DOGE officials have swiftly gained access to sensitive databases, direct-

ment more efficient and more accountable to the hardworking American taxpayers across the country," said White House spokesperson Harrison Fields.

Tesla did not respond to an emailed request for comment.

More than 50 demonstrations were listed Saturday on the website Tesla Takedown, with more planned later in March from coast to coast in the United States along with England, Spain and Portugal. News reports showed demonstrations in recent days in US cities including Tucson, Arizona; St. Louis; New York City; Dayton, Ohio; Charlotte; and Palo Alto, California. Some Tesla owners have also reported their vehicles vandalized with spray painted swastikas amid what Jewish groups and observers fear is a rise in anti-semitism.



Demonstrators are arrested by NYPD officers during a protest against Elon Musk and Tesla outside of a Tesla showroom in New York. PTI

in Washington. Critics of Trump and Musk hope to discourage and stigmatise purchases of Tesla, the electric car company that is the world's most valuable automaker. Liberal groups for weeks have organized anti-Tesla protests in hopes of galvanizing opposition to Musk's Department of Government Efficiency and energising Democrats still demoralized by Trump's November victory.

"We can get back at Elon," said Nathan Phillips, a 58-year-old ecologist from Newton, Massachusetts, who was protesting in Boston on Saturday. "We can impose direct economic damage on Tesla by showing

ed thousands of federal job cuts, cancelled contracts and shut down sections of the government, including the US Agency for International Development.

Musk's critics say his actions defy Congress's power to control the US budget and present a host of ways for him to enrich himself. Musk leads several other companies, notably SpaceX, which conducts launches for NASA and the intelligence community, and the social media platform X.

"Protests will not deter President Trump and Elon Musk from delivering on the promise to establish DOGE and make our federal gov-

Federal prosecutors charged a woman in connection with a string of vandalism against a Colorado Tesla dealership, which included Molotov cocktails being thrown at vehicles and the words "Nazi cars" spray painted on the building.

Saturday's demonstration in Boston had a festive atmosphere, with a brass band playing music as protesters carried signs and chanted. Several of the signs mocked Musk and DOGE, with one reading: "Stop Elon and his despicable Musk rats."

"This government led by Trump and Musk, it's gone completely off the rails and we are here to stop that," said Carina Campovasso, a retired federal worker. "And I hope they listen." About 300 demonstrators protested at a Tesla dealership in New York City on Saturday. Police said nine people were taken into custody but did not elaborate on the charges they faced.

Tesla's share price has fallen by nearly a third since Trump took office, though it's still higher than it was a year ago. Musk's current net worth is an estimated \$359 billion, according to Forbes, which calculated his 2024 net worth as \$195 billion.



A man rides a Penny-farthing bicycle down the Mall towards Buckingham Palace in London on Sunday. AP/PTI

Imran Khan seeks global help for democracy, regional stability

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan has appealed to the international community, particularly the United States, to reaffirm its commitment to democracy, human rights, and regional stability.

Dawn reported that in an article published in Time magazine in his name, the incarcerated politician congratulated US President Donald Trump on his "political comeback".

He also expressed the hope that the US would work with Pakistan to foster economic partnerships, promote stability, and prevent conditions that lead to conflict and extremism.

It remains unclear if the article was indeed penned by Khan, and how it was delivered to the magazine.

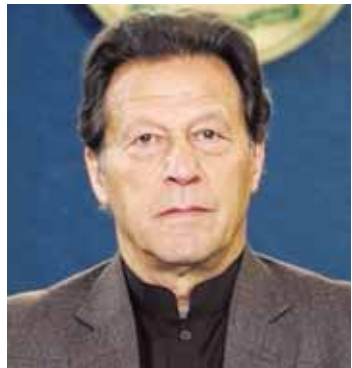
Khan reflected on the "political turmoil" in Pakistan and his ongoing fight for democracy. He expressed deep concern over the alleged erosion of democracy in the country, describing the current period as one of the most challenging in the nation's history.

He underscored that his imprisonment and the charges brought against him were politically motivated attempts to stifle his advocacy for democratic principles.

He claimed his struggle was not personal but addressed the broader

issue of democracy, which had far-reaching consequences, not only for the country but also for regional and global stability.

Given Pakistan's strategic importance, Khan emphasised that the international community must recognise the urgency of addressing the crisis.



