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concluding an interactive session at the institute, home to Royal Institute

The external affairs minister was in

London as in the first leg of his six-day visit to the UK and Ireland from

Tuesday that is aimed at exploring

ways to further boost bilateral

"We have seen the footage of a breach

of security during the visit of the

external affairs minister to the UK,"

ministry of external affairs

(MEA)spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal

"We condemn the provocative

activities of this small group of separatists and extremists," he said.

"We deplore the misuse of democratic

freedoms by such elements. We

expect the host government in such

cases to fully live up to their diplomatic obligations," Jaiswal

Videos posted on social media

showed a small group of pro-

Khalistan protesters holding yellow

flags were shouting slogans against

India and Jaishankar on the opposite

side of the road from Chatham House.

Continued on page 2

International Wednesday evening.

cooperation.

said.

added.

Affairs, on

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

NDIA BREACHED IN UK



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a conversation with Director and CEO of Bronwen Maddox at Chatham House in England

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ndia on Thursday took strong objection to a security breach during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to UK and "provocative condemned such activities." The incident took place in London on Wednesday during an event attended by the minister. A pro-Khalistani protestor attempted to break barricades while some were shouting anti-India slogans. Protestors also tore up the Indian flag. In a firm reaction, New Delhi said it expects the host government to fully live up to their diplomatic obligations in such cases and deplored the "misuse of democratic freedoms" by those elements.

The incident happened as Jaishankar was leaving the Chatham House after

Babbar Khalsa terrorist arrested BISWAJEET BANERJEE LUCKNOW

In a major counterterrorism operation, the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) and Punjab Police have arrested a suspected terrorist linked to Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) and Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI.

The suspect, identified as Lazar Masih, a resident of Kurlian village in Ramdas area of Amritsar, Punjab, was nabbed around 3.20 am in Uttar Pradesh's Kaushambi district.

Addressing a press conference in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Prashant Kumar said Masih had planned a major terrorist attack during the

Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. The Maha Kumbh was held at Prayagraj from January 13 to

February 26. "However, due to intensive security checks at the religious gathering, he failed to execute his plan," he said and added: "The arrest of the terrorist also

verifies smuggling of arms and drugs from Pakistan into India". He added the UP STF succeeded in recovering some explosives material and illegal arms from the terrorist. Among the seizures made are three active hand grenades, two active

detonators, one foreign-made pistol and 13 cartridges of foreign make, the officer said. Besides, a white coloured

explosive powder, an Aadhaar card

with a Ghaziabad address, one mobile phone without SIM card was also seized from his possession, he said.

According to security officials, Masih was actively working for Swaran Singh, also known as Jeevan Fauji, the head of BKI's Germany-based module. He was reportedly in direct contact with ISI handlers based in Pakistan.

Investigators revealed that Masih had escaped from judicial custody in Punjab on September 24, 2024, and had been evading arrest since then. His capture is being considered a breakthrough in significant preventing potential terrorist activities in India.

Continued on page 2

Rana seeks stay of extradition to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW YORK

Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana has moved an "emergency application" with the US Supreme Court against his extradition to India, claiming that he will be tortured there since he is a Muslim of Pakistani origin.

Rana, 64, a Čanadian national of Pakistani origin, is currently lodged at a metropolitan detention centre in Los Angeles. He is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 attacks.

Rana has filed an "Emergency Application For Stay" with the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States and Circuit Justice for the Ninth Circuit.

President Donald Trump last month announced that his administration approved the extradition of "very evil" Rana, wanted by Indian probe agencies for his role in the 26/11 attacks, "to face justice in India". This followed the rejection of his review petition by the Supreme Court in

January. Now, Rana is seeking a stay of his extradition and surrender to India pending litigation (including exhaustion of all appeals) on the merits of a petition he filed in February. In that petition, Rana argued that his extradition to India violates United States law and the United Nations Convention Against Torture "because there are substantial

grounds for believing that, if extradited to India, petitioner will be in danger of being subjected to torture."

The likelihood of torture in this case is even higher though as petitioner faces acute risk as a Muslim of Pakistani origin charged in the Mumbai attacks," the application said. The application also said that his "severe medical conditions" render extradition

to Indian detention facilities, a "de facto" death sentence It cited medical records from July 2024 showing that he has

multiple "acute and lifethreatening diagnoses", including multiple documented heart attacks, Parkinson's disease with cognitive decline, a mass suggestive of bladder cancer, stage 3 chronic kidney disease, and a history of chronic asthma, and multiple COVID-19 infections.

"Accordingly, "Accordingly, petitioner certainly has raised a credible, if not compelling, factual case that there are indeed substantial grounds for believing he would be in danger of torture if surrendered Indian to authorities.

"Further, because of his Muslim religion, his Pakistani origin, his status as a former member of the Pakistani Army, the relation of the putative charges to the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and his chronic health conditions he is even more likely to be tortured than otherwise would be the case, and that torture is very likely to kill him in short order." Continued on page 2

Trump issues last warning to Hamas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump on Wednesday issued what he called a "last warning" to Hamas to release all remaining hostages held in Gaza, directing a sharply worded message after the White House confirmed that he had recently dispatched an envoy for unprecedented direct talks

with the militant group. Trump, in a statement on his Truth Social platform soon after meeting at the White House with eight former hostages, added that he was "sending Israel everything it needs to finish the job."

"Release all of the Hostages now, not later, and immediately return all of the dead bodies of the people you murdered, or it is OVER for you," Trump said. "Only sick and twisted people keep bodies, and you are sick and twisted!"

The pointed language from Trump came after the White House said Wednesday that US officials have engaged in "ongoing talks" and discussions" with Hamas officials, stepping away from a long-held US policy of not directly engaging in the militant group. Continued on page 2

RSS ignites Marathi-Hindi fire in Mumbai Motor mouth cleric derides Shami

SENSEX 74,340.09 +0.83% 74,400 74.200 74,000 73.800-Prev close 73,730.2 73,600 73,400 т 12:00 pm 3:00 pm US\$ = 87.12 INR WEATHER

MARKETS



day or not. In case of Shami, he is on national duty and it is of paramount importance that his body remains hydrated during each game. So, drinking water or not keeping roza on match days is permissible," he said. Shami's coach, Mohammed Badruddin, dismissed the criticism, asserting that the

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Hours after he was pilloried by political leaders of all hues for his statement that "those coming to Mumbai from outside need not necessarily learn Marathi," a RSS chastened leader Bhaiyyaji Joshi on Thursday did a U-turn and said, the language of Mumbai Marathi and it is natural to expect living in the metropolis "to learn, understand and read Marathi". On a day when Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Uddhav Thackeray demanded that Bhaiyyaji Joshi be booked for sedition for his statement, Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis was forced to intervene in the matter and issue a statement in the state Assembly saying that "Marathi is the language of Mumbai and Maharashtra. It is an integral part of Maharashtra's heritage" and it will be "respected and preserved". Seeking to douse the political fire upleaded cultural fire unleashed by Joshi, Fadnavis made a categorical statement in the state Assembly. "Marathi is the Mumbai, language of Maharashtra. The state government and the people living here should adopt it. Marathi language is a part of the culture and identity of the state, and it should be the duty of every citizen to learn it. The Marathi language will be



the Sena (UBT) chief said. "Marathi is our state language, and such a statement amounts to treason. The statement is treason," Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said

"Bhaiyaji Joshi is trying to divide Mumbai on the issue of language. Kem cho, kem cho seems like this is the only thing that will be heard in Mumbai now," NCP (SP) group leader Jitendra Awhad said. "Mumbai, along with Maharashtra, has Marathi as its primary language. However, RSS leaders have historically shown a bias against Mumbai's Marathispeaking populace," Maharashtra Congress general

secretary Atul Londhe said.





Wankhede returns to Mumbai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has set aside the transfer of IRS officer Sameer Wankhede from Mumbai to Chennai, saying the revenue department department "patently violated" its own guidelines. Wankhede, a 2008 batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, made headlines for allegedly demanding ₹ 25 Crore from Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan's family by threatening to implicate his son Aryan Khan in the Cordelia cruise drug bust case during his tenure in the Narcotics Control Bureau

(NCB) Mumbai in 2021. The principal CAT bench comprising Justice Ranjit More and member Rajinder Kashyap found procedural lapses and potential bias in the transfer decision issued by the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

The tribunal said while government officers had an all-India service liability, transfer policies must be implemented in a fair, transparent, and just manner. "We are well aware of the facts that it is a settled law that a transfer, which is an incident of service, is not to be interfered with by the courts, unless it is shown to be clearly arbitrary or vitiated by mala fides or infraction of any professed norm or principle governing the transfer.

Continued on page 2

BISWAJEET BANERJEE LUCKNOW

has

 $A^{ll \ India \ Muslim \ Jamaat}_{president \ Maulana}$ Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi Barelvi criticised Indian

cricketer Mohammed Shami for not fasting during Razadan. The cleric stated that fasting is an obligatory duty in Islam, and anyone who deliberately avoids it is this," committing a sin.

Maulana Razvi claimed that by choosing not to fast, Shami had committed a grave wrongdoing in the eyes of Islamic law. "Islam mandates fasting as one of its fundamental obligations. If a healthy person does not observe Roza, they are guilty religious terms. Mohammed Shami was seen drinking water during a Champions Trophy match, which means he was not fasting. This is a serious offense in Islam," he said.

The cleric added that since Shami was playing a match, it indicated that he was physically fit. "If he was capable of playing, he was also capable of fasting. By drinking water in public, he has sent the wrong message to the community. He will have to answer to God for Maulana Razvi asserted.

The cleric's remarks have sparked mixed reactions. While some religious figures expressed their disappointment, others defended the cricketer, arguing that professional athletes often have different requirements due to the physical demands of their sport.

Maulana Zaheer Khan calls the controversy uncalled for. "Islam is a progressive religion. It has some prohibitions for persons keeping Roza. It is up to a person to keep Roza on that

"Nothing is above the nation. Shami is playing for his country, and that should be the priority," he stated. Senior BJP leader and MLC

e wrong

owler was not in

Vijay Bahadur Pathak defended Shami and said that sports and religion should not be intertwined. Shami is a dedicated athlete who has brought glory to India on multiple occasions. If he felt fasting might affect his performance, it must have been a difficult decision for him. He is a proud Indian, and his commitment to the game should not be questioned," Pathak said.

Shami played a crucial role in India's four-wicket victory over Australia, helping the team secure a spot in the Champions Trophy final. The Indian bowling attack, led by Shami, restricted Australia to 264 runs, with the pacer claiming three wickets for 48 runs in his 10over spell.

This is not the first controversy to emerge during the tournament.



Maharashtra, and it is an integral part of our cultural heritage

After the chief minister's statement, Joshi issued a clarification on his stand on the importance of Marathi in Mumbai and Maharashtra, seeking to end the raging controversy over the remarks that he reportedly made at a function held at Ghatkopar in north-east Mumbai on Wednesday night.

Speaking at a function held at Ghatkopar, Joshi had said: "Mumbai does not have a single language, Mumbai has many languages. Different areas have different languages. For example, the language of Ghatkopar is Ğujarati. Similarly, you will find fewer people speaking Hindi in Girgaon. There, you will find people speaking Marathi...people coming to Mumbai may necessarily have to learn Marathi".

respected and preserved in Before long, Joshi came in for a severe flak from leaders of different political parties, including the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), Sharad Pawar-headed NCP (SP) and Congress.

Demanding that Joshi be booked for treason, Uddhav Thackeray dared the RSS leader to make such remarks in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal and come back.

'Just because the Marathi manoos does not complain that does not mean that you can say anything and get away. Bhaiyyaji Joshi should be booked for treason. How can Bhaiyyaji Joshi make such a statement? This is what I call it sadist mentality. This is a ploy to break Mumbai. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi had indulged in this kind of divisive tactics during the campaigning for the state Assembly polls when he spoke about 'batenge toh katenge,"

Sena (ÚBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray also hit out at Joshi saying: "The language of this land is Marathi, just like Tamil is in Tamil Nadu and Kannada is in Karnataka. The ideology of the BJP is to keep disrespecting Maharashtra. Yesterday, Suresh Bhaiyya ji said that the language in Ghatkopar could be Gujarati, but this is absolutely not possible. The language of Mumbai is Marathi. This government even halted the Marathi Bhasha Bhavan in Mumbai because they want to disrespect Maharashtra and the Marathi language," Aditya said.

Continued on page 2

First woman officer tames Jaguar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a first, Flying Officer Tanuska Singh Lhas become the first woman pilot permanently assigned to IAF's Jaguar fighter jet squadron. It marks a significant step in gender inclusion in combat roles. The officer will shortly report for duty.

While other women have flown the Jaguar during training, Tanushka's permanent induction into the squadron is a first. The Jaguar is a key tactical strike aircraft for the IAF, known for its precision attack capabilities.

Hailing from a family having served in the armed forces, Tanushka initially considered a career in the Indian Army. However, she shifted her focus to the Air Force after learning about the opportunities available to women. She underwent training at the Air Force



Hawk MK 132 aircraft.

Born in Uttar Pradesh, she has lived in Mangaluru since 2007. She completed her schooling in Suratkal and later studied in Mangaluru. She also earned a BTech in electrical and electronics engineering in 2022.

Incidentally, the first batch of three female pilots - Avani Chaturvedi, Bhawana Kanth and Mohana Singh Academy in Dundigal, Telangana, Bhawana Kanth and Mohana Singh followed by specialised training on the were inducted in Indian Air Force

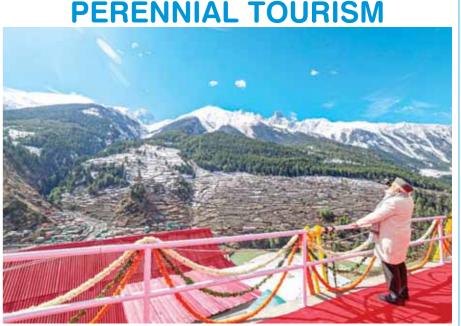
fighter squadron on 2016. Squadron Leader Mohana Singh later made history as the first female fighter

pilot in the country to be cleared to fly the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas fighter jet last year.

Mohana Singh, along with Avni Chaturvedi and Bhawana Kanth, was Avni part of the trio of female pilots in the Air Force's fighter streams. In the early days, the three pilots flew various aircraft from the Air Force's fighter fleet. Currently, they are flying the regular fleets of Su-30MKi and LCA Tejas

Indian Air Force (IAF), the world's fourth-largest air force, currently accounts for around 20 women fighter pilots.

The service opened its fighter stream to women, a watershed in India's military history, in 2016. It has opened all frontiers for women and is giving them opportunities on a par with their male counterparts.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a visit at Harsil, in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand



Omar reacts strongly to Jaishankar statement on PoK

MOHIT KANDHARI 🗖 JAMMU

Unsparing Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday reacted strongly to the recent statement of the Foreign Minister S Jaishankar on the floor of Assembly. "The Foreign Minister (S

Jaishankar) is saying that we will get back the part of J&K which is under the occupation of Pakistan. Who have stopped them? Have we ever said that do not get it back?" the Chief Minister said, winding up the discussion on motion of thanks to Lt Governor Manoj Sinha's address in the Assembly here. Jaishankar, speaking during a session at the Chatham House think-tank in London on Wednesday, said the Kashmir dispute would be solved after the "return of the stolen part of Kashmir which is under

illegal Pakistani occupation". Omar also maintained he would be grateful to the BJPled government if alongside Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) it also retrieves the part of the Union Territory (UT) under illegal occupation of China.

Speaking on the motion of thanks, Omar also came down heavily on the BJP leaders for accusing the National Conference (NC) of insulting Jammu and Kashmir's last ruler Maharaja Hari Singh and challenged them to give just one instance when the ruling party or any other Kashmir-based party insulted the Dogra ruler while the BJP disintegrated and downgraded his Muslim majority state.

Referring to the speech of BJP members in the House, he said the Congress was targeted for leaving Haji Peer



in the Uri sector to Pakistan. "During the Kargil war, there was an opportunity to get back PoK because it was Pakistan which attacked us. If you were so willing, you would have brought back that part but what stopped you? When you look at the map of

Jammu and Kashmir, one part is also in China but you do not talk about it," he said.

He said when the BJP-led central government brings back PoK, they should also bring that part of J&K which is presently in China and "we will be grateful to you".

Countering the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in J&K Assembly and BJP leader Sunil Sharma for accusing the sum sharma for accusing the ruling party of insulting the Maharaja, he dared the opposition party to give him a single instance when the last Dogra ruler was insulted by NC or for that matter by the DDD and Concrete PDP and Congress. "You have distorted the map

of Maharaja by separating Ladakh from J&K and finishing his laws, especially related to land and jobs which were meant to provide safeguards to the people," he said

Abdullah said the BJP is justifying the separation by saying that it was the long-pending demand of the people of Ladakh. Have you asked them? Have

you tried to find out? "From day one, the people of Kargil were against this

decision. The Buddhists of Ladakh who distributed sweets are today of the opinion that they were better placed with J&K. They walked from Leh to Delhi to get back their rights," he said.

The chief minister also took a dig at the LoP for his "derogatory remarks" against the July 13, 1931 "martyrs" and said "though we have different political ideologies, they deserve respect for rising up against the autocracy and their sacrifice led to the formation of this Assembly". July 13 was observed as a public holiday in Jammu and Kashmir to commemorate the 22 men who fell to the bullets of Dogra Maharaja's soldiers outside Srinagar central jail in 1931. The holiday along with the December 5 holiday to mark the birth anniversary of founder Sheikh NC

Mohammad Abdullah was,

however, scrapped by the Lt Governor administration after the abrogation of Article 370.

"Their only fault was that they were Muslims. In the rest of the country, the people who rose against autocracy are respected and nobody can dub them as traitors,' he said. Abdullah said whether July 13 and December 5 are declared holidays or not, it will not matter because the people respect them from their hearts.

Abdullah said in his last tenure as chief minister, he was also planning to lower the number of holidays and December 5 was also on his mind

'We have never harmed the legacy of Maharaja. Have we changed the name of any institution which was named in the name of the Dogra rulers?" he said.

5,000 business entities and 15,000 single-room factories. Goods produced here go to

Middle East, South-East Asia,

United States and Europe and

Dharavi is one of the largest

leather industry hubs in the

world, with more than 20,000

leather manufacturing units

which employs one to 1.5

several other places.

PM conferred **'Honorary Order** of Freedom of **Barbados' award**

nation 02

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Drime Minister Narendra Modi has been bestowed with the prestigious 'Honorary of Freedom of Order Barbados' award in recognition of his "strategic leadership" and "valuable assistance" during the Covid-

19 pandemic. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement on Thursday that Minister of State for External Affairs and Textiles, Pabitra Margherita, received the award on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a ceremony held in Bridgetown, Barbados.

The award symbolises the "enduring friendship" between the two nations, the MEA said. 'The award announcement was made by Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 20, 2024, on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Leaders' Summit in Georgetown, Guyana," it said.

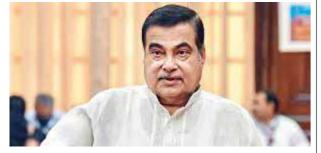
The award has been bestowed upon Prime Minister Modi in recognition of his strategic leadership and valuable assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic," the statement said.

Marathi-Hindi fire in Mumbai

From page 1

all languages... I request everyone to see it from the perspective...The same language of Maharashtra is Marathi. Mumbai is in Maharashtra and naturally, the language of Mumbai is Marathi. Different languages are spoken in India. People speak different languages while living in Mumbai as well. So, it is a natural expectation that they should

Women not limited by Haryana CM reviews development projects in Gurugram district their gender: Gadkari



March 8

based

'We should build a society

where no one is judged based on caste, gender, religion or

social status, but rather on

their talent and contributions,'

Gadkari said. The awards were instituted by the Mumbai-

Kamala Ankibai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW religion. DFI HI He made these remarks at a

function to give away the "Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said Mahila Samman" to women changemakers, ahead of the there is a need to create a International Women's Day society where no one will feel that will be celebrated on discriminated against on the basis of their gender, caste or

Babbar Khalsa terrorist arrested

From page 1

Authorities are continuing their interrogation to uncover further details about his said. network and operations.

Union Urban Affairs Minister Following this arrest, Uttar Pradesh Minister Suresh Manohar Lal Khattar spoke about women's empowerment Kumar Khanna commended and the progress that Haryana has made in this regard over the security forces for their the years. He recalled that efforts, stating that their swift actions had prevented a during his tenure as the chief minister he reinforce

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini while presiding over a review meeting on the various projects in district on development Gurugram instructed Thursday, officials to concerned expedite the implementation of major state government projects and ensure their

timely completion. He said that officers must ensure high-quality work while maintaining a swift pace, and not allow any laxity in the development process. The meeting was attended by Industry and Commerce Minister Rao Narbir Singh, Sohna MLA Tejpal Tanwar, Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi (via video conference) and Principal Advisor DS Dhesi. After receiving a detailed report on the sewerage,

Ghamandiram Gowani Trust. Gadkari said the world has now changed and women should not feel limited by their drainage, sanitation, water supply, construction and demolition (C&D) waste, and gender. "Where merit exists, road systems from the relevant departmental officers, the Chief Minister said that development of women are taking the lead, with 75 per cent of top achievers being women," he infrastructure is very important to establish new dimensions of development in the district.

He urged all departments to work in coordination and ensure that the stipulated timelines for these projects to H ther are adhered that since stated the government is accountable to the public, it is crucial that officials regularly monitor the progress of all ongoing development projects. In cases where delays are caused

defended

While reviewing the cleanliness system in the corporation area, the Chief Minister said that Gurugram

is a key driver of the state's economic development. He said that it is our collective moral responsibility to ensure the city remains clean and beautiful. To address the issue of manpower, the Chief Minister suggested that sanitation workers could be engaged as needed in the relevant areas through the Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam (HKRN).

The meeting also included in-depth discussions on improving the door-to-door garbage collection system in the corporation area.

While instructing the officers of Gurugram Metropolitan Development Development Authority (GMDA), the Chief Minister said that the renovation work on all roads must be completed promptly to ensure a smooth and safe traffic system for the public.

He said that there is still ample time before the monsoon season, and therefore, officers should ensure the work is completed by the end of June.

The meeting also revealed that GMDA manages 284.5 km of road, with 135 km of road renovation already completed. Following the removal of GRAP restrictions renova

by the concerned agencies, he said that penalties should be imposed and FIRs be filed. waste be expedited, along with the upgradation of the drainage system and the metro expansion project, while ensuring transparency and efficiency in their implementation. It was also informed in the

> meeting that the current water requirement of 270 cusecs in Gurugram is being met through the GWS and NCR channels. However, there is a need to remodel the GWS canal to

meet the district's future water demands. A plan has been proposed to redesign the canal and convert it into a pipeline, which will not only eliminate issues like water leakage but also ensure better water quality due to the covered structure.

The total cost for this project is estimated at around Rs 3,000 crore. The Chief Minister said that, in light of Gurugram's growing water requirements, a separate provision for this project will be included in the upcoming budget.

In the meeting, Industry and Commerce Minister Rao Narbir Singh said that before any work road undertaking renovation in Gurugram, the de-silting of drains along the roads should be completed.

He said that officers should ensure that the consent of the concerned Resident Welfare Association (RWA) is obtained before proceeding

Lok Sabha and State Assembly polls to target Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industrialist Gautam Adani, leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Months after he made Dharavi re-

development an issue in the

visited Asia's large slum to speak to the people and understand their problems. Rahul, who was on his second visit to Maharashtra after the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)'s debacle in the State Assembly polls, spent a few hours in Dharavi slum - which is being redeveloped by M/s Dharavi Redevelopment Project Pvt Ltd (DRPPL), a joint venture between the Maharashtra government and the Adani Group, is executing the redevelopment. Upon his arrival at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, Rahul was welcomed by Maharashtra President Congress Harshavardhan Sapkal, Mumbai party chief Varsha Gaikwad, who is the Mumbai North Central MP, Congress Legislature Party leader Vijay Wadettiwar and Congress Working Committee invitee member Naseem Khan.

Rahul's visit to Dharavi is aimed at understanding the problems of people residing there.

Spread over 240-hectare area, naravi has severa

create masterpieces. This was Rahul's second visit to Dharavi. He had earlier visited Asia's largest slum on

Rahul visits Dharavi

March 16, 2024, when he and his sister and Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi, the now Wayanad MP, travelled the locality in an open-roof SUV which marked the end of 6,700-km 66-day Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra.

It may be recalled that Rahul - during his campaigning for the Maharahstra Assembly polls in November last year -had charged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was bent on handing over the Rs 1 lakh crore worth Dharavi land to industrialist Gautam Adani, while the Opposition Maani, while the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was all for supporting the poor, youth and unemployed people in the state.

Addressing news conference on the final day of the campaigning for the November 20 Maharashtra Assembly polls, "It's a contest between one or two billionaires and p001 people of the state. On one side, Adani is eying Dharavi land, while on the other side are our workers, and youth betrayed by the MahaYuti government are aspiring for a better life".

lakh workers. Gandhi is also visiting the Chamar Studio, set up by Sudheer Rajbhar, who uses various materials to **RSS** ignites

Having realised that through his statement he had rubbed the political class in the political class in Maharashtra the wrong way, Bhaiyyaji Joshi issued a clarification later in the day on Thursday saying: "My mother tongue is Marathi. But I also respect the existence of

the state's commitment to maintaining law and order. Masih is currently being interrogated, and security agencies believe their capture has disrupted a major terror plot in the country.

- attac

witnessed the deep-rooted taboos in the state regarding women. Khattar said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" initiative brought significant changes in Haryana.

on wor on an additional 100 km of roads commenced on February 15 and is expected to be completed within the stipulated timeframe.

The Chief Minister directed that the removal of C&D

anv in the area.

In response to a question about the budget, Saini said that this is the first budget of the third government. As such, suggestions were sought from various stakeholders.

units -- right from textiles to pottery to fabrication to Îeather industry. Plastic recycling and garbage segregation too is done here. Mainly a hub of cottage industries, it has an estimated

come here an learn Marathi, understand Marathi and read Marathi, in fact, this is a great example of copeople existence that speaking so many different languages in India live together".

Rana seeks stay of extradition to India Wankhede returns to Mumbai India breached in UK

From page 1

As Jaishankar was about to leave the institute, a tall man was seen attempting to break the police cordon and run towards Jaishankar's motorcade. The tall and bearded man even tried to block the minister's motorcade by standing in front of it. The man was swiftly taken away by Metropolitan Police officers. It was not the first such incident of breach of security by pro-Khalistan elements. In March, 2023, certain pro-Khalistan elements pulled down the Indian flag at the Indian high commission in London, triggering strong reaction from India.

Following the incident, India summoned the senior-most British diplomat in Delhi and demanded an explanation

over complete "absence of Furthermore, the journalist claimed Kashmiris are "up in security" at the mission. India has been asking the UK to arms", alleging India has take action against prostationed "one million troops Khalistani elements operating to control seven million Kashmiris" before asking from British soil.

Meanwhile, during his UK Prime Minister Narendra Modi could utilise his friendship with US President visit, which will end on March 9, Jaishakar also met UK Foreign Secretary David Donald Trump to resolve the Lammy. The two leaders long-standing Kashmir issue. spoke on several topics, Jaishankar firmly dismissed including political any third-party intervention education, cooperation, and approach to handling the mobility, people-to-people Kashmir issue, stating that exchanges and strategic coordination, among others. decisive measures had already During the discussion at been taken to address the matter independently. Chatham House, the External Affairs Minister faced a "I think the part we are waiting for is the return of the question by a Pakistani journalist who claimed the stolen part of Kashmir, which

is under an illegal Pakistani same would make Jaishankar occupation. When that's "little nervous". The journalist then accused India done, I assure you, Kashmir solved," the External Affairs of "illegally occupying Kashmir" Minister said.

From page 1

The US Supreme Court denied Rana's petition for a writ of certiorari relating to his original habeas petition on January 21. The application notes that on that same day, newly-confirmed Secretary of State Marco Rubio had met with External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar.

When Prime Minister Modi India's arrived in Washington on February 12 to meet with Trump, Rana's counsel received a letter from the Department of State, stating that "on February 11, 2025, the Secretary of State decided authorize" Rana's to "surrender to India," pursuant to the "Extradition Treaty between the United States and India". Rana's Counsel requested

the complete administrative record on which Secretary Rubio based his decision to authorize Rana's surrender to India. The Counsel also requested immediate information on any commitment the US has obtained from India with respect to Rana's treatment. "The government declined to provide any information in response to these requests," the application said. It added that given Rana's underlying health conditions and the State Department's

findings regarding the treatment of prisoners, it is very likely "Rana will not survive long enough to be tried in India".

'The issues raised by petitioner merit full and careful consideration, and the stakes are enormous for

from the State Department him. The very least the US courts owe the petitioner is a full chance to litigate these issues, including exercising their appellate rights, before he is consigned to the fate that awaits him at the hands of the Indian government," the application said.

It added that if a stay is not entered, there will be no review at all, and the US courts will lose jurisdiction, and "petitioner will soon be dead. Therefore, we respectfully request that this Court enter an Order staying extradition the and surrender of petitioner pending a full and pending a full and considered hearing on petitioner's claims by the district court, circuit court, and, if necessary, a writ of certiorari to and further proceedings before this Court.

From page 1

However, the actions of respondents are such which do not fall within the policy framework laid by themselves," CAT's February 20 order said. The bench said the judgments cited by the revenue department wouldn't come to its rescue for it had "patently violated" the guidelines while transferring Wankhede.

"With utmost restraint, we refrain from imposing the cost on the respondents. It is held that the transfer of the applicant is not in consonance with the new Transfer/ Placement Guidelines, 2018 for Indian Revenue Service (C&CE) Officers issued by the respondents dated 12th April, 2018," it added. Wankhede is currently

working as additional commissioner in the Department of Revenue in

Chennai following his transfer on May 30, 2022. He previously held the zonal on May director's position in the Mumbai NCB before his transfer.

Wankhede alleged his transfer was punitive in nature and a direct consequence of his actions at the NCB, claiming he and his family members received multiple death threats from the underworld. His seeking representations reconsideration of the transfer, including one on June 6, 2022, and another on July 18, 2024, were rejected by the authorities. Wankhede was involved in several high-profile cases, including the arrest of Sameer Khan, son-in-law of a former Maharashtra cabinet minister, in a drug-related case. Following these events, an inquiry was initiated against him by a special enquiry team on June 16, 2022.

From page 1

Confirmation of the talks in the Qatari capital of Doha come as the Israel-Hamas ceasefire remains in the balance. It's the first known direct engagement between the U.S. And Hamas since the State Department designated the group a foreign terrorist organization in 1997. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt declined to provide detail on the the substance of talks, but said President Donald Trump has

served as mediators with

attack on Israel that sparked the war. "Look, dialogue and talking

to people around the world to do what's in the best interest of the American people is something that the president ... Believes is a good-faith effort to do what's right for the American authorized his envoys to "talk people," she said. Leavitt added that Israel has to anyone." Egyptian and Qatari intermediaries have been consulted about the

Hamas for the U.S. And that there are "American lives Israel since the group launched its October 7, 2023, at stake." Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's office offered a terse acknowledgement of

the US-Hamas talks. "Israel has expressed to the United States its position regarding direct talks with Hamas," the prime minister's office said. Israeli officials say about 24 living hostages - including Edan American citizen - as well as

the bodies of at least 35 direct engagement with others are believed to still be

Hamas officials, and noted held in Gaza.

Benjamin

an

Alexander,

Adam Boehler, Trump's nominee to be special envoy for hostage affairs, led the direct talks with Hamas. Boehler, founder and CEO of Founders, Rubicon а healthcare investment firm, was a lead negotiator on the Abraham Accords team during Trump's first term that strove to win broader recognition of Israel in the Arab world. The talks, which took place

last month, focused mainly on the release of American

hostages, and a potential end of the war without Hamas in power in Gaza, according to a Hamas official who was not publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity. The official added that no progress was made but "the step itself is promising" and

more talks are expected. Egyptian and Qatari mediators helped arrange the

Israel-Hamas

remains uncertain. Trump has signaled that he has no intentions of pushing Netanyahu away from a authorized to comment return to combat if Hamas doesn't agree to terms of a new ceasefire proposal, which the Israelis have billed as being drafted by US Envoy Steve Witkoff.

The new plan would require Hamas to release half its remaining hostages - the talks. militant group's main The direct engagement bargaining chip - in comes as continuation of the Israel-Hamas consofier ceasefire extension and a promise to

negotiate a lasting truce. Israel made no mention of releasing more Palestinian prisoners, a key component of the first phase.

Wednesday Trump on welcomed eight former hostages - Iair Horn, Omer Shem Tov, Eli Sharabi, Keith Siegel, Aviva Siegel, Naama Levy, Doron Steinbrecher and Noa Argamani - to the White House.

"The President listened intently to their heartbreaking stories," Leavitt said. "The hostages

reported earlier Wednesday by the news site Axios. Leavitt, the White House press secretary, is one of three administration officials who face a lawsuit from The Associated Press on First-Fifth-Amendment and grounds. The AP says the three are punishing the news agency for editorial decisions they oppose. The White House says the AP is not following an executive order to refer to the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America.

Hamas officials were first

Trump issues last warning to Hamas thanked President Trump for his steadfast efforts to bring all of the hostages home." Talks between US And



NCRTC to develop hubs along Delhi-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a move to develop com-mercial, residential and ser-vice hubs along the Delhi-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor, the National Capital Transport Region Corporation (NCRTC) plans to set up a project management unit for strategic plan-

The NCRTC, which is executing the project, has invited bids, aiming to monetise land parcels, generate non-fare revenue and develop commercial, residential, and service hubs along Namo Bharat stations, according to officials. The selected consultants will be responsible for market research, transaction advisory, project management support, strategic planning and knowledge transfer.

"The identified land parcels for development include sites in Ghaziabad, Duhai Depot, Bhaisali (Meerut), and Modipuram Depot, which will be converted into retail

and commercial spaces," NCRTC said in a statement.

The corporation said that these locations will accommodate malls, retail-diningentertainment hubs, integrated parking facilities with office spaces, rental housing, studio apartments, hospitals, and theme parks. The Ghaziabad plot spans

about 2.4 hectares, while the plots in Duhai Depot, Bhaisali, and Modipuram cover about 31, 9.7, and 31 hectares, respectively, it added.

In addition to these major sites, smaller land parcels covering about 16 hectares are available at Sarai Kale Khan, New Ashok Nagar, Anand Vihar, Guldhar, Duhai, Muradnagar, Modinagar South and North, Meerut South, Shatabdi Nagar, and Modinuram it caid

Modipuram, it said. Currently, Namo Bharat train services operate along a 55km stretch, connecting New Ashok Nagar to Meerut South via eleven stations The entire 82-km corridor is



Namo Bharat Corridor

expected to be completed this year. According to the NCRTC, Namo Bharat, India's first high-speed, high-frequency regional transit sys-

tem, is revolutionising urban mobility in the NCR. Integrating this semi-high(TOD) zones enhances connectivity, stimulates economic growth, and prevents

Unit, which will be set up soon, will play a crucial role in ensuring the successful speed corridor with Transit-Oriented Development The Project Management erty development plan, the

statement said, adding that the selected consultant will be responsible for strategic planning, market research, transaction advisory, project management support and knowledge transfer.

"Key responsibilities will include conducting real estate market studies, demand assessments, and financial modeling to optimise land utilisation. The PMU will also prepare business plans and bid documents, facilitate the selection of developers, and oversee stakeholder coordination, contract execution, and project progress," it stated.

"At the conclusion of the pro-ject, the consultant will provide documentation and handover reports to ensure seamless knowledge continuity. The last date of submission for this is March 20," it added. The development strategy will align with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) principles and existing regulatory frameworks, the statement read

high-density, mixed-use development within walking distance of transit stations reducing congestion in heavily populated areas and fostering growth in emerging urban centres. Delhi, Meerut, and Ghaziabad Development Authorities are working together to implement TOD and Value Capture Financing (VCF) strategies. The World Bank has recognised NCRTC's TOD model as a global best practice in sustainable urban planning, it stated. As a capital-intensive project, Namo Bharat requires sustainable revenue beyond fare collection. NCRTC has been actively exploring non-fare revenue streams by adopting best practices from domestic and international models, it shared. It also highlighted that initiatives such as TOD, Land Value Capture (LVC), and Value Capture Financing (VCF) are being implemented to ensure the project's long-term financial sustainability.

It stated that TOD promotes

capital 03

Rekha Gupta engages with traders for Delhi budget Delhi CM reviews local issues in Shalimar Bagh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

A fter meeting with profes-sionals and women repre-sentatives, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday held detailed discussions with trader and industry organisations of the national capital, to seek their suggestions for the Viksit Delhi Budget.

At the meeting, traders and business owners have expressed frustration over inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation and lack of development, adding that they have been troubled by mismanagement and impractical policies of the previous government.

They also expressed concerns over the several impractical policies implemented by the previous government, cleanli-ness, availability of toilets and pollution.

During the discussion, Praveen Khandelwal was also present. Speaking on the sidelines of an event related to the upcoming Delhi Budget 2025-26, Gupta said her government has received valuable suggestions from traders and industrialists and assured them of concrete action.

Gupta said that trade and industry people have shared their suggestions and aspirations with us to prepare a draft



poor condition, and even basic

civic amenities like washrooms

are lacking in major markets,"

both small and large commer-

neglect of infrastructure.

Criticising the previous Aam

she told reporters.

CM Rekha Gupta during a meeting with traders and industry organisations on the Delhi budget

of the Viksit Delhi Budget". The Chief Minister remarked that "the objective of this dialogue program is to improve the living standards of the cit-izens of Delhi by discussing their problems and make the budget according to the needs of all those sections"

"For years, traders and business owners have been suffering due to impractical policies, bureaucratic hurdles and negligence by the last government. There has been no real

Aadmi Party (AAP) governdevelopment — roads and ment, Gupta said that it had drainage systems remain in "focused only on publicising pain, but we are committed to finding solutions and providing relief

She highlighted issues faced by The upcoming budget would prioritise infrastructure develcial hubs such as Chandni opment, sanitation and busi-Chowk, Karol Bagh and Lajpat ness-friendly policies to sup-Nagar, which are reeling from port traders and boost ecoinadequate sewer systems, poor nomic activity in the capital road conditions and overall she said Expressing her commitment

towards the resolution of her ity of toilets etc.

government, Rekha Gupta said that "both the policy and inten-tion of our government are clear. The Delhi government is determined to bring about all-round development of Delhi and Delhiites"

She reiterated, "our aim is that this budget should give many big gifts to the people of Delhi and bring more prosperity in their lives

Earlier Gupta was apprised on Wednesday about her meeting with education professionals, saying that people associated with schools and the education sector held discussions on sev-

eral topics. She said that the government intends to advance the education system in the national capital.

Gupta has earlier held detailed discussions with women's organizations in the Mahila Samvad organised in Delhi Vidhan Sabha on Wednesday on the Viksit Delhi Budget. Women from various organisa-

tions attended the meeting and gave their suggestions on various issues related to women of Delhi. In the Mahila Samvad on the Viksit Delhi Budget, women mainly raised issues like women safety, financial assistance, increasing women's participation, better education, CCTV cameras and availabilPIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Starting the campaign on the ground with her constituency, Shalimar Bagh, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta inspected a girl's school at ward number 55 of the assembly constituency on Thursday and assessed the condition of drinking water, sanitation, roads conditions and tree pruning in the locality while addressing complaints regarding stray dogs. During her visit, she also interacted with local residents to understand their concerns.