On the issue of terrorism, Khan criticised the government for diverting resources from crucial counterterrorism efforts to pursue a political vendetta against Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI).

Regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, which have seen an uptick in terrorist activity, were neglected in favour of "military campaigns against political opponents".

The judiciary, Khan alleged, had been reduced to a tool of political persecution.

Speaking on the DawnNews TV show 'Doosra Rukh' on Saturday, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Chairman Irfan Siddiqui said the PTI was "impossible to predict".

The party was suggesting alliances while simultaneously calling for civil disobedience, sending letters and publishing "explosive" articles in Time magazine, the PML-N senator said.

While discussing the talks with the PTI, Senator Siddiqui said it was impossible to present options during the talks as they did not assess them at any forum; rather, their decisions came straight from Khan.

He said the PTI did not know what they were doing until they received instructions from Khan.

"When Imran ordered 'no more talks', the PTI committee was completely caught off guard," he said.

Asked if the PTI wanted to continue negotiations despite Imran's instructions, he responded in the affirmative. "I remember (PTI Chairman) Gohar Ali Khan went to see Imran, and when he returned, there were still three or four days left before the deadline to meet their demands. Still, they said no more talks."

Officials concerned about militant attack in Karachi

PTI ■ KARACHI

A hand grenade attack on a police station in Karachi has left senior officials concerned whether insurgent groups from Balochistan or the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have become active in Pakistan's biggest city. Despite the ongoing terror attacks carried out by the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) or the TTP in other parts of Pakistan, Karachi has largely remained peaceful in recent times.

On Friday evening, unidentified men on two motorcycles hurled at least three hand grenades at the Preedy police station in Saddar town, injuring four policemen and damaging the outer building.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) South Syed Asad Raza said the people who hurled the grenades had still not been identified as they sped away on their bikes in the narrow lanes after the attack. "The injured policemen were moved to a hospital where their condition is out of danger," he said.

Bomb Disposal Squad experts said three grenades were detonated in the attack.

Reza said in the past the criminal gangs in Lyari used hand grenades to attack police stations and mobile vans. Reza said the attack alerted police and security personnel as there had been very few such cases in Karachi.

The official said they had intelligence reports saying the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have recently made videos in Karachi, and some of the suspected militants were also apprehended in the city.

Child dies of Ebola in Uganda, raising concern over surveillance

PTI ■ KAMPALA

A 4-year-old child became the second person to die of Ebola in Uganda, the World Health Organisation has said, in a setback for health officials who had hoped for a quick end to the outbreak that began at the end of January.

The child had been hospitalised at the main referral facility in Kampala, the capital of the East African country, and died Tuesday, the WHO office in Uganda said in a brief statement on Saturday. The statement said WHO and others are working to strengthen surveillance and contact tracing.

There were no other details about the death and local health officials were not commenting on the case.

The death undermines Ugandan officials' assertions of an outbreak under control after eight Ebola patients were discharged earlier in February. The first victim was a male nurse who died the day before the outbreak was declared on Jan 30. He had sought treatment at multiple facilities in Kampala and in eastern Uganda, where he also visited a traditional healer in trying to

diagnose his illness, before later dying in Kampala.

The successful treatment of eight patients who had been contacts of that man, including some of his relatives, had left local health officials anticipating the end of the outbreak. But they are still investigating its source.

Tracing contacts is key to stemming the spread of Ebola, and there are no approved vaccines for the Sudan strain of Ebola that's infecting people in Uganda.

Over 20,000 travellers are screened daily for Ebola at Uganda's different border crossing points, according to WHO, which supports the work.

The WHO has given Uganda at least USD 3 million to support its Ebola response, but there have been concerns about adequate funding in the wake of the US administration's decision to terminate 60% of USAID's foreign aid contracts. Dithan Kiragga, executive director of the Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation, a non-governmental group that supports Ebola surveillance in Uganda, told The Associated Press on

Friday that his group had stopped its work supporting local health authorities in screening travelling passengers after the termination of its contract with USAID.



CHANGE OF NAME

I, Anil Kumar S/o Shri Ram Avadh R/o A-1175, Indira Marg Mandawali Fazalpur Delhi-110092 declare that I have Changed my name from Anil Kumar Singh to Anil Kumar for all future Purposes.

PD(1606)C

I, Rinku Tiwari W/o Pranav Kumar Raju R/o G- 118 Sector Delta 2, Greater Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar have changed my name from Rinku to Rinku Tiwari for all future purposes.