Accompanied by senior officials from the PWD, DDA, MCD, DUSIB, and other departments, Gupta visited Shalimar Village Chowk, Max Road, Haiderpur Village Chowk, and other areas of the ward interacting with locals on their problems related to water, roads and sanitation and directing the officials to ensure resolution of the issues based on their feedback. She assured residents that necessary steps would be taken to resolve long-standing problems in the locality.

CM Gupta reiterated her government's commitment to reach out to every citizen of the national capital with basic facilities. "Our aim is that all basic facilities reach every citizen of Delhi properly, and for this we are continuously working on it," CM Gupta



Delhi CM Rekha Gupta during a visit in Shalimar Bagh

wrote in a post on X. Following her inspection, Gupta criticised the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government for neglecting these issues, saying, "People here are struggling with sewage problems, incomplete drainage systems, and poor sanitation in market areas. The previous government only advertised people's problems but failed to act. I will work to resolve these issues." During her visit to AC Block, Gupta assessed the water supply situation and held discussions with officials to ensure uninterrupted service for residents. In BW Block, she took stock of multiple civic concerns that had reportedly been pending for months, particularly issues related to roads, water supply and

tree pruning. Residents raised concerns over delayed repair work, poor waste management and water shortages. Gupta assured them that the government would take steps to expedite the improvements. Later, the Chief Minister also inspected BC East Block along with Water Board officials, assessing water supply conditions and gathering feedback from residents about water scarcity and quality issues. Earlier, Chief Minister Gupta conducted an inspection of GTB Hospital, where she criticised the previous AAP-led administration for the alleged mismanagement and wastage of healthcare equipment. She also expressed concern over the 'poor state' of health infrastructure in Delhi.

Delhi metro's golden line achieves milestone with TBM at Vasant Kunj



elhi Metro's golden line

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

The construction of Delhi Metro's Golden Line achieved a major milestone on Thursday as the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) broke through at the Vasant Kunj Metro station site after completing a 1.55-km tunneling stretch from Kishangarh.

This underground corridor, which will connect Aerocity to Tughlakabad, is part of the 19.34km underground stretch of the Golden Line - the fourth phase of the Metro network. The break through of the TBM at the Vasant Kunj Station site of the Delhi Metro took place in the presence of Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, and Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Tokhan Sahu.

Two parallel circular tunnels for up and down movement are being constructed on this stretch as part of the Aerocity-Tughlakabad corridor.

The TBM used for this stretch measures 91 metres in length and was excavated at an average depth of 23 metres, with a minimum depth of 15.7 meters and a maximum of 30.2 metres. The tunnel has an inner diameter of 5.8 meters, and about 1,107 tunnel rings have been installed so far. Another parallel tunnel is also under construction on the same stretch and is expected to be completed by June 2025. The tunnel has been built using

the proven technology of Earth Pressure Balancing Method (EPBM) with a concrete lining made of precast tunnel rings. These tunnel rings were cast at a fully mechanised casting yard set up at Mundka.

cured with a steam curing system to achieve early strength. The tunnelling drive for this tun-nel started on October 30, 2023 and challenges of steep gradient along with varied geology com-

were taken during the construc-

The concrete segments were

prising of mica and hard rock were encountered. All necessary safety precautions

tion of the tunnel below the existing structures. Ground movements were monitored with highly sensitive instruments fixed on nearby structures, ensuring that there was no settlement anywhere. "As part of the Phase 4 work approved so far, 40.109 kilometres of underground lines are being constructed. The Aerocity-Tughlakabad corridor has underground sections totalling 19.343 kilometres. A TBM is a machine used to excavate tunnels with a circular crosssection through various soil and rock strata. They can be designed to bore through anything from hard rock to sand. TBMs have revolutionised tunnelling work worldwide, enabling tunnels to be

bored without disturbing buildings and other surface structures, the Delhi Metro said in a press release. TBMs are particularly useful for underground tunnelling work in congested urban areas. DMRC has been using TBMs for its tunneling work since Phase 1.

Delhi government to conduct cyber security audit of IT systems

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Delhi government will conduct a cyber security audit of its Information Technology (IT) system for the detection of vulnerabilities to prevent any breach of security and data theft.

The government has geared up for hiring a CERT-in (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) empanelled agency for the three-year project, they said. The officials said the hypertext transfer protocols (https) have become the easiest path for cyber attackers to intrude on a network, with growth in vulnerabilities in applications. The in-house and outsourced

applications often put speedy development and convenience over security, which results in vulnerabilities such as authentication bypass, SQL (programming language) injection and cross-site

scripting among others, they said. The IT Department of the Delhi government has invited bids from eligible vendors for a project to detail an audit report which will be prepared to outline all the discovered vulnerabilities categories as critical, high, medi-um and low severity. The entire security audit report for any website or application will be 10 working days from the date the request is formally communicat-ed by the department. The select-ed agency will also submit a comprehensive report after the vulnerabilities are addressed, said the document. It will also issue a 'safe to host' certificate after all identified vulnerabilities are resolved and validated according to the

security audit requirements.

Speaker Vijender Gupta establishes committees to restore legislative practices

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on Thursday set up the Business Advisory Committee and the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions of the newly consti-tuted eighth Delhi Assembly, paving the way for reintroduction of legislative practices discontinued under the previous AAP government. Both the committees, chaired by Gupta, will have dominance of the ruling BJP.

The nine-member Business Advisory Committee headed by the Speaker will include Deputy Speaker Mohan Singh Bisht as a member. The members of the committee will include: Aahir Deepak Chaudhary, Jitender Mahajan, Om Prakash Sharma, Raj Kumar Chauhan, Som Dutt, Surendra Kumar and Surya Prakash Khatri. The Business which reviews and facilitates discussions on bills and resolutions introduced by private members, will be headed by the Advisory Committee, chaired by the Speaker, is responsible for Speaker Its members will include: Abhay Verma, Amanatullah Khan, Anil determining the legislative agenda and streamlining discussions in the House. A business adviso-Kumar Sharma, Arvinder Singh Lovely, Poonam Sharma, Prem ry committee advises on business matters and recommends how to Chauhan, Sanjay Goyal and allocate time for discussions. Shyam Sharma. The formation of these commit-They may also suggest how to

prioritise business and recomtees reaffirms the Assembly's commitment to upholding mend changes to rules. Both committees will play a crudemocratic principles and ensuring the effective conduct of legcial role in ensuring the smooth islative proceedings, said the functioning of legislative business office of the Speaker. "The LG's address is a solemn and deliberations, encouraging legislators to come up with suggestions and introduce resolu-

occasion, and he was discharging his constitutional duties. The tions and bills for serving the people better, said an official. Rules of Procedure forbid such The Committee on Private disturbances during the LG Members' Bills and Resolutions, Address," he said.

Delhi Police busts 'Band, Baaja, Baraat' wedding thieves gang

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

Delhi Police has busted a Band, Baaja, Baraat' gang of thieves who gatecrashed highprofile weddings in the capital and its suburbs, and apprehended four of its members, including a juvenile. With this, three cases of thefts at weddings in Shastri Park, Swaroop Nagar and GTB Enclave have been solved, police said.

The gang, based in Rajgarh dis-trict of Madhya Pradesh, was involved in multiple incidents of tealing such as the stealing cash and jewellery from wedding venues, police said. "The gang specialised in gate-crashing weddings and blending in with guests by dressing up in festive clothes. They would attend the event as if they were invited to it, have dinner and patiently wait for the right moment to

strike," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Apoorva Gupta said. Once the opportunity presented

itself, they would swiftly steal bags containing gifts, jewellery and cash meant for the bride and groom before vanishing from the venue, the DCP said.

Following a series of wedding thefts reported across Delhi-NCR, police launched an investigation. After thoroughly analysing CCTV footage from various wedding venues and deploying informants at banquet halls and farmhouses, police were able to identify the culprits, she said.

"The gang's key tactic involved using minors to commit thefts. Investigations revealed that the gang leader would lure (the children's) parents in their villages by offering them ₹10 to 12 Lakh a year in exchange for their chil-

dren's services," Gupta said. These children, typically aged between nine and 15, were then brought to Delhi, where they underwent training on how to steal things without raising sus-

picion.

They were also trained to blend in with guests, act confidently and remain silent if caught, she said

'Police received a tip-off regarding the gang's movement and a raid was conducted near Shastri Park metro depot. During the raid, the three accused were arrested and a juvenile was apprehended," Gupta said.

The accused were identified as Ajju (24), Kuljeet (22) and Kalu Chhayal (25), all from Madhya Pradesh, she said.Police recovered ₹2,14,000 in cash, one mobile phone and several pieces of silver jewellery from the accused, she said.

Mayor Mahesh Kumar orders crackdown on illegal spas, hotels

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Mayor Mahesh Kumar direct-det the public health depart-ment of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Thursday to take strict action against illegal spa centres, unau-thorised OYO hotels and unlicensed restaurants across the

A directive in this regard was issued at a meeting that was chaired by the mayor and attended by Deputy Mayor Ravindra Bhardwaj, Leader of the House Mukesh Goel, Municipal Health Officer Laller D Officer Lallan Ram Verma and the deputy health officers (DHOs) from all 12 MCD zones, according to a statement.

Emphasising the need to curb unauthorised commercial activities, Kumar pointed out that such establishments not only pose health and safety concerns for

icant revenue losses for the corporation. He instructed the public health department to formulate a concrete action plan and imple-

residents, but also lead to signif-

ment strict measures to shut down illegally-operating businesses

The public health department must take strict action against illegal spa centres, unauthorised restaurants and illegally-operating OYO hotels across the city," Kumar said.

The mayor also underlined the importance of increasing the MCD's revenue, saying unauthorised businesses often evade licensing fees and necessary approvals, impacting the corporation's financial resources.

"Our priority is to enhance revenue and ensure that there are no financial obstacles in delivering welfare initiatives for the residents of Delhi," he said.



PM reviews progress in cooperative sector, seeks focus on export markets

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of the cooperative sector and emphasised the need for partnerships with global cooperative organisations and for promoting organ-ic products with special focus on export markets.

Modi also recommended the use of digital public infrastructure (Agristack) to expand agriculture and related activities in cooperative sector and highlighted the importance of integrating UPI with RuPay Kisan Credit Card to facilitate

financial transactions. During the meeting here, discussions were held on promoting "Sahkar Se Samruddhi' bringing transformation through technological advancements in the cooperative sector, plans to increase the participation of youth and women in cooperatives, and the various initiatives of the Ministry of Cooperation, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

The meeting was attended by Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah.

Minister Prime Modi emphasised the need for partnerships with global cooperative organisations to expand the Indian cooperative sector and stressed promoting organic products through cooperative organisations. He also suggested focusing on

export markets and developing a soil testing model through cooperatives to improve agricultural practices. Modi emphasised the need

for healthy competition among cooperative organisations, the statement said. He also emphasised the importance of documenting the assets of cooperative organisations to ensure transparency and suggested promoting cooperative farming as a more sustainable

agricultural model. Modi also recommended the use of digital public infrastructure (Agristack) to expand agriculture and related activities in the cooperative sector, providing farmers with better access to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

services. In the context of education, the prime minister proposed introducing cooperative courses in schools, colleges, and IIMs, as well as promoting successful cooperative organisations to inspire future generations, according to the statement. He further said that young graduates be should encouraged to contribute, and

logical advancements, artificial

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cooperative organisations should be ranked based on their performance, so as to promote competition and growth simultaneously. During the meeting, the

Prime Minister was also about National briefed Cooperation Policy and key achievements of the Ministry of Cooperation over the past three-and-a-half years, the statement said.

Realising the vision of 'Sahkar Se Samruddhi', the ministry has formulated a draft of the National Cooperation Policy 2025 through an extensive consultation process.

The objective of National Cooperation Policy 2025 is to facilitate the systematic and holistic development of the cooperative sector, with a focus on accelerating rural economic development, while prioritising women and youth.

It aims to promote a cooperative-based economic model and establish a robust legal and institutional framework, the statement further said. Furthermore, the policy

endeavours to deepen the grassroots impact cooperatives and significantly enhance the contribution of the cooperative sector to the overall development of the country, it said.

Since its inception, the ministry has undertaken 60 initiatives across seven key areas to promote and strengthen the cooperative movement, it added. These initiatives include the

digitization of cooperative

institutions through the National Cooperative Database and Computerisation Projects, as well as the strengthening of Primary Agricultural Credit (PACS).

Societies Additionally, the ministry has focused on enhancing efficiency the and sustainability of cooperative sugar mills.

The Centre has implemented schemes various for cooperative societies through "whole of government approach", integrating over 15 schemes from more than 10 ministries at the PACS level, the statement said.

As a result, there has been diversification in cooperative businesses, additional income generation, increased opportunities for cooperatives, and improved accessibility of government schemes in rural areas, it said. Annual targets have also been set for the formation of these cooperatives, the statement said.

To promote cooperative PK education, training and research and to provide skilled professionals, a Bill to convert IRMA Anand into

'Tribhuvan Cooperative University' and make it an Institution of National Importance has been introduced in the Parliament, the statement said. Prime Minister Modi was briefed on the growth of cooperatives and their vital role across various sectors. Cooperative sector's contribution to India's economy, particularly

in agriculture, rural development, and economic inclusion was highlighted, the statement said. During the meeting, it was highlighted that presently, one-fifth of the country's population is associated with the cooperative sector, which includes over 8.2 lakh cooperative institutions spanning more than 30 sectors, with a membership

exceeding 30 crore individuals. The meeting was also attended by Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, Kumar Bhutani; Ashish Principal Secretary to the PM Mishra; Principal the PM Secretary-2 to Shaktikanta Das; Advisor to the PM Amit Khare; and other senior officials.

Indian national Shahjadi Khan buried in Abu Dhabi

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PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ndian national Shahjadi Khan was buried on Thursday in Abu Dhabi as per regulations of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), according to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Shahjadi, a caregiver from Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, was executed last month after a court found her guilty of allegedly murdering a child. "Burial of Shahjadi Khan, an Indian national, was conducted on Thursday in Abu Dhabi as per regulations of the

UAE authorities," MEA said. "Prior to her burial, the authorised representatives of Shahjadi's family paid respect to the mortal remains. They also attended the funeral prayers at the mosque as well as the burial at the Baniyas cemetery," it said. Embassy assisted the officials authorised representatives in this regard as well as attended the last rites, it added.

education, early clinical

exposure for students, and

enhanced communication

skills for both students and

faculty. Highlighting the developments made in medical

infrastructure for cancer care,

Frame more vibrant medical curriculum, says Nadda Congress slams new panopticon PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI Income Tax law $U_{\rm Nadda\ has\ advocated\ the}^{\rm nion\ Health\ Minister\ JP}$ inclusion of the latest techno-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday alleged that the new income-tax law which will helps the tax officials to have access to the e-mails, social media and bank accounts of all assessees, which will lead to India becoming a surveillance state.

Congress spokesperson and the head of the party's social media department, Supriya Shrinate, said this is a warning for everyone as email, social media, bank and trading accounts are under an attack now.

"They spied on us with Pegasus. Now, they'll take away our personal lives altogether. Under (Prime Minister Narendra Modi's) new income tax law, the government is quietly giving tax officials the power to break into your digital life. No warrant, no notice - mere suspicion is enough to strip you of your privacy. This is surveillance. And we must all oppose it unequivocally," the

way?" she asked.

The Congress leader said this intelligence, telemedicine and digital healthcare in the revised is a warning for everyone as the government will very medical education curriculum. soon have access to citizens' e-In his address at a post-budget mails, social media accounts, webinar series organised by bank accounts, financial transactions and trading the Health Ministry on Wednesday, he sought the accounts, because the new framing of a curriculum that income-tax law proposes that is more vibrant, meaningful and fit to current challenges tax officials should have access to the same. and makes optimum use of She said the tax officials can existing infrastructure and read private conversations, medical faculty.

have access to bank accounts and get to know about the amount earned by someone and how the money is spent. They can also have access to people's trading accounts to know about their know investments.

"This is nothing but the government trying to enter our lives surreptitiously. This is nothing but the government trying to take control through backdoor entry. This is nothing but the government trying to make India a surveillance state and I am not fine with it.

Ongoing geopolitical chal-lenges like wars, trade dis-"Because we have already seen putes and technology conflicts how driven by vendetta are weakening the trust among particular politics ountries and this is. government They action more difficult, Brazil's weaponise the ED, CBI and Environment and Climate income-tax (department) not Minister Marina Silva said on just against their political Thursday. opponents, (but also) to crush Silva, who was in India to activists, students and attend anybody who has a difference Sustainable Development of opinion with it," Shrinate Summit, told journalists that said in a video message along while multilateralism is with her post on the struggling to fully address microblogging platform. global challenges, it remains She said she is not fine with the only viable path forward. tax officials having access to She also acknowledged that the US decision to pull out of e-mails, social media and bank accounts, because this is the Paris Agreement "does going to lead to unnecessary influence to a certain extent" harassment and intimidation. the goals Brazil has set for this year's UN climate conference 'This is going to lead to weaponisation of the (COP30) in Belem. agencies and this will also "We do have a very challenging confluence of lead to assassination of reputation and lives and I am multiple factors that are certainly not fine with this. worrisome for climate action will lead to a in general. This increasingly-This surveillance state and if you complex geopolitical context -- wars in different regions or are someone who values their countries, trade disputes, privacy, it is time for you to speak up. Because the tax tariffs and technology officials are going to do this disputes - may all impact not on the basis of proof but climate progress. They may the basis of simple drain resources and also on suspicion," the Congress hamper confidence and trust leader claimed. among parties. So we have a

"the biggest investment is the investment in people".

Nadda underlined that the government was working with a "holistic approach" that focuses not only on the curative aspect but also on the preventive, palliative and rehabilitative approach to patient care.

We are also trying to include AYUSH and other medical systems to ensure the availability and access to healthcare for the people." Addressing the event, Nadda said, "Since cancer treatment is a lengthy process with a long cycle of chemotherapy, the government is focusing on He emphasised the need for engaging with Day Care Cancer Centres rather than adding soft skills to increase the empathy, ethics and big hospitals to ensure engagement of patients postcommunication skills of the medical students and said that

chemotherapy sessions.

challenges, says Brazil Minister

said.

short-term

"The government will establish Day Care Cancer Centres in all district hospitals over the next three years. Two hundred of these will be set up this year itself." Underlining the importance of strengthening the medical health system, reiterated the Nadda budget announcements introducing new medical seats and highlighted the government's efforts to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality healthcare to people through more than 1.75 Lakh Ayushman Aarogya Mandirs. The minister said that the number of medical colleges has increased from 387 in 2014 to 780 now and

underlined that there has

been a 130 per cent rise in the

emissions driving climate

change, were required to

deliver a new and ambitious

financial package to support

climate action in the developing world at the UN

climate conference in Baku,

Union Health Minister JP Nadda Pioneer Photo

cent growth in seats for postgraduate courses during the same period. also supported the He suggestions made during the

Nadda mentioned the establishment of the National Cancer Institute at AIIMS-Jhajjar, the upgradation of Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute in Kolkata and the setting up of oncology departments in all 22 AIIMS. Citing a recent LANCET study, he underlined that "timely cancer treatment webinar such as faculty initiation has improved among medical significantly because of the Ayushman Bharat Jan Aarogya retired Yojna. Patients enrolled under teachers as visiting faculties to make unviable institutions AB-PMJAY saw a 90 per cent incorporating rise in access to cancer medical treatment within 30 days."

Multilateralism struggling with global |BJP wins MLC polls ED conducts in Andhra Pradesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home **P**^{Minister} Munister Natendia Minister Amit Shah on Chandrababu Naidu on the victory of NDA candidates Thursday thanked the people in the polls.

journey to new heights," the prime minister said, responding to a post by Chief Minister N Chief

hiring

Enforcement The

against SDPI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI

raids in money

laundering case

number of seats for undergraduate and a 135 per pooling

institutes, viable, competency-based

said from its official X handle.

Shrinate, in a post on X, said, "Warning: Your email, social media, bank and trading accounts are under attack." "The new income tax law allows tax officials unrestricted access to your emails: read your private conversations; your social media: monitor your posts, messages and interactions; your bank accounts: track every rupee you earn and spend; and your trading watch accounts: vour investments and financial moves.

"They need NO proof to do just suspicion. so, A government with unchecked power. The Modi government with that has been misusing agencies to silence critics and crush Opposition will now do this: harass and intimidate citizens, settle political scores by targeting opponents, weaponise tax department to destroy reputations and lives. is nothing but This surveillance. Will you just stay silent or look the other

conomic instability and food insecurity.

triple negative effect," she

The minister warned that

protectionism may bring

temporary gains but, in the

long run, leads to inflation,

trade

She stressed that two major global challenges — health and climate change - cannot solved without World international cooperation. There is growing scepticism about multilateral efforts, particularly in climate negotiations, following the disappointing outcome at COP29 in Baku, the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement and Argentina signalling its intention to do the same.

"Baku represented disappointment.... This climate of disappointment after the COP was due to developed countries not fulfilling their commitments, which leads, on one hand, to a loss of credibility and a deficit of implementation. This is now even more difficult to handle because it also results in a deficit of confidence," Silva said in response to a question from PTI.

Developed countries, historically responsible for most of the greenhouse-gas

However, they offered a paltry USD 300 billion by 2035, a mere fraction of the at least USD 1.3 Trillion needed annually from 2025, leaving many developing countries

deeply disappointed. Silva said multilateralism is not being able to "fully handle" global challenges. However, "there is no effective solution outside multilateralism (either). Multilateralism is the only way forward," she said, stressing that Brazil remains committed to strengthening

Calling for reforms in the UN system for global governance, Silva said changes are needed to make it more effective and adaptable. "Our reality is not static. We need swifter processes and swifter structures to deal with climate change.

Asked whether the US decision to leave the Paris Agreement would affect COP30, Silva said, "We cannot be denialists to not acknowledge that.'

to the BJP in Members of the Legislative Council (MLC) elections. The BJP has won two out of three MLC seats there. Elections were held on February 27.

'I thank the people of Telangana for blessing @BJP4Telangana with such phenomenal support in the MLC elections. Congratulations to our newly elected candidates," Modi said in a social media post. "I am very proud of our party Karyakartas working among the people with great diligence," he said.

In another post, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the victory of Democratic National Alliance (NDA) candidates in the graduate MLC elections in Andhra Pradesh.

"Congratulations to the winning candidates. The NDA governments at the Centre and in Andhra Pradesh will keep serving the people of the state and take the state's development

Prasad and P Rajasekharam won the graduate MLC elections Andhra in Pradesh. while an independent candidate secured victory in the teachers' constituency MLC poll.

Home Minister Amit Shah expressed gratitude to the people of Telangana for blessing the BJP with a thumping victory in the election to the state's legislative council.

'Gratitude to the people of Telangana for blessing the BJP with a thumping victory in the MLC election. Your trust inspires us to serve even harder," Shah said in a social media post.

The home minister said this is a triumph of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's untiring efforts to develop Telangana.

"Heartiest congratulations to Telangana BJP President @kishanreddybjp Ji along with the Karyakartas of the party for all the hard work,' he said.

trends

Directorate (ED)ed nationwide searches on Thursday as part of a money laundering investigation against the SDPI, the political outfit of the banned Popular

Front of India (PFI). The searches come after the federal probe agency arrested Social Democratic Party of

(SDPI) national India president MK Faizy on March 3 at the Delhi airport. He is currently in ED custody.

The searches were carried out at two locations in Delhi, including the SDPI headquarters in Nizamuddin West, Thiruvananthapuram and Malappuram in Kerala, Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh, Pakur in Jharkhand, Thane in Maharashtra, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Lucknow and Jaipur, said officials. The ED said, after the arrest of Faizy, that there was an 'organic" relationship between the two outfits and that the PFI (Popular Front of India) was carrying out its criminal

activities through the SDPI. The PFI was banned by the Union government September 2022, calling it an unlawful association and accusing it of indulging in terrorist activities. Multiagency searches by the ED, NIA and various state police organisations preceded the PFI ban. The SDPI was founded in 2009 and is also registered as a political party with the Election Commission of India. The ED told the court, while seeking Faizy's remand earlier this week, that PFI and SDPI were "organically" linked and that SDPI was nothing but the "political front" of PFI and was "funded and controlled" by the latter. The anti-money laundering agency said that it had evidence to state that there was a "deep-rooted" nexus between the two organisations, as there was "overlapping" membership of their cadres, involvement of PFI office bearers in the founding of SDPI, and the utilisation of each other's assets.

CREA report highlights severity of winter air pollution in India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) in its report, highlighted the severity of winter air pollution in India, revealing that 173 out of 238 cities recorded PM2.5 levels exceeding the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) of 40 µg/m . Aizawl, Mizoram recorded the lowest winteraverage PM2.5 level at 7 $\mu\text{g/m}$, making it the cleanest city in the analysis. Not a single city met the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline of 5 μ g/m , underscoring the widespread

said. According to the report,

air quality crisis, the report

city in India during winter 2024-25, with an average PM2.5 concentration of 159 μ g/m throughout the season. During the previous winter (2023-24), Delhi also topped the list with a higher average of $171 \,\mu g/m$. Byrnihat in Meghalaya

Delhi was the most polluted

followed closely in winter 2024-25, recording a PM2.5 concentration of 157 $\mu g/m$. Other cities among the top 10 most polluted included Hajipur, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Noida, Patna, Asansol, Durgapur, and Charkhi Dadri. The top 10 most polluted cities are located in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, West Bengal, and Assam along with Delhi.

Moreover, none of the 238

cities analysed met the World Organisation's Health (WHO) guideline of $5 \mu g/m$, emphasising the scale of air quality challenges. Winter refers to the period from October 1, 2024, to February 28, 2025 (winter 2024-25).

On a broader state level, Rajasthan (34 cities), Bihar (24 cities), and West Bengal (7 cities) had all monitored cities exceeding NAAQS. Similarly, Maharashtra (30 out of 31 cities), Odisha (15 out of 16 cities), and Uttar Pradesh (15 out of 20 cities) had a high proportion of cities with winter PM2.5 levels above the national standard. The report said over the 151-

day winter period, 100 cities featured in the top 10 most polluted cities are listed at



India Gate

least once. Of these, 44 cities appeared at least 10 times. Byrnihat had the highest recurrence (111 days), followed by Delhi (105 days), Hajipur (80 days), Ghaziabad

(52 days), and Bahadurgarh (47 days). Aizawl, Mizoram recorded the lowest winteraverage PM2.5 level at 7 $\mu g/m$, making it the cleanest city in the analysis. The top 10

least polluted cities included six cities from Karnataka, three from Tamil Nadu, and one from Mizoram.

Among the 98 (National Clean NCAP Clean Air Programme) cities with Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) data, 78 recorded winter-average PM2.5 levels above NAAQS, while all 98 WHO's exceeded the recommended limit. Similarly, in 140 non-NCAP cities, 95 surpassed NAAQS, and all remained above WHO guidelines. This highlights that air pollution is not limited to NCAP cities but extends to a wider set of urban areas.

"Data gaps remain a challenge in assessing air pollution

comprehensively. During winter 2024-25, no CAAQMS data was available for any day from stations in Darbhanga, Ernakulam, Hosur, Kochi, Kozhikode, Pathardih, and Thoothukudi. Additionally, 44 cities had less than 80 per cent data coverage, including 21 cities in Haryana. While all 24 cities in Haryana initially had data available at the start of winter, several monitoring stations stopped reporting by December. By the end of the season, only Charkhi Dadri, Faridabad, and Gurgaon met the 80 per cent data coverage threshold, while data from the remaining 21 cities, crucial for assessing winter pollution, was unavailable,' the report said.



Global economies grappling with population crisis: Chandrababu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA VISAKHAPATNAM

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday stated that the world's leading economies are grappling with a population crisis.

Speaking at a book launch, Naidu emphasised that while these countries possess advanced resources such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cutting-edge technolo-gies, they lack a sufficient workforce to operate them.

"All top countries in the world are struggling. There is no population. AI and technology exist, but there are no people to operate them," he said.

Citing examples of Europe, China and Japan, Naidu noted that ageing populations have become a significant challenge for these economies. However, he suggested that

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Disabilities (PwDs).

Samman Yojana'.

walk-out.

years.

BJP legislators on Thursday Dcreated a ruckus in the Jharkhand assembly, demand-ing an increase in the pension of widows and Persons With

The saffron party MLAs demanded a hike in the pen-sion so that these people get

financial assistance at par with beneficiaries of the 'Maiyan

Samman Yojana. The BJP legislators trooped into the well of the House, seeking a reply from the JMM-led government to their demand, and later staged a

They asked the government

RANCHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu during book launch of World History written by former Minister Daggubati Venkateswara Rao in Visakhapatnam India remains largely unaffect-

ed by this issue. Over the past few months, the TDP supremo has urged the people of Andhra Pradesh to have more children to counter

BJP brawls, walks out in Jharkhand Assembly,

demands higher pensions for widows, PwDs

the declining population trend. Naidu also highlighted that India is at a pivotal moment in history Recalling the Liberalisation,

Privatisation. and Globalisation (LPG) reforms introduced in the early 1990s under the Congress government, he said India gained a "first-mover" advantage in the

PTI

Information Technology sec-

tor. Expressing confidence in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat 2047 vision, Naidu asserted that Andhra Pradesh would achieve similar progress through its Swarna Andhra 2047 initiative. Despite Andhra Pradesh fac-

ing multiple challenges, Naidu reaffirmed his determination to navigate them, envisioning the Telugu people as a global-ly leading community. Comparing the state's current situation to being on a "ven-tilator," he stated that he reg-

ularly seeks support from the central government to address its issues. On Thursday, he also request-ed assistance from Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

and Sitharaman.

The event in the port city was attended by former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu

School paint sparks allegations of saffronisation in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BHUBANESWAR

The BJP government in Odisha has decided to paint all government school build-ings with a shade of orange, prompting the Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) to allege that it is part of the ruling party's attempt at saffronisation of education.

education. The BJP, on the other hand, asserted that the BJD, during its 24-year rule till June 2024, had painted school buildings green and student uniforms were green and white, similar to the party's colour code. The Odisha State Education Programme Authority

Programme Authority (OSEPA) has recently issued an instruction to all district collectors about painting school buildings with 'Orange Tan-N' colour.

"The government has been pleased to approve the new colour code. In this context, it is requested to issue suitable instructions to concerned field

functionaries for adoption of the approved colour code in all government schools, including PM SHRI schools, during construction, repair and renova-tion works," OSEPA state project director Ananya Das wrote to all collectors, who are the chairpersons of Samagra Shiksha in districts.

This order would be in supersession of all previous instructions related to the colour code of school buildings, she said. Responding to the develop-ment, senior BJD leader Prasanna Acharya said it is "sheer politics and con-dompable" demnable"

"It is a peculiar psychology. I don't understand why this government is making such bogus decisions. What is the purpose? Can you change the education system by changing the colours? Can you infuse more energy among the children by changing the colour?" he asked. Alleging that the BJP is trying to infuse politics in the minds

Acharya claimed that nothing positive would be achieved by such a decision which involved crores of rupees of from the state exchequer.

state exchequer. In his reaction, School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond said the pre-vious BJD government had changed the colour of the schools and painted them with their next colour code

their party colour code. "We are not changing the colour of the school buildings. It was the BJD government which had changed the colours of school uniforms to buildings. The decision will create a good environment and the schools will look attractive,'

Gond said. In October last year, the BJP government changed the colour of the school uniforms of students studying in classes nine and 10 of government and aided schools.

cent in the near future, he

Highlighting the Haryana gov-

ernment's commitment to

strengthening security forces, the Chief Minister said that

special attention has been given to technical upgrades,

resource enhancement, and the expansion of training facil-

ities to better equip police force for any challenges they

The new uniforms have a combination of light brown, chocolate and clay-baked yellow of schoolboys and girls, colours.

added.

may face.

Haryana CM urges CRPF trainees to serve impartially

PARVESH SHARMA GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini called upon the trainee officers of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to take a pledge to carry out their duties imporcarry out their duties impar-tially and fearlessly. He also urged them to always

be ready to protect the law and the Constitution, safeguard the rights of the people with sensitivity and stand firm in their commitment to truth, honesty and dedication, regardless of the circumstances.

The Chief Minister was speaking as chief guest at the passing out parade ceremony of 55th batch of directly appointed Gazetted Officers of the CRPF in Gurugram on

Thursday. A total of 39 trainee officers, including two women offi-cers, passed from the CRPF academy after completing a rigorous training program. He expressed confidence that these 39 trainee officers would discharge their responsibilities

tion, contributing to the integrity, unity, and sovereignty of the nation in line with the proud legacy of the CRPF. Commending the CRPF for its invaluable contribution to the

with utmost honesty and devo-

country's internal security, the Chief Minister described the force as the backbone of country's security. He also commended the CRPF

He also commended the CRPF for adopting modern tech-nologies and training tech-niques, which are helping to develop professional and capa-ble officers prepared to face any challenges in the field. The Chief Minister further encouraged the newly passing out officers to engage in con-

out officers to engage in constant learning, stressing that ongoing education and re-learning are essential for suc-

cess He highlighted that the CRPF is progressing towards mod-ernisation and empowerment, ensuring that the force remains equipped to tackle evolving

security challenges. "Congratulating the trainee officers, their families, and the entire CRPF, the Chief

Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini during the passing out parade of the 55th batch of DAGOs at CRPF Academy in Gurugram Pioneer Photo

Minister expressed his confi-He thanked the Prime Minister for this initiative, which has led dence that these officers would make significant contributions to the recruitment of many women in the Armed Forces. to the country's internal securitv and nation-building," he "The Haryana Government said. Saini also recalled the his-toric decision of Prime has also encouraged women to serve in the police force, with women currently making up Minister Narendra Modi to allow women in the Armed 10 percent of the state police. Forces, recognising the power of half the nation's population. The State government aims to increase this figure to 15 per"In addition, the state has established a dedicated Sainik and Ardh-Sainik Welfare Department to support ex-servicemen and paramilitary forces. In cases of martyrdom, families of Haryana soldiers serving in the armed forces and paramilitary forces receive a financial assistance of ₹1 Crore, along with a government job for one family mem-ber. To date, 415 dependents have been provided with jobs," he informed.

Director General CRPF Gyanendra Pratap Singh, Director CRPF Academy Sunil Kumar Jha and others dignitaries were also present on this occasion.

'Maiyan Samman Yojana'. Under this scheme, the gov-ernment provides ₹2,500 per 72,000. month to women beneficiaries in the age group of 18 and 50 The government assured the agitating members that it would consider the demand. BJP MLA Satyendra Nath Tiwary first raised the issue

during question hour. Replying to this, scheduled caste, tribe and backward class minister Chamr Linda said 'Maiyan Samman' and pension are two different programmes. "Maiyan Samman is a government's women empowerment programme, while the pension scheme is run under the Centre-state share arrrangement. There are complications in increasing the pension amount. If the Centre increases its share, we will also hike our share," Linda said.



Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren with his wife and JMM MLA Kalpana Soren during the Budget session of the state Assembly in Ranchi

whether it intended to raise Tiwary said the population of widows in Jharkhand is the pension amount of widows, physically challenged persons and elderly people at around 2.85 lakh, while the par with the beneficiaries of number of physically challenged persons is around

"They receive only ₹1,000 a month, while 'Maiyan Samman' Yajana beneficiaries monthly receive ₹2,500. Interestingly, cooks in schools and health sahiyas (assistants) get monthly remuneration of ₹2,000, which is lower than the benefit of Maiyan Samman

scheme," Tiwary said. Congress MLA Rameshwar Oraon also urged the government to a illeger disparity. State minister Sudivya Kumar said that the government would soon increase the remuneration of cooks and health sahiyas to ₹3,000.

should get a pension, which should be at par with the benefits of 'Maiyan Samman Yoajana' 'I want to ask the government if it is in favour or not of the

pension hike Replying to this, parliamentary affairs minister Radha Krishna Kishore said that they would study the pension sys-tem of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chandigarh and then will consider the demand.

BJP legislators sought a specific reply from the government if it would increase the pen-

NHRC takes cognisance of alleged discrimination in TN | JU fracas: FIR lodged against

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

quoting reports. against their alleged The NHRC has taken "suo the statement said. the men ers of a

against their alleged ostracism, motu cognisance of a media The Commission has observed National Human Rights report that a village chief that the content of the news KOLKATA report if true raise a seriou Following a Calcutta High PCourt order, the Kolkata police on Thursday filed FIRs issue of violation of human rights of the victim families. Therefore, it has issued notice to the District Collector, against Bengal Education Minister Bratya Basu and sever-Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu calling al others including senior for a detailed report within Trinamool Congress leader and two weeks," the statement said. According to the media report, professor Om Prakash Mishra in carried on February 20, "the victhe case of protest and clashes that rocked the campus last tim families were barred from accessing local stores, other Saturday inside the Jadavpur facilities, and communicating University. with other residents?

Bengal education minister

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

some students were injured in the incident leading to a statewide

BJP MLA Shatrughan Mahto again brought up the issue in a starred question. Dhanwar MLA and Jharkhand

president Babulal BJP Marandi said widows and physically challenged persons

physically challenged persons. Subsequently, they trooped into the well of the House and raised slogans against the government. Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahato urged them to go back to their seats as the government assured them to consider the matter.

The BJP legislators, however, continued to create a ruckus in the Assembly and then walked out of the House.

Thursday said it has taken suo motu cognisance of the reports alleging ostracisation of 30 people of eight families by a village chief over a land dispute in Tenkasi in Tamil Nadu, and issued a notice to its district collector.

These families were "barred from accessing" local stores, other facilities, and communicating with other residents, NHRC said in a statement,

family when they initiated a legal battle against a man over land encroachment in Sambavarvadakarai town in Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu", it said.

Seven other families were also allegedly ostracised when they supported this family. Reportedly, the police arrested

30 people of eight families when they protested in front of the office of the District Collector wing students' unions on Monday.

Expressing concern at the intelligence failure on the part of the police regarding a built up inside the campus Justice Tirthankar Ghosh on Wednesday rapped the police administration and wondered why only one-sided FIRs had been registered. The Court also directed the administration to file a comprehensive report regarding the incident.

Quite a few people including

Congress to challenge BJP on key issues in Haryana Assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

¬he budget session of Haryana Assembly, which will begin here on Friday, is likely to be a stormy as the Opposition Congress will likely corner the ruling BJP over a host of issues, including unemployment, paper leak, rising debt, law and order and farmers' plight.

According to the tentative schedule of the Budget session, the ses-sion will begin with the Governor's Address on Friday. There will be general discussion in the House on the Governor's Address on March 10, 11 and 12. The Budget estimates for 2025-26 will be presented on March 13 by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, who also holds the Finance portfolio while general discussion on the budget will take place on March 17 and 18.

As per the tentative schedule, the Budget session will continue till March 25. Congress leader and former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda has said his party will strongly raise the issues including "paper leak, unemployment, law and order and corruption"

"It has become clear to the entire state that the BJP is protecting the paper leak mafia, because one paper after another is getting leaked and there have been scams in every paper from the state board exams to recruitment under this government," Hooda said recently.