PD(1607)C



YOGASANAS FOR BELLY FAT LOSS



SURYA NAMAKSARA:
A series of 12 asanas combined to form a perfect combination we call *sun salutation*. It is also known as the mother of all asanas. It starts with namaste and stretching the abdomen and then stretching the hamstrings bending forward and so on! The sequence we all know it, if you don't and are completely new to it, just google it. It will burn the fat faster resulting in a smooth and toned belly shape that every person desires when roaming beachside. There is and never be another substitute for *Surya Namaskar*. It helps in overall blood circulation in the body and stretching abdomen muscles resulting in good appetite and reduced bowel problems.

Tasty Recipe Using Pistachio



On the occasion of *World Pistachio Day*, Chefs have shared with *The Pioneer* delicious recipe that you can make using pistachios on behalf of *American Pistachio Growers*. *Pick Me Up Pista Bomb* is a recipe by *Chef Sanjeev Kapoor*, *Chocolate Pistachio Kunafa Cake* is by *Chef Shivesh Bhatia*. You can have a taste of all these dishes by preping the recipes:

Pick Me Up Pista Bomb By Chef Sanjeev Kapoor

On behalf of *American Pistachio Growers*, *Chef Sanjeev Kapoor* shares the recipe for *Pick Me Up Pista Bomb*.



INGREDIENTS
● 1 cup American Pistachios; ● ¼ cup brown sugar; ● 1 cup rolled oats, toasted; ● 1 cup puffed amaranth (rajgira); ● ¼ cup honey; ● ¼ tsp cinnamon powder

METHOD
● Dry roast American Pistachios for 3-4 minutes on medium heat. Switch the heat off and allow to cool slightly.
● Put the roasted pistachios in a food processor jar and process to a coarse mixture.
● Heat a non-stick pan. Add brown sugar and 2 tbsps water and cook till the sugar melts.
● Add rolled oats, puffed amaranth, and

coarsely processed pistachios. Add honey and cinnamon powder and mix till well combined. Transfer on to a plate and allow to cool slightly.
● Take small portions of the mixture with greased hands and roll each portion into a ball.
● Serve.



Chocolate Pistachio Kunafa Cake By Chef Shivesh Bhatia

On behalf of *American Pistachio Growers*, *Chef Shivesh Bhatia* shares the recipe for *Chocolate Pistachio Kunafa Cake*.

INGREDIENTS-
● 1 tbsp butter; ● 1 cup kunafa dough; ● 2 cups pistachios; 1 tbsp oil; ● 3 tbsps icing sugar; ● For assembly; ● 2 layers of chocolate sponge; ● Chocolate glaze

METHOD-
● Set a non-stick pan on medium heat and add butter to it.
● Once the butter has melted, add the kunafa dough and roast till it becomes golden brown. Set it aside.
● To make the pistachio paste, add California pistachios in a blender jar along

with oil and icing sugar.
● Pulse the entire mixture at regular intervals of about 1 minute until the pistachios start releasing some oil and turn into a paste.
● Combine this pistachio paste with the roasted kunafa to make the filling for the cake.
● To assemble the cake, place a layer of chocolate sponge on a stand or turn table.
● Spread the pistachio kunafa filling generously over the cake layer and sandwich it with another chocolate sponge.
● Now tightly wrap an acetate sheet around the assembled cake. Pour the chocolate glaze over the cake and pull the acetate sheet up to let the glaze drip down from all sides.

BY YASH GUPTA

Obesity is the most common problem among the elderly as well as the youth, the people and their lifestyle are forcing them to walk and have poor posture, which results in low confidence and prone to diseases. Due to sitting all day in front of a computer and workstations, it is obvious the belly from the button will say hello before you can speak. So, if you think there is a remedy that will burn the fat without you moving an inch, everyone would do it. It's better to choose your hard, either regret or discipline. Here we will look at the top 5 yoga asanas to reduce belly fat quickly. The flatter the stomach the more fabulous the life. Health is the new currency of the era. Make sure you own it and keep the wealth as long you live.

The author is an Art of Living faculty, meditation & mind coach, professional yoga trainer.