"One after the other, scams, including those related to mining, are being exposed. Corruption, unemployment and crime are continuously increasing in the state," Hooda alleged. The damage to farmers' crops because of recent heavy rain, said "deteriorating law and order, rising debt" and other issues will also be raised by the party, he said. Indian National Lok Dal has

said the party will prominently raise various issues related to public interest during the Budget session. Meanwhile, with the Assembly session beginning Friday, the Congress party is yet to name the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader. After BJP rode to power for a third consecutive term in Haryana in last year's Assembly polls, the Congress MLAs have attended three sittings of the Assembly without a Leader of Opposition. Meanwhile, during the Budget session, the government is going to bring a fresh version of the bill on the regulation of travel agents. Chief Minister Saini had recently said the travel agents involved in sending the state youth abroad through illegal routes are being identified and strict action will be

taken against them. Saini had also said the government has made full planning to implement the 'Lado Lakshmi Yojana'

Ahead of the October 2024 Haryana polls, the BJP had promised ₹2,100 to women as monthly financial assistance for the women under this scheme if the party returned to power.

The Budget session is coming up and we will be making the pro-vision of its budget, Saini had Meanwhile, ahead of the presen-

tation of the Budget, Saini, in recent weeks, held pre-budget consultations with diverse groups to gather valuable suggestions. He also sought suggestions from ruling and opposition MLAs. Saini had on Tuesday said that the state budget for 2025-26 will be growth-oriented, with a special focus on sectors such as agriculture, education, health, sports, infrastructure, and women empowerment. He emphasised that the budget will lay a strong foundation for the state's progress and contribute to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India) by 2047.

"Our goal is to present a budget that drives prosperity for every citizen of the state," he added. Saini said the state government is working to improve the lives of people through various reforms. The state government has brought about a revolutionary change in governance over the past 10 years, marking the most significant transformation in over a decade, Saini added.

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

Amid speculations of an Awidening crevice between Mamata Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek who is also the Trinamool Congress (TMC) general secretary the latter on Thursday remained conspicuous by his absence in the crucial core committee meeting of the party that the Bengal Chief Minister had constituted last week to deal with the alleged permeation of electoral rolls with "ghost voters" - as an alleged "part of BJP's ploy to win the next year's State elections.

The leaders of the core committee - comprising Firhad Hakim, Subrata Bakshi, Arup Biswas among others considered close to the Chief Minister — met on Thursday to discuss the issue of "spurious" electoral rolls.

According to sources close to the junior Banerjee he would hold a separate meeting on March 15 where he is likely to call all district and block level leaders. Though sources in the TMC said that much should not be read about Abishek Banerjee's Thursday's developments there was hushed talks about his absence from the meeting. The junior Banerjee who is also

an MP from Diamond Harbour constituency is reportedly unhap-py with the way his own coterie being marginalised in the party. Incidentally the issue became public recently when Abhishek



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee

himself clarified his stand from

a public platform. He told a party organisation meeting called by the Chief Minister at Netaji Indoor Stadium that rumors were being fanned that he was moving away from the party which he vowed to be untrue.

"There is a propaganda in the social media that I am quitting the party. This is being done by the vested interests in the BJP. But I must say that I am not a traitor like Suvendu Adhikari or Mukul Roy. I had identified them as traitors who were betraying the party. I will not join the BJP come what may even if they cut my throat. I will still shout 'Mamata

Banerjee Zindabad. I will not join BJP. I will not betray the TMC or Mamata Banerjee," Abhishek had told the party members in presence of the Chief Minister Meanwhile, in a related develop-ment senior TMC leaders including Subrata Bakshi, Firhad Hakim, Arup Biswas, Chandrima Bhattacharya and Ritabrata Banerjee on Thursday met the Chief Electoral Officer to discuss the permeation of fake voters in the electoral rolls.

'We have alerted our leaders down the line and a statewide scrutiny is on. Hundreds of fake names are appearing that have been included in the voters' list. Many of these people live outside

Bengal and have different EPIC numbers in some cases they have the same EPIC numbers. This is a big scam and we have alerted the CEO about this and scrutiny will continue," said Bhattacharva

PTI

Earlier the Chief Minister had alleged that the BJP was filling the voters' list with ghost voters in order to win the 2026 Assembly elections like they allegedly did in Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi.

"The leaders in Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi could not catch this trick but here we have caught it and will purge all the voters' lists clean. We will defeat the BJP once again," she said.

Army hosts 'Arunachal Pradesh -India Centric Geospace' seminar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DIBRUGARH

The Indian Army hosted a two-day seminar titled 'Arunachal Pradesh — India Centric Geospace' in Assam's Dibrugarh district, an official release said on Thursday. The two-day seminar, which began on Wednesday at Dinjan Military Station, was attended by senior military officials, policymakers and

scholars. It provided valuable insights into the region's geopolitical, economic and development aspects, it added.

Leading scholar and commentator on transboundary rivers, climate change and the Arctic, Uttam Kumar Sinha, emphasised the need for India to enhance its river management capabilities independently rather than reacting to China's activities.

He stressed a scientific, sustainable and people-centric approach to infrastructure development.

🕋 NEW DELHI | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

A game changer

The strengthening of EU-India ties offers a promising path towards stability, prosperity and technological advancement

he European Union's outreach to India has gained significant momentum, marking a new chapter in their strategic relationship. In the wake of global disruptions, including the shifting stance of the United States under Donald Trump-characterised by tariffs, the withdrawal of support for Ukraine, and disengagement from Gaza-the strengthening of EU-India ties emerges as a stabilising force in global geopolitics. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's recent visit to India underscores the EU's commitment to deepening ties with New Delhi. Meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Hyderabad House, von der Leyen expressed the EU's high regard for India as a partner. She emphasised that as the two enter the third decade of their strategic partnership, "the best is yet to come." This sentiment reflects the EU's vision of India as a key player in shaping global economic and political landscapes. A focal point of their discussions was the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), a crucial initia-



tive aimed at boosting connectivity, trade and energy cooperation.

Given the evolving geopolitical dynamics, this corridor could serve as a counterbalance to China's Belt and Road Initiative, ensuring a more diversified and resilient global supply chain. A significant highlight of the India-EU partnership is its deepening engagement in digital and technological arenas. With India emerging as a technological powerhouse and the EU striving for digital sovereignty, collaboration in these areas can create a formidable synergy. The EU's focus on clean energy aligns with India's ambitious renewable energy goals. Such initiatives can help India and the

EU lead the global transition towards a sustainable future. Beyond technology and energy, trade remains a cornerstone of EU-India ties. Both sides are actively negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that could unlock significant economic potential. The EU is India's second-largest trading partner and a comprehensive trade agreement would not only boost exports but also enhance supply chain resilience, particularly in a world grappling with economic volatility. With Trump's protectionist policies disrupting global trade, an EU-India trade pact could serve as a counterweight, ensuring that both economies remain competitive and open to global commerce. The collaboration on supply chain resilience will also be crucial in mitigating risks associated with overdependence on specific markets. With Trump's policies creating uncertainty in trans-Atlantic relations and global trade, the EU's pivot towards India reflects a strategic recalibration. The EU recognises India's growing role as a stabilising force in global affairs-both as a democratic counterweight to authoritarian regimes and as a crucial player in maintaining a rules-based international order. The EU-India partnership stands at a defining moment. With digital collaboration, green energy initiatives, and robust trade negotiations at the forefront, this relationship could reshape global economic and political alignments.



When no solution is the only solution



Whether due to ego or rivalry, certain disputes become intractable, spanning generations. The irony is that winning does not always make one a winner

ne of the bigger challenges in life is to find an answer to a question dealing with life itself. The glib belief is that every problem has a solution. A wisecrack has rightly commented that every problem has a solution but the solution creates a problem of its own. If it were a simple, straightforward dimension, such as that, there would be nothing to worry about because problems and solutions would be in a dyadic relationship.

The problem arises when a problem is not solvable because two sides want a solution on their terms or indeed have no solution at all. This need not necessarily be an act of mischief, but it may be a simple case of jealousy/envy or indeed a bitter competitiveness that brooks no solution at all. The first exposure to such an intractable jungle-like situation today is that the two parties concerned themselves do not see a solution worth pursuing. This may be because of many reasons, one of them being that the person concerned may genuinely believe he has an upper hand and that he is not going to lose that advantage. Very often, this gets intertwined with ego, worth, or dislike.

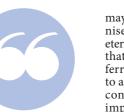
If there are stakeholders beyond this, of a variety which see an advantage in the contending parties being maintained as contending parties, or there is a personal dislike between the two people concerned, then also a solution becomes well-nigh impossible. Thus, it is that certain problems have subsisted beyond generations and led to devastating wars which ultimately wiped out both parties, and there was nothing for the winner to take away at all.

The story of the Mahabharata is a telltale story of the winners sort out the situation may be ultimately having nothing to the only route forward. gain, at least for the generation in play. In more recent times, World War I and World War II id and World War II conflict, one being a gender did not produce any obvious dimension and another as winners, and the world went sibling rivalry. Be that as it

back to a full circle. The better-known cases of history have similar dots on a lesser scale and indeed, this can be true also in personal lives

The long and short of it is, it takes more than a 'win' to become a winner. At a different scale altogether, personal dislikes and prejudices can be so large that one adopts an attitude where one concludes that, irrespective of the nuances, one will simply not work towards a solution. Here again, the resolution of the conflict becomes difficult. Hence, it is a fortunate situation where both sides want a situation of solution and therefore are open to it. This is so often a given in this set of circumstances that to pray for it would be to hope for the near impossible.

To expect divine grace to



THUS, IT IS THAT **CERTAIN PROBLEMS** HAVE SUBSISTED BEYOND

GENERATIONS AND LED TO DEVASTATING WARS WHICH ULTIMATELY WIPED OUT BOTH PARTIES AND THERE WAS NOTHING FOR THE

may, it is necessary to recognise that no conflict can be eternal either. While it is true that generations have transferred the conflict from one to another, the nature of the conflict itself became an impediment to solutions, and if nothing else, the ego factor may become a primary determinant of the way forward. Under such circumstances,

the generational transformation of the rivals involved alters the nature of the solution that is feasible. Indeed, no solution is feasible unless it is doable and sustainable. People often

align together because of their own needs and then find arguments to sustain their position. In many cases, logic gives way to simple impulses and a nonthinking solution takes hold of the operationally powerful. The operationally powerful impose their solution,

flowing out of the conflict was not met. Under such circumstances, it may be useful to suspend the conflict and learn to live with it rather than solve the problem. Avoiding a problem or indeed learning to live with it may at times be a solution. This can follow many routes including not letting the problem escalate.

The enigmatic context is that very often, as the needs of the combatants change, the search for solutions also becomes elusive. This is because one has no use for "the solutions".

The times have changed, and the solutions are passive because there is nothing left to enjoy in becoming a winner. It is therefore important to realise, in many cases, that a solution is only a solution if it makes winners of all concerned. However, that may be another matter altogether.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)



WINNER and the predictable hap TO TAKE AWAY pens. The flawed solution is subverted by the party whose AT ALL basic need for advantage

An Indian myna perches on a red silk-cotton tree (Bombax ceiba), in Nadia

A parent's reflection on society and the next generation



I was raised with the values of respect, resilience and financial prudence principles. yet, I sometimes wonder if these values still carry the same significance

was born in a middle-class family 66 years back, less than 12 years after independence. My father was an engineer in a state government department. I came across my mother's diary a few years back. She had spent her life painstakingly balancing a low government income against the rising expenses of bringing up three children. My parents inculcated in us the value of money.

Another value that was deeply ingrained into our psyche by them was to respect everyone. I was taught that relationships were more important. A look festival of reproach from my mother

was enough for me to realise my mistake if I was disrespectful. This is what I tried to pass on

to my children. I often look at them with pride. Having lived a better part of my life trying to hold on to these values, I now find myself at crossroads. Rapid urbanisation has resulted in concentration of bigger population in apartments.

Technology has evolved like never before to provide faster modes of communication. Society WhatsApp group is unfortunately used by a few people at the expense of harin the murky world of society



politics. It does not matter to

them if their actions are

The condominium seems to

be mirroring the happenings

beyond the residential com-

plex. I am left wondering that

derogatory.

monious relationships Recently, I found myself at the

receiving end of a vitriolic diatribe. My fault was that I had taken the initiative of organising a cultural and literature

politics and religion, the two I sincerely believe that our factors that should create a youngsters need more exposure to the arts to navigate an unified society, are used to increasingly fast-paced and divide. more stressful world than It is at times like these that I start doubting the values what we grew up in. The language used by a few of these inculcated by my parents, persons, who have claimed to and that in turn, I expect my be my good friends and children to follow. I talked to neighbours over the past eight many other residents working years, left me nonplussed at best and painfully hurt at with me for the festival. They were also indignant and sad worst. It should not have surabout the way things were prised me. These very people turning out to be. have been habitually doing They had their own stories to the same followed by profuse narrate. One lady was rudely apologies as it suits them. It told to curb her flair for takjust seems expedient to them ing good initiative. Another lady was left with only four

other friends when it was time to pitch in. The majority suffers in silence at the hands of the minority. It made me rethink if our parents were wrong in turning us what many may call timid to suffer mental anguish. I also debated if we passed the right values to our children.

We were unanimous in our shared belief. I derived strength as I looked around, and talked to these parents, many of whom were younger. We have been right in teaching our children to be better humans.

Our children are better than us. They are putting the same technology to better use. #Me Too, Girls' Right to Education, Let's Talk, Good Touch Bad Touch are only a few of the initiatives that they are pursuing with single-minded devotion to make this a better world. I am confident that they will set better examples for the next generations to raise their voices and not suffer in silence against the bullies

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

THE EDITOR ERS I (O)

BLUE ECONOMY NEEDS PROTECTION

Madam — Kudos for 'Balancing growth and conservation' (March 6) for highlighting the most sensitive issue of conservation at Kerala's Quilon fish bank. This is only one of the several aspects of conservation, and its ignorance has a massive, devastating effect on the blue economy and fishing community. Fiftysix percent of our coastal population is directly and indirectly dependent on the blue economy. The conservation aspect of sustainable growth and development has long been ignored by the policymakers. The political ecosystem is insensitive to conservation. In fact, extensive conservation projects need to be conceived and implemented on all river fronts, particularly in the hilly areas. In the absence of geological studies and research and conservation, mass destruction of life and property in hills is caused by torrential rains and floods.

Several rivers are disappearing fast, causing mass annihilation of flora and fauna as well as cultivation. The Geological Survey of India should carry out wideranging and widespread surveys and research in hills, riverbeds, and coastal regions to ascertain and fetch fresh data. The Archaeological Survey of India should engage conservation architects for carrying out conservation of excavation sites, historic places and buildings, ancient temples, river fronts, and coastal regions. Against all beliefs and perceptions, the conservation projects are potential employers and sources of revenue. Unfortunately, our engineering colleges are producing fewer conservation architects. Urban development is incomplete without conservation. Oceanic studies and research institutions should be established in all potential regions for sustainable growth and development.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

US IMPOSES HEAVY TARIFF

Madam— US President Trump launched trade war against America's three biggest trade partners, drawing immediate retal- Canada also had initiated disruptive

Modi inaugurates Vantara



he recent visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the inauguration of Vantara – Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in Gujarat's Jamnagar has hit the headlines with heart warming pictures of the PM spending happy moments with the animals there. Spread over 3,000 acres, Vantara- a brain child of Anant Ambani of the Reliance group is all set to become the world's largest zoo and

iation from Mexico, Canada and China. Trump's government has imposed 25 per cent tariffs on Mexican and Canadian imports though Trump limited the levy to 10 per cent on Canadian energy. He also doubled the tariffs he slapped last month on Chinese products to 20 per cent. China retaliated with tariffs of upto 15 per cent on a wide array of US farm exports. It has also expanded the number of US companies subject to export controls and other restrictions by about two dozens. Canadian PM has said that his country would plaster tariffs on more than 100 billion dollars of American goods over the course of 21 days.

Mexican President has said that Mexico would respond to the new taxes with its own retaliatory tariffs. Trump has said that tariffs are intended to address drug trafficking and illegal immigration. He has also announced that the tariffs will come down only if the US trade deficit narrows. China has filed complaint with the WTO against US in response to Trump's tariff hikes on Chinese goods.

rehabilitation centre. The world class rehabilitation centre is equipped with modern veterinary technology, including ICU, MRI, CT scan, X-ray, dialysis, ultrasound and endoscopy units, besides research institutions and academic hubs

Vantara which received the prestigious 'Prani Mitra' national award focusses on rescue, rehabilitation and protection of animals globally. The facility has through its various operations rescued abused, injured and endangered animals from different parts of the globe. The rehabilitation center has been designed to recreate a natural and nurturing environment akin to the lush habitats from which the rescued animals hail from.

M Pradyu | Kannur

proceedings against US at the WTO on the additional tariffs. Trump's new tariff Imposition will certainly rattle financial markets, raising concern about renewal inflation and business uncertainty in US and abroad.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

CONG LEADER COURTS CONTROVERSY

Madam - Congress spokesperson Sharma Mohamed stirred controversy by calling Rohit Sharma "fat for a sportsman" and the "most unimpressive" captain India has had. Congress is already losing deposits and the recent debacle at Delhi elections proved their worth and the high command must have decent control over the cadres by teaching them how to talk on a public platform. In a historic achievement, India captain Rohit has become the first captain to lead his team to the final in all four major Men's ICC tournaments

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

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FIRSTCOLUMN

THE RISE OF EU-INDIA **DIGITAL COOPERATION**

The EU and India are strengthening ties in digital governance, AI and semiconductor resilience



KUMARDEEP BANERJEEE

ven as President Trump of the USA was busy being the world's most popular content creator, the global forces were turning the gears of a strategic realignment. After the televised, admonishment of Ukrainian President Zelensky by US President Trump and his VP JD Vance, the former was seen with several leaders of the European Union. As the case may be European leaders didn't have much to offer to Ukraine, except a subtle message to make peace with the US President. It may be a matter of time, before, Ukrainian President Zelensky has to evacuate his bunker office in Kyiv and perhaps make way for a more, current US head of state worldview representative. The message for the world was clear, the US would no longer be happy to bankroll, what it considers vague political narratives, potentially considered to be the hallmark of a free liberal world order.

This world order, incidentally a post-World War creation, by the US, ensured free fair open markets, meant for the prosperity of all. What this free world order has achieved in the past many decades can be debated, however, it has ensured the US retains its supremacy in the economic prosperity index and so have many of the aligned nations including India (since the 1990s). Just before the US and Ukraine visible splat, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen led a large delegation of senior ministers to Delhi to re-establish the highlevel EU India Trade and Technology Council conversations. Given the current geo-political landscape, one of the major focus areas was Digital Economy and Governance.

The European Union (EU) and India reaffirmed their commitment to deepening digital cooperation, emphasising shared values through their Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance, and Digital Connectivity. Both sides pledged to accelerate human-centric



digital transformation and advance key technologies, including AI, semiconductors, High-Performance Computing and 6G, to benefit both economies and societies. The two parties agreed to enhance research and innovation to improve competitiveness and economic security while promoting a cyber-secure global digital ecosystem. They also stressed the importance of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in fostering inclusive digital economies. Both sides committed to ensuring interoperability between their respective DPIs, safeguarding human rights, and protecting personal data and intellectual property. They also discussed mutual recognition of e-signatures to facilitate cross-border digital transactions On semiconductor collaboration, the EU and India focused on strengthening the resilience of supply chains and expanding joint research in areas such as chip design and sustainable technologies. The two sides underscored their shared commitment to the responsible development of AI, agreeing to further cooperation through joint projects and the development of frameworks for ethical AI. They also plan to enhance cooperation on large language models and Al applications in sectors like climate change and bioinformatics. They also committed to implementing the Global Digital Compact, which was endorsed at the UN General Assembly in September 2024, and ensuring continued global support for multi-stakeholder internet governance at the upcoming World Summit on Information Society +20. It may be the right click for both the EU and India. The EU and India are seizing the opportunity to strengthen their digital and technological ties. Their renewed partnership signals a commitment to fostering a resilient, secure, and inclusive digital future, underpinned by shared values and mutual economic interests. As old alliances shift, new partnerships may define the contours of the evolving world order.

Namaste at Oscars: Indian cinema has arrived



analys \$ 07

Indian storytelling captivates and inspire audiences worldwide. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future of Indian cinema



he Namaste at the Oscars 2025 has reinforced the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: "The world is one family," a vision that transcends borders yet thrives on respect, mutual interdepen-dence and a shared spirit of creativity. This symbolic gesture was not merely a greeting but a powerful moment of inclusivity, reflecting cinema's unique ability to bring together artists, audiences and creators from across the globe.

This moment at the Academy Awards highlights how soft power is no longer confined to diplomacy alone; it now permeates events, institutions, and cultural exchanges. Cinema, often regarded as the perfect brand platform for fostering relationships, stood at the centre of this phenomenon.

The Namaste was a gateway, introducing the legacy of Indian storytelling to a diverse global audience and reinforcing

came close, and Slumdog Millionaire (2008) swept the Academy Awards, yet these narratives were largely shaped by Western filmmakers. The paradigm began to shift with R (2022), which not only won an Oscar for Naatu Naatu but also forced global audiences to acknowledge the unapologetic, high-energy story-telling of Indian filmmakers. This shift was further cemented A SIMPLE,

WELL-TIMED when Payal Kapadia's All We NAMASTE Imagine as Light (2024) won the HAS GIVEN Grand Prix at Cannes, a rare honour for Indian cinema. Films like Chaitanya Tamhane's The Disciple (2020), Rima Das's INCREDIBLE

INDIA A Village Rockstars (2017), and RENEWED Nandita Das's Manto (2018) have been steadily breaking barriers, proving that Indian cinema is no GLOBAL longer defined by stereotypes but IDENTITY.

not just participating but actively shaping the conversation. One powerful example of how such moments create ripples is Life of Pi (2012). When director Ang Lee won the Oscar for Best Director, he greeted the audience with a Namaste, acknowledging the deep Indian cultural influence on the film.

That moment reinforced India's storytelling traditions, but the Namaste at the Oscars 2025 is even more significant; it wasn't just about one film, it was about the entire Indian cinematic move-

ment. India must now leverage this momentum through platforms like WAVES, the country's film export initiative. WAVES has the potential to push Indian cinema into untapped markets, ensuring a land of fantasy to a nation of action. It is no longer a question of whether Indian films will win the Oscar; it is now a matter of when and how often. India is no longer a guest at the global film table-it is a host, a creator, and an influencer.

The Namaste was not just a greeting; it was an invitation for the world to recognise Indian cine-ma's true potential. The time to capitalise on this moment is now. With the right vision and action, this could be the defining decade when Indian cinema not only par-ticipates in global storytelling but leads it.

The world has acknowledged India. Now, Indian cinema must ensure that every frame, every story, and every festival presence echoes the power of that Namaste. The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 was more than a greeting-it was a defining moment for Indian cinema on the global stage. It symbolised India's growing influence in storytelling, marking a shift from sporadic recognition to strategic presence. To sustain this momentum,

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

the deep cultural interconnect between nations through the lens of cinema. Beyond its immediate impact, this gesture has set the stage for the future of the Oscars and similar global platforms. It paves the way for cultural ethos to play a larger role in how nations and their creative industries collaborate and connect. A simple, well-timed Namaste has given Incredible India a renewed global identity, transforming its participation in world cinema from occasional recognition to strategic influence. Conan O'Brien's decision to open the

Oscars with Namaste was not accidental. It was a statement, an acknowledgement that Indian cinema is no longer at the periphery of global storytelling. This was not a token mention of India, nor was it a cursory reference to its billion-strong audience

This was a recognition of India's growing cinematic legacy and influence. India has long been part of Oscar history, but often through an external gaze. Films like Gandhi (1982) won big, Lagaan (2001)

by diverse, powerful narratives. The power of this Namaste must be harnessed beyond the Oscars. As India gears up for Cannes TRANSFORMING

ITS 2025, this moment should serve PARTICIPATION as a launching pad for stronger positioning. India's representation at global film festivals must be strategic; ensuring that films sent IN WORLD **CINEMA FROM** to these platforms reflect the OCCASIONAL depth, diversity, and dynamism of RECOGNITION Indian storytelling. The Cannes Film Festival has

TO STRATEGIC already been a crucial stepping INFLUENCE. stone for Indian cinema. From

Neecha Nagar (1946) winning the Palme d'Or to Masaan (2015) winning the Un Certain Regard prize, India's legacy at Cannes has been long-standing. However, now is the time to transition from isolated wins to sustained influence.

The government and industry stakeholders must work together to ensure that Indian cinema is

that films from independent, regional, and mainstream creators reach wider international audiences.

By riding the wave of this Namaste moment, WAVES can position Indian cinema not just as entertainment, but as a formidable cultural force. Strategic collaborations, international distribution networks, and dedicated Oscar campaigns must now be part of the plan.

If South Korea could orchestrate a global push for Parasite (2019), resulting in its historic Oscar win, India must now do the same, systematically pushing its best films into the international awards circuit.

This is not just about recognition; it's about claiming a rightful place in world cinema. The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 should serve as a wake-up call, a reminder that Indian cinema has evolved from

India must leverage platforms like WAVES, push for global collaborations, and ensure strong representation at festivals. The world has acknowledged India's cinematic potential; now, it is time for Indian cinema to lead. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future, ensuring that Indian storytelling continues to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide.

(The writer is former civil servant writes on cinema and strategic communication. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

Ganges dolphin resurfaces in Charikadia river after 25 years

The conservation of the Gangetic dolphin is not just about protecting a single species; it is intrinsically linked to keeping the Ganga clean

he recent sighting of the endangered Ganges dolphin (Platanista gangetica) in Assam's Charikadia River at Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur district, has sparked immense interest. Locally known as Sihu, this marks the first recorded presence of the species in the river since 1998, ending a 25-year absence. The prolonged disappearance of the Ganges dolphin from this waterway had fueled concerns over its dwindling numbers and possible extinction.

The disappearance of the species from the Charikadia River has been attributed to several factors, including hunting, habitat destruction, and depletion of food sources. Historically, Ganges dolphins thrived across major river sys



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

ments.

tems in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, including the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems. However, their population has now become fragmented, with significant numbers surviving only in isolated sections of these river systems. The Ganges dolphin is a

unique freshwater species that

on echolocation to hunt. on dolphin behavior, survival, Despite its remarkable adaptaand threats. tions, the species faces severe threats, primarily due to habi-It also provides training to fish-

ermen, equipping them with tat degradation from largeconservation techniques to scale development projects, protect dolphins during fishincluding dam construction, ing activities.Despite conservadrainage works, and embanktion efforts, human infrastructure projects continue to pose Pollution further exacerbates significant challenges. The colthe risks to their survival. lapse of a four-lane bridge Recognizing the urgent need under construction over the for conservation, India has Ganga River at Sultanganjtaken steps to protect the Ganges dolphin. The National Agwani in Bihar for the third time has drawn attention to the Dolphin Research Centre environmental impact of such (NDRC), the country's first developments. In 1990, the dedicated research facility for Bihar government declared a 60-km stretch of the Ganga this species, was inaugurated on March 4, 2024, in Patna, River from Sultanganj to Bihar. Located on the Patna Kahalgaon as the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, University campus, near the aiming to protect the species Ganges River, the center spans 4,400 square meters and aims while promoting eco-tourism. is functionally blind and relies to conduct in-depth research Recognizing the ecological



significance of the Ganges dolphin, the Government of India designated it as the national aquatic animal in October 2009 during the inaugural meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA), chaired by then-Prime Minister Dr. Prime Manmohan Singh. The Vikramshila Gangetic

Dolphin Sanctuary currently hosts approximately 250 dol-phins, frequently observed between Shankar Talkies and

Manik Sarkar Ghat. While government agencies have made efforts to protect the species, conservationists emphasize that illegal sand mining must be curbed to ensure its survival. Large-scale sand extraction disrupts river ecosystems by altering water flow and destroying the dolphins' habitat and food sources, such as small fish. Mechanized sand mining further exacerbates environmental damage, creating deep trenches that negatively impact

river health. Experts warn that unless illegal activities are controlled, the already fragile dol-phin population will continue to decline. On a more optimistic note, Union Water Resources Minister C.R. Patil has stated that the Namami Gange Mission-a large-scale initiative aimed at rejuvenating the Ganga-has contributed to a rise in the dolphin population. Experts view this as an encour-aging sign of improving environmental conditions. According to the Wildlife Institute of India, approxi-mately 4,000 Gangetic dol-phins currently inhabit the Ganga and its tributaries, with nearly 2,000 residing in Uttar Pradesh alone. In response, the Uttar Pradesh government has introduced a tourism policy designating a dolphin sanctu-

ary within the Chambal Sanctuary to bolster conservation efforts.Prime Minister Narendra Modi's launch of Project Dolphin has significantly increased public awareness of the species. This initiative strengthens conservation measures while promoting the ecological health of the Ganga River. Further emphasizing its commitment to pro-tecting the species, the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife has designated October 5 as National Dolphin Day. With increasing awareness and conservation initiatives, there is renewed hope that these remarkable creatures will continue to thrive in their natural habitat. (The writer is a senior jour-

nalist; views are personal)



EU leaders open emergency summit on defence and Ukraine aid PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PARIS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BRUSSELS

Received a day of emergency launched a day of emergency talks Thursday in a bid to beef up their own security and ensure that Ukraine will still be properly protected.

Friedrich Merz, the likely next chancellor of Germany, and summit chairman Antonio Costa discussed over breakfast in Brussels ways to fortify Europe's defences on a short deadline.

Merz pushed plans this week to loosen the nation's rules on run-ning up debt to allow for higher defence spending. Meanwhile, the 27-nation bloc

was waking up to news that French President Emmanuel Macron would confer with EU leaders about the possibility of using France's nuclear deterrent to protect the continent from Russian threats.

It all underscored the sea change that has taken place in the two months since Trump took office and immediately started questioning the cornerstones of cooperation between the United States and Europe that had been the bedrock of Western security since World War II.

"Given these profound shifts in US policy, and the existential threat of another war on the continent, Europe must manage its essential defence tasks," the European Policy Center think tank said in a commentary.

The bloc will "take decisive steps forward," Macron told the French nation Wednesday evening. "Member states will be able to increase their military



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy meets French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the European Council to discuss continued support for Ukraine and European defense, in Brussels on Thursday. PRESS TRUS OF INDIA

France is struggling to reduce

an excessive annual budget deficit of 5% of GDP, after run-

military equipment.

debt.

spending" and "massive joint Her proposal is underpinned by funding will be provided to buy and produce some of the most innovative munitions, tanks, weapons and equipment in Europe," he said.

Adding to the ebullient mes-sage, he said that "Europe's future does not have to be decided in Washington or Moscow." Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is taking part in the summit.

Limited room to increase ning up its total debt burden to 112% of GDP with spending on **spending:** European Commission President Ursula relief for businesses and con-sumers during the COVID-19 von der Leyen has proposed a pandemic and the energy cri-sis that followed Russia's invaplan to loosen budget rules so countries that are willing can sion of Ukraine spend much more on defense.

Five other countries using the euro currency have debt levels over 100% of GDP: Belgium, 150 billion euros (\$162 billion) worth of loans to buy priority Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal. Europe's largest econ-omy, Germany, has more room to borrow, with a debt level of Most of the increased defense spending would have to come from national budgets at a time 62% of GDP. when many countries are already overburdened with

62% of GDP. **Pressing security needs:** Part of any security plan is also to protect the increasingly belea-guered position of Ukraine. A Russian missile killed four people staying at a hotel in Zelenskyy's hometown

Zelenskyy's Zelenskyy's hometown overnight. He said that a humanitarian organisation's volunteers had moved into the hotel in Kryvyi Rih, in central Ukraine, just before the strike.

The volunteers included Ukrainian, American and British nationals, but it wasn't clear whether those people were among the 31 injured. to Ukraine as he sought to press Zelenskyy to engage in negoti-ations to end the war with Russia, bringing fresh urgency sharing with Ukraine, cutting to Thursday's summit. Thursday's meeting is unlike-ly to address Ukraine's most

pressing needs. It is not aimed at urgently drumming up more arms and ammunition to fill any supply vacuum created by the US freeze. Nor will all nations agree to unblock the estimated 183 billion euros (\$196 billion) in frozen Russian assets held in a Belgian clearing house, a pot of ready cash that could be seized. **PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** Still, the Europeans under-

lined the importance of the moment. "Europe faces a clear and present danger on a scale that none of us have seen in our adult life-

time. Some of our fundamental assumptions are being undermined to their very core? von der Leven warned in a letter to the leaders ahead of their meeting

But perhaps the biggest chal-lenge for the EU will be to take a united stance at a moment : Russia as a "threat to France and when it's fractured, since much : Europe," and said he had decidof what the bloc does requires ed "to open the strategic debate unanimous support. Hungary is threatening to veto part of the summit statement on Ukraine. Even if the challenges are so isaid the use of France's nuclear daunting, Thursday's summit is unlikely to produce immediate the hands of the French presidecisions on spending for dent. Ukraine or its own defenses. Macron's move comes in Another EU summit where the real contours of decisions election winner Friedrich Merz, would be much clearer is set for who recently called for a discus-March 20-21.

France is providing military intelligence to Ukraine after Washington announced it was freezing the sharing of Early this week, Trump ordered information with Kyiv, French a pause to US military supplies defence Minister Sebastien : Lecornu said Thursday.

The US said Wednesday it off the flow of vital information that has helped the wartorn nation target Russian invaders, but Trump admin-

istration officials have said that positive talks between Washington and Kyiv mean it may only be a short suspen-sion. American intelligence is vital for Ukraine to track Russian troop movements and select targets.

Speaking to France Inter radio on Thursday, Lecornu said France is continuing its intelligence sharing.

"Our intelligence is sover-eign," Lecornu said. "We have intelligence that we allow Ukraine to benefit from." Lecornu added that following

the US decision to suspend all military aid to Ukraine, French President Emmanuel Macron asked him to "accelerate the various French aid packages" to make up for the lack of American assistance.

support for the Ukrainian

army" and possibly deploying European forces, he said. Those forces "would not fight

on the front line, but they

would be there, on the contrary,

once peace has been signed, to

guarantee that it is fully respected," Macron detailed. He said

that a meeting of army chiefs of

staff of European nations will-ing to be involved is to be held

in Paris next week. US President Donald Trump

has pushed for Europe to carry

more of the burden of protecting the continent, and Trump administration officials have

indicated that the current US

level of engagement may not be

Macron also said he hoped to

convince Trump not to impose

tariffs on imports from Europe.

Trump has threatened to

impose 25% tariffs on European

goods, arguing that the

European Union has deliberate-

ly undermined trade with the

ÚS, which EU leaders have

forever.

denied.

Lecornu said that in the wake of the US decision, ship-ments of Ukraine-bound aid departing from Poland had been suspended, adding how-

ever that "Ukrainians, unfortunately, have learned to fight this war for three years now and know how to stockpile."

Macron offers French nuclear deterrence to protect Europe

 $F_{\text{Macron said Wednesday he}}^{\text{rench President Emmanuel}}$ will discuss with European allies the possibility of using France's nuclear deterrent to protect the continent from Russian threats, amid concerns over potential US disengagement. France is the only nuclear power in the European Union. Macron, in a televised address ahead of a special European summit Thursday, described on the protection of our allies on the European continent by our (nuclear) deterrent." He weapons would remain only in

response to a push by German sion on "nuclear sharing" with

France. EU leaders are set to address the issue of nuclear deterrence, among other topics, during the Thursday summit in Brussels focusing on support for Ukraine and European defense. European NATO allies have for decades counted on the powerful US deterrent.

"Europe's future does not have to be decided in Washington or Moscow," Macron said, insist-ing that "the innocence of the last 30 years" which followed the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall, is "now over."

Macron said Russia is now spending 40% of its state budget in military spending, with plans to expand its army by 2030 with 300,000 additional soldiers, 3,000 tanks and 300 jet fighters. "Who can believe that today's Russia will stop at Ukraine?" Macron asked.

Allies need to make sure Russia would not invade Ukraine again after a potential peace deal is signed, Macron said. This means providing "long-term

S Korean fighter jets accidentally drop bombs, injuring 8 people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SEOUL

Two South Korean fighter jets accidentally dropped eight bombs on a civilian area during a joint live-fire exercise with the US military on Thursday, injuring eight people, officials said

The MK-82 bombs released by the KF-16 fighter jets fell outside a firing range, the air force said in a statement. It apologised and expressed hopes for a speedy recovery of the injured and said it would offer compensation and take other necessary with the US military in Pocheon, a

city close to the heavily armed border with North Korea. The air force also said a committee would investigate the accident and examine the scale of the damage inflicted.

An unidentified air force official told local reporters that a pilot of one of the KF-16s had entered wrong coordinates for a bombing site. An unidentified Defence Ministry official told reporters that further investigation was needed to determine why the secfear. 16 also dropped The n bombs on a civilian area.

Mayor Paek Young Hyeun called the bombings "awful" and urged the military to halt drills in the city until it formulates reliable steps that can prevent a recurrence. He said that Pocheon, a city of 140,000 people, provides three major firing ranges for the South Korean and US militaries Park Seong-sook, a 70-year-old eyewitness who was not hurt in the bombing, said she thought "a war has broken out." "It was such a loud sound," she said,

adding that it left her trembling with arv said later Thursday i

Russian missile kills 4 in Zelenskyy's hometown hotel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

In Ukraine, a Russian ballistic missile killed four people staying at a hotel in President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown during the night.

Zelenskyy said a humanitarian organisation's volunteers had moved into the hotel in Kryvyi Rih, in central Ukraine, just before the strike, including Ukrainian, American and British nationals.

He didn't say whether those people were among the 31 injured. Russia fired 112 Shahed and decov drones

The air force said the fighter jets were taking part in the one-day firing drill In a televised briefing, Pocheon

has decided to suspend all live-fire drills across South Korea

well as two ballistic Iskander missiles, at Ukraine overnight, the Ukrainian air force said.

diplomat in London loses his job over Trump remarks

they can easily buy all their fer-

tilizer ahead of time. And con-

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA WELLINGTON (NFW 7FAI AND)

New Zealand's most senior envoy to the United Kingdom has lost his job over remarks he made about US President Donald Trump at an event in London this week, New Zealand's foreign minister said Thursday.

Phil Goff, who is New Zealand's High Commissioner to the UK, made the comments at an event held by the international affairs think tank Chatham House in London on Tuesday

Goff asked a question from the audience of the guest speaker, Finland's Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen, in which he said he had been re-reading a famous speech

by former British wartime leader Winston Churchill from 1938, when Churchill was a lawmaker in the government of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Churchill's speech rebuked Britain's signing of the Munich Agreement with Adolf Hitler, allowing Germany to annex part of Czechoslovakia. Goff quoted Churchill as saying to Chamberlain, "You had the choice between war and dishonour. You chose dishonour, yet you will have war." Goff then asked Valtonen: "President Trump has restored the bust of Churchill to the Oval Office. But do you think he

really understands history? As the audience chuckled at the New Zealand envoy's question, Valtonen said she would "limit myself" to saying that

Churchill "has made very timeless remarks," according to video of the event published by New Zealand news outlets. Valtonen's speech on Tuesday was billed as covering Finland's approach to European security at an event entitled Keeping the peace on NATO's longest border with Russia.

In response to questions from reporters, Foreign Minister Winston Peters said that Goff's remarks were "disappointing" and made the envoy's position "unten able

"We have asked the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Bede Corry, to now work through with Mr. Goff the upcoming leadership transition at the New Zealand High Commission in London,"

Peters said in a written statement. Goff has been New Zealand's envoy to the UK since January 2023. He did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Ófficials were "in discussion with High Commissioner Goff about his return to New Zealand," according to a written statement from New Zealand's foreign minister, which did not divulge more detail.