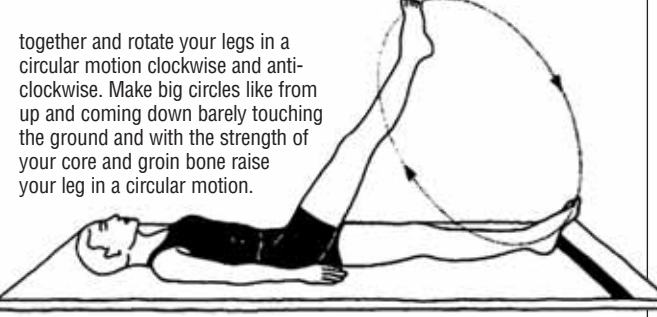
- Work on yourself, because it is the only thing that will stay,
- Work on yourself because it is the only thing you are working on at the end of the day.
- Work on yourself because you have to leave a legacy behind
- Work on yourself because this is how you win the mind.



NAUKASANA
Also known as the boat pose/posture. Looks very tough but with practice the core muscles function well and get those 3D abs. All you have to do is lie down on your back and lift your arms, feet, and eyes in the same line. At least 6 inches off from the ground, hold the position for at least 30 seconds, and later you can progress the number of times and for a longer duration. It promotes burning belly fat and building stabilized core muscles. Advisable to do an empty stomach and women on periods must avoid the asana. Make sure to continue breathing while holding onto the posture and relax in Shavasana very slowly.



PADA CHAKRASANA
One's favourite exercise for belly fat loss is *leg rotation*. It is indeed the most effective way to build a strong core. It works on every single muscle major and minor, from the torso to the hips.
Every muscle group is involved, working on the inner thighs and hip abductors. Just as above simply lie down with the same hand placement you have to do is keep your feet



together and rotate your legs in a circular motion clockwise and anti-clockwise. Make big circles like from up and coming down barely touching the ground and with the strength of your core and groin bone raise your leg in a circular motion.

PADA SANCHALANASANA
Let me simplify, cycling. You don't have to go for cycling outside. Just relax and lie down on your back place your palms on the ground for support (personal recommendation to put both your palms in a diamond shape under your lower back, gives you comfort) and lift



your legs. Start *cycling* and you will feel a lot of muscles saying "hello" and "save me" and if you are not used to this exercise "let's stop for now". Don't worry, until to trick your mind you will never achieve the rewards if keep listening to your mind. Do it for 15-20 seconds clockwise and 15-20 seconds anti-clockwise 2-3 times each. Works magic, but there is always a price to pay.

TAKE CARE OF:
When performing Pada Sanchalanasana keep in mind to maintain proper alignment of your spine, core muscles & leg movements with your breath to avoid strain on lower back.

Move Your Body, Lift Your Mind

Move Your Body, Lift Your Mind
In an era where stress, anxiety, and depression are becoming increasingly common, the role of physical activity in promoting mental well-being has never been more crucial. While most people may associate exercise with physical health, its impact on mental well-being is also quite significant- from managing stress, boosting one's mood and enhancing the overall well-being. Studies indicate that who exercises regularly have improved mental health, healthier cognitive functions, and enhanced emotional well-being.

But how this happens?
High levels of cortisol- a

primary hormone that body release in response to stress; can lead to increased anxiety and negatively impact your overall mental well-being. Engaging in regular exercise helps lower cortisol levels, making it easier to manage stress and maintain a balanced mood.
When you engage in physical activity, your body releases endorphins, those feel-good hormones that help reduce stress while increasing happiness and relaxation. They help relieve pain, relax, and lift mood. Exercise also promotes the production of serotonin and dopamine, neurotransmitters that play a key role in



regulating mood and preventing mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety.

Cognitive Benefits of Physical Activity
Not only emotional well-being but exercise is also beneficial for better cognitive function. Regular physical activity has been linked to improved memory, concentration, and problem-solving skills as it reduces stress and anxiety.
Regular exercise increases blood flow to the

brain, which enhances cognitive abilities and reduces the risk of neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease. Studies suggest that even moderate activities like walking or yoga can significantly enhance brain function and mental clarity.

— By Dr Parul Malhotra



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

Physical activity is undoubtedly beneficial for your body and brain. But have you heard of social and emotional benefits of it? Ever wondered how exercising gives you opportunities for social connections. Let's see- joining a dance class, gym or yoga sessions introduce you

to meet like-minded people. Exercising with them builds a sense of community, offering emotional support and motivation. If you are lucky enough, you might find people who through their positive energy inspire you to become better versions of yourselves.