Former Prime Minister Helen Clark who was Goff's boss during his time as a lawmaker — denounced his sacking in a post on X, where she wrote the episode was "a very thin excuse" for removing a "highly respected" former foreign minister from his diplomatic role



A half-moon sets behind the Sultanahmet Mosque during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan in Istanbul, Turkey on Thursday PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

'Bear with me', Trump says as both farmers, consumers brace for tariff effects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA OMAHA (US)

 $F^{\rm armers \ and \ meat \ producers}_{\rm across \ the \ US \ can \ expect \ the}$ new tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China and the retaliatory action from those countries to hurt their bottom lines by billions of dollars if they stay in place a while, and consumers could quickly see higher prices for produce and ground beef. But some of the impact on farmers might not be felt until the next harvest and some products might actually get cheaper in the short run for consumers if exports suffer. And the price of corn, wheat and soybeans accounts for relatively little of the price of most

products. Plus, President Donald Trump could offer farmers significant aid pay-ments, as he did during the trade war with China during his first administration, to offset some of the losses.

In his address to Congress

Tuesday night, Trump argued omist at Kansas State that agricultural imports hurt University. The situation has some farmers American farmers and asked them to "bear with me again" as stocking up on equipment and he seeks to protect them. He supplies in preparation for

didn't mention any additional prices to go up, but it's not like aid. "I love the farmer," he said. If the tariffs make farmers sumers might have a hard time stockpiling perishable products uneasy about investing in expensive tractors and con-

like avocados and ground beef. sumers worry so much about The details of how the tariffs are groceries that they cut other implemented and whether any products are excluded will also spending, that would hurt the economy overall and could matter. How will farmers be hurt?: even lead to a recession. And consumers were already worried Corn and soybean prices for this about record egg prices amid a year's harvest already fell roughbird flu outbreak

"Exactly how strong our economy is over time has a lot to do with US consumers' comfort with continuing to go out to restaurants and continuing to buy washers and dryers and just that general activity. And a lot of what we're talking about here is probably going to slow some of that," said Glynn home "at best tone deaf." Tonsor, an agricultural econfor the amount of corn, soybeans, wheat, and other agricultural products that we now export in significant quantities," he said.

Meanwhile, as crop prices decline, farmers might see their fertilizer bill jump because 85% of the potash American farmers use in fertilizer comes from Canada, which also supplies some nitrogen fertilizer as well. The Fertilizer Institute President and CEO Corey Rosenbusch said "an open, fair, predictable and transparent trade environment between the U.S. and Canada is vital?

Ív 10% since the tariffs were first "We need potash to raise healthier crops," said Minnesota announced a couple of weeks farmer Danny Lundell, who Joe Janzen, an agricultural econhosted Gov. Tim Walz on his omist with the University of corn and soybean farm near Cannon Falls on Tuesday. "And Illinois, said that has "snuffed out" any profitability in those it doesn't matter if you're big, crops. He called Trump's commedium or small, it's going to ments that farmers may be able affect you?

But Iowa State agricultural to sell more of their products at economist Chad Hart said many "There is no domestic market farmers applied fertilizer to

their fields last fall and may not have to pay the higher fertilizer bills until later.

What about meat prices?: The United States imports a lot of lean beef to mix with fattier beef produced at American plants to make hamburger, and that imported beef will get more expensive because nearly half of it comes from Canada and Mexico. That's likely to show up in grocery stores in six to eight weeks. America exported more than

\$1.8 billion worth of chicken and another \$8.4 billion in red meat to Mexico, Canada and China. These tariffs could easily lead to a 10% drop in exports, Tonsor said.

If farmers aren't able to move that much meat overseas because of tariffs, they can seek to sell more domestically but they'll likely have to discount prices. Bad for farmers, but potentially good for consumers.

The impact will vary by prod-

uct. For instance, demand for steaks and bacon may remain relatively steady because little of that is exported, but the price of hams could drop in the US because Mexico is a major buyer of those. The price of specialty cuts like beef tongue that are almost entirely exported will plummet.

Livestock producers will see a bit of relief because the cost of the feed they use will decline, but Tonsor said they will still lose money overall.

How do farmers feel about this?: "Farmers are very concerned," said Steve Kuiper, a director at the Iowa Corn Growers Association. "People just aren't buying stuff," he said, which is hitting big companies like John Deere and local suppliers that sell their equipment.

That's the case for farmers who grow table crops as well as commodities. Katy Rogers, who manages an organic farm out-side Indianapolis, said that as

soon as Trump started talking about tariffs she bought everything she thought would see a price hike in the coming months

Kuiper hopes that the impacts of tariffs can be mitigated and eventually lead to a more level playing field that benefits farmers. He wants to see trade open with more countries. For instance, he said that for corn, China had already been favoring trade with Brazil, so he instead sees opportunity in places like India

But Trump has threatened additional reciprocal tariffs on other countries on April 2, which could make it harder for farmers to shift their exports to other countries

What is the lasting impact?: Trump can do a lot to ease farmers' pain with aid pay-ments. He gave them more than \$22 billion in aid payments in 2019 and nearly \$46 billion in 2020 though that year also in 2020, though that year also included aid related to the pan-

demic But Janzen notes that Trump is working to drastically slash spending across the federal overnment.

Walz, who lost his bid to become vice president last fall, said the tariffs will hurt trading relationships and prompt buyers in China, Mexico and Canada to look elsewhere.

Some trade experts question how long Trump's tariffs will last as they boost prices for American consumers, including his base voters, who have long complained about inflation and rising food prices.

"It is going to do nothing to help with the food inflation in the US," said Timothy Wise, author of "Eating Tomorrow" and expert on agricultural trade between Mexico and the US "I don't see it as sustainable. I don't find it plausible that corporate folks who surround Trump are going to sit back and allow him to destroy their foreign markets?



priate junctures.

nation.

House speaker behind him,

Trump delivered a longer, more

theatrical speech to a divided

Congress reflecting a divided

Republicans clapped and cheered

robustly at times. Democrats

mostly sat in stony silence and

occasionally shouted in protest.

One, Rep. Al Green of Texas, was

ejected from the chamber early

on after he stood up and inter-

Such unscripted moments - and

the high emotions visible behind

them — are rare in China. It is a

one-party state, and the

Communist Party brooks no

dissent in public. It strives to pre-

sent a facade of unity. In his

remarks, Li praised unity and

urged the country to "rally more

closely" around Xi's leadership.

In Washington, Trump lament-

ed that "there is absolutely noth-

ing I can say to make" Democrats

"happy or to make them stand or

American history

rupted the president.

with impacts on both the eco-

nomic and military rivalry

Trump made no mention of

technology except to say that it

would help build "a golden

dome" missile defense shield

over the U.S. He declared his

focus as commander-in-chief to

be "building the most powerful

military of the future." One mea-

sure, he said, was to resurrect the

American shipbuilding industry.

Li's report touched on defence

between the two.

China's premier & American president: Two leaders, two speeches, two differing world visions

AP BEIJING

Their words came just an hour apart this week — two major speeches by two of the world's most powerful leaders, delivered on opposite sides of the planet. Together, they illustrate the very different approaches the world's 21st-century powers are taking to achieve their respective national ambitions.

For China, it was a call for unity to overcome obstacles through innovation and "opening up" a time-honoured phrase in Chinese politics — to eventually accomplish national rejuvenation. It came from Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Beijing as he delivered an annual work report to the National People's Congress, nearly 3,000 representatives from a nation of 1.4 billion people.

Seven thousand miles away and an hour later, at 9 p.m. in Washington, President Donald Trump addressed both chambers of the U.S. Congress, more than 500 lawmakers representing a nation of 340 million, as he vowed to levy tariffs on imports and defeat inflation to "make America great again" — an equally resonant phrase for many in the United States

From setting to speaking style, the speeches were an ocean apart. Yet they struck a similar tone — that of a desire for greatness at a moment when the reigning superpower and its biggest challenger are seeing their interests increasingly at odds.

The paths their leaders choose will shape both countries' futures and the rest of the world's, too. Divided democracy vs. authoritarian unity: Li's speech was a set piece delivered to a loyal audience. For 55 minutes, he read a condensed version of a mostly dry and laudatory report on the

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public that the Sal Deed executed between Subhash Chander Suma and M/s Nothern Strips Ltd through its Direct Praveen Barsal is registered for the residential property bearing no.106 for land measuring 13.1/2Biswa out of Khasra no. 144/106 (00.13.1/2 in the extended Lal Dora of Wilage Kanjhawala, Delh having registration no. 2831, book no.1 volume no 153 page no. 23-33 dated 03.10.2013 before Sul Ponietras SV D. Denbin Lothis have have not 1. B No. and representing wrongfully before District Court at Gautam Buddh Nagar. Everyone is requested to check the Delhi Bar Council Identit Card before signing any **Document** Registrar SR VI D Rohini Delhi has been lost. LR No Affidavit / Vakalatnama. 2635636/2025 dt. 03-03-2024 is lodged in P.S Crime Branch, Delhi. If found kindly inform th undersigned in writing on the below mentione

dress. M/s Nothern Strips Ltd, Mob.-9555223323

PUBLIC NOTICE tice is hereby given to the Public that the Sale Deec ecuted between Jagdish Chander Sethi and M/s Nothern Strips Ltd through its Director Praveen Bans gistered for the residential property bearing no.106 or land measuring 13.1/2Biswa out of Khasra no 144/106 (00.13.1/2) in the extended Lat Dora o /illage Kanjhawala, Delhi-110081 having Registratio no. 2832. Book no.1 volume no. 153 page no. 34-44 dated 03.10.2013 before Sub Registrar SR VI D Rohin Delhi has been lost.LR No. 2635625/2025 dt. 03-03-2024 is lodged in P.S. Crime Branch. Delhi. If found

in the cheerleading way of government's performance last American politicians pumping up support for their policies. He year and its plans for 2025. He spoke from the stage of a grand, theatre-like chamber in promised steps - including cutthe Great Hall of the People, a ting energy costs - to defeat inflation, a pain point for many monumental, communist-era edifice on Beijing's renowned Americans. And he pledged to

Tiananmen Square. China's top put more tariffs on imports, a leader, Xi Jinping, sat on the dais move he claimed would boost US behind him. The thousands of industries but threatens to upset delegates arrayed before them the global trade order and inflict politely applauded at the appropain on China and its exportdependent economy. Trump's address, which clocked

"Plants are opening up all over at about an hour and 40 minutes. the place. Deals are being made took place in the white-domed like never seen. That's a combi-Capitol on the eastern end of the nation of the election win and tar-National Mall, dotted with iffs. It's a beautiful word, isn't it?" national monuments. With his Trump said. vice president and the Republican

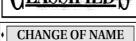
China is more worried about

PUBLIC NOTICE My Clinets Ramniwas S/o late Sh. Rajpal & Sunita W/o Ramniwas R/o H.No.-603 Village Tahirpur Saria Delhi-10095 be at know to publicat largs lebarred sever- relations with his son Sawan and his wife Pooia from movable-immovable properties due to their misconduct. My clients will not be responsible for their illegal acts and ny liabilities

MANISH KUMAR (Advocate) Ch. No.-D Block-625 Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092

PUBLIC NOTICE It is brought to the notice of the Public in general that my client Devesh Gupta son of Shri Deepak Gupta resident of KH-88 Block-H, Kavi Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201002 has lost/misplaced all original documents i.e. allotment letter, possession letter, share pertificate, Conveyance Deed and Related Payment receipt etc. of his Flat No. B-33, Mount Everest CGHS Ltd., Plot No. 17, Sector-19, Dwarka, New Delhi. In this regard, IR/NCR has been lodged on Delhi Police online portal vide LR No:2639431/2025 dated 04/03/2025. The finder may please contact me and return the documents within 15 days of this notice to the address given below. He shall be suitably rewarded. Any misuse of any of the above documents shall be treated as an offence and the person concerred shall be proceeded against as per the Law. If the above-mentioned documents are not found/recewents shall as lost/misplaced all original documents i.e thin 15 days of notice, these documents sha e treated as invalid in all respects PUSHPENDER KUMAP





I, No.15432404W Hav (Clk Sd) Ashish Kumar Singh, R/o- Vill-Ainy Hatinsi, PO & Teh-Kaiserganj, Dist- Bahraich, U.P.- 271903, have changed my son's name from Aarav Singh to Raghuveer Singh, vide affidavit dated 06/03/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

Sd./

SHALU (Advocate)

Mob.: 9711445353

Enrollment No. D/267/201

PUBLIC NOTICE

May it be known that my client(s), Sunil k Gupta & Veena Gupta, R/o House No. 32

First Floor Pocket-9 Sector-22 Bohin

Delhi-86 do hereby cut, sever all their tie

with Archit Gupta (Son), Twinkle Gard (Daughter in Law), Sovika Gupta (Grand

Daughter). We disown them & declare that

they shall not get any share in our moveabl

& immovable property. Whosoever deals with them shall do so at their own risk and

PD(1635)C I. Nirmala, Mother of-No.14868601F Nk Mahadik Mahesh D, R/o-A/P Dhumalwadi, Tal- Koregaon, Dist- Satara, Maharashtra-415010, have changed my



deflation than inflation. But Li acknowledged the other challenges the economy faces, chiefly falling real estate prices and depressed consumer spending.

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that I, Pushp Lata Vig W/o Late Sh.Ashok Kumar Vig R/o House No.B-22/ 1401,Tulip Violet,Sector-69,Gurugram, Haryana-122102 mutattee/owner of Flat bearing No.61-F, Second Floor, under LIG category. Pocket K, situated at Sheikh Sarai-II, New Deih-110017. The original documents i.e. Allotment-cum-demand Letter of the above flat have been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch in vide S.O. No.430/2014 LR No.2646923/2025 dated 06.03.2025. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/ contact with above named person at above address/phone No.913/970339 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy.Director (LAB) H or Director (H)-1, D Block, 3 rd Floor, Vikas Sadan ,INA,New Deihi.

H

MAX

Healthcare

PUBLIC NOTICE

DESTRUCTION OF MEDICAL

Any patient who wishes to acquire

Certified True Copy of his/her

Medical Records pertaining to above

stated period may request in writing

to the contact person mentioned in

the table below, between 10.00 am

5.00 pm (Monday to Saturday). All

such request applications must reach

the concerned person as mentioned

below, within 3 (three) month from

the date of publication of this notice

The request for medical records

should be submitted in the

prescribed format along with the

self-attested copy of the photo identity proof of the patient The

patient can also authorise someone

else to apply for and/or collect the

Medical Records on his/her behal

with a valid authority letter/power of

attorney. The authorised person

should submit self-attested copy of

photo and signature proof for the

patient and himself/herself. In case of

deceased patients, the attendant

recorded in the Medical Records may

apply/authorize someone to apply for

the same. Please note that standard

charges shall be applicable for

He reaffirmed Beijing's "unswerv-

ing commitment" to opening up. "Regardless of changes in the external environment, we should remain steadfast in our commitment to opening up," Li said. "We

🗲 KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS! 👈 **MORE HOLI FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2025** In order to clear extra rush of passengers during the upcoming Holi Festival, Railways have decided to run the following

additional Holi Festival Special Trains as per details given below :-

will continue to expand our

globally oriented network of

high-standard free trade areas'

In a statement that no doubt

referred in large part to the

United States, he cautioned that

"an increasingly complex and

severe external environment may

exert a greater impact on China

in areas such as trade, science and

Leaving climate accord vs. green

transition: Trump touted his

move to withdraw from the

Paris Climate Accord and

described his energy policy with the moniker "drill, baby, drill." He

boasted of ending the previous

administration's environmental

restrictions and (incorrectly) its

electric vehicle mandate, "saving

technology'

	02436/02435 New Delhi-Patna JnNew Delhi Reserved Vande Bharat Holi Special Train						
Train N	lo.: 02436			Train No		.: 02435	
ARR.	DEP.	♦ STATIONS		ARR.	DEP.		
	08:30	New Delhi		20:10			
20:10		Patna Jn.		08:30			
DATE OF RUN: 02436 Ex New Delhi on 08.03.2025 to 20.03.2025							

(Except Monday) and 02435 Ex Patna Jn. on 09.03.2025 & 21.03.2025 (Except Tuesday).

STOPPAGES: Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar & Ara Jn. stations.

ACCOMMODATION: Executive & Chair Car.

DESTRUCTION OF MEDICAL RECORD OF PATIENTS	09425	09425/09426 Sabarmati JnHaridwar JnSabarmati Jn. Holi Special Train						
Notice is hereby given that Max Multi Speciality Centre, Panchsheel Park &	Train N	o.: 09425		STATIONS	•	Train No	.: 09426	
Max Institute of Cancer Care, Lajpat	ARR.	DEP.	•	STATIONS	1	ARR.	DEP.	
Nagar will be destroying medical records related to the treatment		17:20		Sabarmati Jn.		22:30		
and/or test performed of its patients	17:00			Haridwar Jn.			21:00	
at the Centre pertaining to the period January - 2021 to December - 2021.	DATE OF RUN: 09425 Ex Sabarmati Jn. on 09, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27 &							

30.03.2025 (Thursday & Sunday) and 09426 Ex Haridwar Jn. on 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28 & 31.03.2025 (Friday & Monday).

STOPPAGES: Mahesana Jn., Palanpur Jn., Abu Road, Pindwara, Falna. Marwar Jn., Beawar, Ajmer Jn., Madar Jn., Kishangarh, Jaipur Jn., Gandhi Nagar Jaipur, Bandikui Jn., Alwar, Rewari, Gurgaon, Delhi Cantt. Delhi Jn., Ghaziabad, Meerut City, Muzaffarnagar & Roorkee stations. COMMODATION: AC 2 Tes

CCOMMODATION: AC-3	Her,	Sieeper	à	General	

0482	04829/04830 Jodhpur JnGorakhpur JnJodhpur Jn. Holi Special Train						
Train N	o.: 04829	L STATIONS		Train No		.: 04830	
ARR.	DEP.	•	STATIONS		ARR.	DEP.	
	16:15		Jodhpur Jn.		04:00		
04:30	04:45		Delhi Jn.		14:00	14:10	
20:50			Gorakhpur Jn.		23:25		

DATE OF RUN: 04829 Ex Jodhpur Jn. on upto 27.03.2025 (Thursday) and 04830 Ex Gorakhpur Jn. on 07.03.2025 to 28.03.2025 (Friday).

STOPPAGES: Merta Road Jn., Degana Jn., Choti Khatu, Didwana, Ladnun, Sujangarh, Ratangarh Jn., Churu Jn., Sadulpur Jn., Loharu, Mahendragarh, Rewari, Gurgaon, Delhi Cantt., Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Ayodhya Cantt., Ayodhya Dham Jn., Mankapur Jn., Basti & Khalilabad stations.

ACCOMMODATION: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & General

2024 is lodged in RS. Crime Branch, Delhi. If found with them shall do so at their own risk at kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below my client shall not liable for the same.	name from Nirmala to Nirmala		shall be applicab	le for	ACCOMMODATI	UN: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper	a General.		17:00	Gondia Jn.	23:45	
mentioned address. Mehul Gupta (Advocate) 32A DDA Flats,	Dadaso Mahadik, vide affidavit	supplying	such records.			322 Bhagat Ki Kothi-Haridwar Jn	n 08	14:20	14:50	Varanasi Jn.	14:20	14:50
M/s Nothern Strips Ltd, Mob9555223323. Satyawati Colony, Ashok Vihar P-II, Delhi-1100	⁵² dated 06/03/2025 before	Name of th	ne Contact Date	of	Bhag	at Ki Kothi Holi Special Tra n	Trips	19:00		Chhapra		22:15
NORTHERN BAILWAY	Notary Public Delhi.	Hospital	person medie		Train No.: 04821		Train No.: 04822	DATE O	F RUN: 0886	3 Ex Gondia Jn. on 12.03	2025 (Wedn	esday) and
TENDER NOTICE	PD(1636)C		Details recor-	ds to estroved	ARR. DEP.	▼ STATIONS	ARR. DEP.			n 14.03.2025 (Friday).		
The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Gati Shakti Unit/Delhi, DRM Office, New Delhi-	I, JC-733683L Sub Sudhir				08:30	Bhagat Ki Kothi	23:55			argarh, Raj Nandgaon, Durg		
110055 invites e-tender for the under noted work:	Kumar, R/o-Vill- Dabadua, PO-	Max Multi Speciality	Mr. Rakesh PNDT Kumar Docu	ments	04:15	Haridwar Jn.	05:15			ad, Anuppur Jn., Shahdol, Prayagraj Chheoki, Ghazipu		
1 Name Electrical work in connection to (A) Sahibabad-Ghaziabad: Replacement of work of automatic section with Distributed Electronic Interlocking (B) Delhi	Daulatpur (Baldeo), Teh-	Centre	Sharma Jan 2			04924 Ex Diseast Ki Kathi				N: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Slee	-	
and its Sarai Rohilla - Replacement of signalling gears with Electronic	Mahawan, Dist- Mathura U.P 281301, have changed my son's	Panchshee Park, N-110,				04821 Ex Bhagat Ki Kothi (lay) and 04822 Ex Haridwar Jn.						01
location Interlocking (C) Replacement of signalling gear on age cum conditional	name from Rahul Kumar to	Panchshee	el ma@maxhe Docu	ments	01.04.2025 (Tueso	• .	. 011 11.05.2025 10		04280 L	Lucknow JnSabarmati Jn Holi Special Train		Trip
basis with El at 6 stations i.e. GRA, BZJT, KUN, BZK, SHDM & MOY	Rahul Deshwar for all future			021 to		dhpur Jn., Gotan, Merta Road Jn.,	Degana In Choti				Train N	lo.: 04280
2 Tender Notice No. 24-DyCEE-GSU-DLI-24-25	purposes vide affidavit dated		MOB:			_adnun, Sujangarh, Ratangarh Jn			ş	STATIONS	ARR.	-
3 Earnest Money (to be deposited Online) ₹48,200,00	06/03/2025 before Executive		9811298534 OFFICE			Jn., Sunam Udham Singh Wala,				uoknow In		
4 Approximate cost of work ₹ 24,09,040.00/-	Magistrate, Delhi Cantt.		OFFICE:			la Cantt. Jn., Saharanpur & Roork				ucknow Jn.		12:10
5 Date & Time for submission of Tenders uploaded on date 07.03.2025 on IREPS website i.e., www.ireps.gov.in. The bidders can participate in the	PD(1637)C		46097200		ACCOMMODATI	ON: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper	& General.			abarmati Jn.	11:45	
e-Tender and e-Tender. The tender will be opened at 11:30 Hrs on	I, Kaushalya Singh, Mother of-		Mr. Rakesh Jan -	2021	00070/00074		uddin- 04			280 Ex Lucknow Jn. on 07		• /
opening of tender 28.03.2025.	No.15801804P NK(GNR) Rohit	Institiute of	f Kumar to De	c -		Γrivandrum North-Hazrat Nizamι drum North Holi Special Train	uddin- 04 Trips			pur Central, Tundla Jn., Agr likui Jn., Jaipur Jn., Phuler		
6 Detailed The detailed e-Tender notice is available on Northern Railway	Kumar Singh, R/o Vill- Sahari	Cancer Care	Sharma 2021 F Mail -		Train No.: 06073		Train No.: 06075			& Mahesana Jn. stations.	, on., Ajme	. on., Abu
Tender website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in and tender document is Notice & available on www.ireps.gov.in. Above tender document will be	Chak, PO- Hardi Chak, Dist-	26A, 2nd	rakesh.shar			STATIONS		ACCON	INODATION	N: Sleeper & General.		
Tender available for submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in	Gorakhpur, U.P. have changed		ma@maxhe althcare.		ARR. DEP.	· I	ARR. DEP.		0438	2 Bareilly-Sabarmati Jn.		01
Document from 14.03.2025 to 28.03.2025. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The	my name from Kaushalya	Loipot	com		14:15	Trivandrum North	14:15		0430	Holi Special Train		Trip
detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the	Singh to Kaushalya Devi, vide		MOB:		20:40	Hazrat Nizamuddin Jn.	04:10				Train N	lo.: 04382
above office.	affidavit dated 06/03/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.	New Delhi -110024	9811298534 OFFICE:		DATE OF RUN:	06073 Ex Trivandrum North	on 07.03.2025 to		ę	STATIONS	ARR.	DEP.
No. 24-DyCEE-GSU-DLI-24-25 Dated: 05.03.2025			011-			ay) and 06075 Ex Hazrat Niz				Bareilly		08:30
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 729/25	FD(1030)C		46097200		10.03.2025 to 17.0	,,			S	abarmati Jn.	06:00	
			4P8		STOPPAGES: K	ollam Jn., Kayankulam Jn., Che	engannur, Tiruvalla,					
D D Office of the	Superintending En	igineei				am Town, Aluva, Thrissur, Palakka		DAILS		382 Ex Bareilly on 08.03.20 ganga Bridge, Kasganj Jn., I		
1 st Circle, Public V	Norke Donartn	nont	Almor		Tiruppur, Erode Jn., Salem Jn., Jolarpettai Jn., Katpadi Jn., Chittoor,			Jn., Bha	aratpur Jn., B	andikui Jn., Jaipur Jn., Phul	era Jn., Ajm	er Jn., Abu
					Tirupati, Renigunta Jn., Gudur Jn., Nellore, Vijayawada Jn., Waranga			Road, P	Palanpur Jn. 8	& Mahesana Jn. stations.		
Phone/Fax: 05962-230	295 Email: sepwdalm@re	ediffmail	.com			r Jn., Rani Kamalapati, Bina Jn., Vir	0	ACCON	MMODATION	N: General.		
Letter No. : 934(i)/ Nivida-01/2024-25			Dated : 05/03/2	025		, Agra Cantt Jn. & Mathura Jn. Stat			04680) Amritsar JnKatihar Jn.		01
	E RIDDING (E To				ACCOMMODATI	ON: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper	& General.			Holi Special Train		Trip
	••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••	idenno	91		05007/05008 Go	rakhpur JnAmritsar JnGorakt			5	STATIONS		lo.: 04680
E-TENDI	ER NOTICE					Holi Special Train	Trips				ARR.	DEP.
The Superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, PWD Alm	ora invites tender through E-T	Condering (Two Bid Svet	em)	Train No.: 05007		Train No.: 05008		A	Amritsar Jn.		20:10
on behalf of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand for					ARR. DEP.	STATIONS T	ARR. DEP.		!	Katihar Jn.	10:30	
dated 07/03/2025 & onwards on website http://www.uk		nation will		on	14:40	Gorakhpur Jn.	08:00	DATES	OF RUN: 04	680 Ex Amritsar Jn. on 07.)3.2025 (Fr	iday).
Sector Content to the amount of the Sector S		o - avg	2010/07/07/07/07/07		09:30	Amritsar Jn.	11:10			s Jn., Jalandhar City Jn., Lu		
SI. Name of Work Cost o		ne of	Contractor'	- I I						Saharanpur, Moradabad, E		
No. Tender		pletion	Category o	~		05007 Ex Gorakhpur Jn. o				., Rae Bareli Jn., Ma Belh ipur City, Ballia, Suraiman		
Form	(Rupee in Tender		Registratio		29.03.2025 (Satur to 30.03.2025 (Sur	rday) and 05008 Ex Amritsar J	Jn. on 09.03.2025			egu Sarai, Khagaria Jn., M		
	lakh)		for tenderin	9	,	halilabad. Basti, Gonda Jn., Bur	thwal Sitanur In	Banman	ıkhi Jn. & Pur	rnia Jn. stations.	-	ŕ
A Deneuval work by CDDC in Km 20 to 24	3 000 400 00 M	Annath C	loop "D" 9 Lie	hor	SIUPPAGES: KI	iailiabau, basti, Gonua JN., Bur	nwai, Silapur Jn	1.0000				

our auto workers and companies from economic destruction."

Beijing, on the contrary, is betting on a greener economy. Li said it would be a priority to accelerate "green transition" for "all areas of economic and social development". China already has the world's largest electric vehicle industry. Echoing earlier pledges by Xi, Li said China would "actively and prudently" work towards carbon peak and carbon neutrality.

Li stressed the importance of innovation and of developing the tech economy in China, including artificial intelligence. It's a push that many US policymakers worry could challenge America's lead in technology,

only briefly but said China would "speed up the development of new combat capabilities? MAGA vs. Chinese reiuvenation': There's something in common, too: Both countries are yearning for greatness again.

05045/05046 Lal Kuan-Rajkot JnLal Kuan Holi Special Train						16 Trips
Train N	o.: 05045	1			Train No	.: 05046
ARR.	DEP.	•	STATIONS		ARR.	DEP.
	13:10		Lal Kuan		04:05	
14:55	14:57		Bareilly		02:03	02:05
18:10			Rajkot Jn.			22:30

DATE OF RUN: 05045 Ex Lal Kuan on 09.03.2025 to 27.04.2025 (Sunday) and 05046 Ex Rajkot Jn. on 10.03.2025 to 28.04.2025 (Monday).

STOPPAGES: Kichha, Baheri, Bhoji Pura, Izzatnagar, Bareilly City, Bareilly Jn., Badaun, Soron Shukar, Kasganj, Hathras City, Mathura Cantt., Mathura Jn., Bharatpur, Dausa, Jaipur Jn. Phulera Jn., Nawa City, Kuchaman City, Makrana Jn., Degana Jn., Merta Road Jn., Gotan Jodhpur Jn., Luni, Samdhari Jn., Mokalsar, Jalor, Modran, Marwar Bhinmal, Raniwara, Dhanera, Bhildi Jn., Patan, Mahesana Jn. Viramgan Jn., Surendranagar & Wankaner Jn. stations.

	ACCOMMODATION: A	AC-2 Her,	AC-3 Her,	Sleeper &	General.
· 1					

05193/05194 Chhapra-Mtyr Captain Tushar Mahajan- Chhapra Holi Special Train						
Train N	lo.: 05193		Train No			
ARR.	DEP.	▼ STATIONS	ARR.	DEP.		
	14:00	Chhapra	08:00			
08:42	08:47	Moradabad	14:20	14:30		
23:05			00:10			

DATE OF RUN: 05193 Ex Chhapra on 10.03.2025 to 31.03.2025 (Monday) and 05194 Ex Mtyr Captain Tushar Mahajan on 12.03.2025 to 02.04.2025 (Wednesday).

STOPPAGES: Chhapra Kacheri, Masrakh, Dighwa Dubauli, Thawe Jn Tamkuhi Road, Padrauna, Kaptanganj Jn., Gorakhpur Jn., Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal, Sitapur, Sitapur City, Shahjehanpur, Bareilly, Moradabad, Laksar Jn., Roorkee, Saharanpur, Yamunanagar Jagadhri Ambala Cant Jn., Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt. Kathua & Jammu Tawi Stations.

ACCOMMODATION: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & General

08895/08896 Gondia JnChhapra-Gondia Jn. Holi Special Train						
Train N	o.: 08895	STATION	Train No	.: 08896		
ARR.	DEP.	▼ STATION	°	ARR.	DEP.	
	17:00	Gondia Jr	Gondia Jn.			
14:20	14:50	Varanasi J	02:40	03:10		
19:00		Chhapra		22:15		
DATE OF RUN: 08895 Fy Gondia In on 11.03.2025 (Tuesday) and						

11.03.2025 (Tuesday) 08896 Ex Chhapra on 13.03.2025 (Thursday).

STOPPAGES: Dongargarh, Raj Nandgaon, Durg, Raipur Jn., Bhatapara, Uslapur, Pendra Road, Anuppur Jn., Shahdol, Umaria, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur Jn., Prayagraj Chheoki, Ghazipur City & Ballia stations. ACCOMMODATION: AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & General.

08863/08864 Gondia JnChhapra-Gondia Jn. Holi Special Train						
Train N	lo.: 08863			Train No.	.: 08864	
ARR.	DEP.	+	▼ STATIONS		ARR.	DEP.
	17:00		Gondia Jn.		23:45	
14:20	14:50		Varanasi Jn.	14:20	14:50	
19:00			Chhapra		22:15	
ATE OF BUIN: 08962 Ex Condia In on 12.02.2025 (Wednesday) and						



SI. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Tender Form	Earnest Money (Rupee in Iakh)	Validity of Tender	Time of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration for tendering
1	Renewal work by SDBC in Km 30 to 34 and Km 45 to 48 of Bageshwar - Girichhina - Someshwar - Dwarahat- Vimandeshwar- Ida- Ranikhet-Motor Road (Binta - Someshwar-Girichhina Section) under Annual Repair 2025-26.	₹ 5000.00 + 18% GST	₹ 3.80 Lakh	120 Days	09 Month (including Rainy Season and Winter Season)	Class "B" & Higher in Road work in Central Govt./ Any state Govt./ Any Govt. Undertaking.
2	Renewal work by BC in Km 18 to 34 of Kosi - Daulaghat - Korichina - Bagwalipokhar - Binta Motor Road (Korichina Bagwalipokhar Section) under Annual Repair 2025-26.	₹ 5000.00 + 18% GST	₹ 7.35 Lakh	120 Days	09 Month (including Rainy Season and Winter Season)	Class "A" & Higher in Road work in Central Govt./ Any state Govt./ Any Govt. Undertaking.
3	Renewal work by SDBC in Km 01 to 09 of Dhauladevi - Kheti Jateshwar- Dhuragaon - Seraghat Motor Road under Annual Repair 2025-26.	₹ 5000.00 + 18% GST	₹ 3.14 Lakh	120 Days	09 Month (including Rainy Season and Winter Season)	Class "B" & Higher in Road work in Central Govt./ Any state Govt./ Any Govt. Undertaking.

STOPPAGES: Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal, Sitapur Jn., ACCOMMODATION: Sleeper & General. Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur Jn., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cantt., Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar City & Beas stations. ACCOMMODATION: AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & General.

04380 Yog Nagari Rishikesh-Ahmedabad Jn. Holi Special Train					
	Train No	.: 04380			
	ARR.	DEP.			
Yog Nagari Rishikesh		08:10			
Ahmedabad Jn.	10:50				
TES OF RUN: 04380 Ex Yog Nagari Rishikesh on 07.03.2025 (Fri).					

Fri). DA STOPPAGES: Haridwar Jn., Roorkee, Tapri Jn., Meerut City, Ghaziabad Jn., Mathura Jn., Kota Jn., Nagda Jn., Ratlam Jn. & Godhra Jn. stations. ACCOMMODATION: General.

For any kind of information, passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.govin or NTES App.

sit RailMadad Website :- www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in Download RailMadad ap

05060 Azamgarh-Secunderabad Jn. Holi Special Train		01 Trip
	Train No.: 05060	
	ARR.	DEP.
Azamgarh		04:45
Lucknow	15:45	15:55
Secunderabad Jn.	21:00	

DATES OF RUN: 05060 Ex Azamgarh on 07.03.2025 (Friday).

STOPPAGES: Mau Jn., Belthara Road, Salempur Jn., Bhatni Jn, Deoria Sadar, Gorakhpur Jn., Basti, Mankapur Jn., Ayodhya Dham Jn., Ayodhya Cantt., Lucknow, Kanpur Central, Orai, Virangna Lakshmibai Jhansi Jn. Lalitpur, Bina Jn., Bhopal Jn., Itarsi Jn., Betul, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Balharshah, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Kazipet Jn. & Kacheguda Stations. ACCOMMODATION: Sleeper & General.





GST Council reconstitutes GoM on GST revenue analysis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The GST Council has reconstituted the Group of Ministers on GST revenue analysis which will suggest sector-specific issues that need policy intervention, and the feasibility of a unified enforcement platform to check tax evasion.

The GST Council, in its 55th meeting on December 21, 2024, had decided to reconstitute the Group of Ministers (GoM) on GST revenue analysis with a revised ToR. The GoM was first set up in 2019.

The reconstituted GoM on 'Analysis of Revenue from GST' under Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, would have nine members including from the states of Bihar (Samrat Chaudhary),

Chhattisgarh Choudhary).

Pradesh

Punjab

Gujarat (Kanubhai Desai), Andhra (P Keshav), Maharashtra (Ajit Pawar), acts and rules. (Harpal Goods and Services Tax Singh Nadu

Cheema). Tamil (Thangam Thennarasu) and Telangana (M B Vikramarka). As per the expanded ToR, the GoM would analyse the statewise revenue collection trend, including the identification of revenue patterns sectors and regions. across

It would also review details of revenue from the inter-state outward supply. It would also conduct a review of sectorwise analysis and identify sector-specific issues that need policy intervention or enforcement measures. The GoM would also analyse the effect of macroeconomic policy changes and

revenues, challenges faced by agrarian and smaller states, and analyse the impact of amendments made in GST

(GST) was rolled out on July 1, 2017. Since then the Act and its rules have been amended to make it easier for businesses after approval of the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts The GOM would "review and recommend harmonisation of anti-evasion, audit, scrutiny tools developed by various agencies (NIC, GSTN, DGARM, state governments) to create unified enforcement and compliance

platform". It would also suggest suitable measures/policy intervention for course correction for geographical factors on GST revenue augmentation,

particularly for high revenue suffering shortfall.

The expanded ToR of the GoM comes at a time when another GoM, under Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, is already working on rationalisation of GST rates and slabs.

Besides, there is another GoM, under Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, to decide on the fate of compensation cess and taxation proposal to replace it once it ends on March 31, 2026. Gross GST collections from

April-February this fiscal has grown 9.4 per cent to about ₹20.13 Lakh Crore.

After adjusting for refunds, the collections grew 8.6 per cent to ₹17.79 Lakh Crore on net basis between April-February.

Ashwini Vaishnaw launches IndiaAl compute portal, dataset platform AlKosha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA 📕 NEW DELHI

Marking a year of the IndiaAI Mission, Union model IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday launched the IndiaAI compute portal and dataset platform AIKosha, among a slew of other initiatives under the IndiaAI Mission, aimed at improving access to AI and fostering innovation.

The compute portal will provide access to compute more than 18,000 GPUs, cloud storage and other AI services to students, startups, researchers, academia, and government departments. platform aims to The

streamline access to highquality non-personal datasets for AI innovation. The Minister for Electronics

and IT also launched AIKosha an all-in-one dataset platform providing resources, tools, and expert mentorship

to help transform potential ideas into industry solutions. Datasets will be available for builders and developers to work with and launch India-specific AI

models The compute portal will be used to develop India's own foundational model, Vaishnaw said, adding that the preparedness for India's own foundation model is progressing well and as many as 67 applications have been received.

Citing India's mission to the moon, he said the mission was conducted at a fraction of the cost of other countries' moon missions and the same model will be followed for the foundational model and India will build it at a fraction of cost of what other countries are doing it.

In 3-4 years, India should have its own GPUs competing at the global stage, Vaishnaw said, adding that the cost of

using these GPUs is historically low at less than ₹100/hour.

MeitY Secretary S Krishnan said the launch of the compute portal will enhance the way AI gets rolled out and implemented across the country

The AI Compute Portal is the largest component of the India AI mission. Almost about 45 per cent of funds (of India AI Mission) are earmarked for that particular area," Krishnan said.

Technology, specially AI, can be an enabling factor in achieving the 2047 Viksit Bharat dream, he added. Further, MeitY launched a competency framework for AI and public sector officials, and the India AI Startups Global

Acceleration Programme. The ministry also awarded students under the India AI Fellowship programme, and recognised 30 selected AI applications.

higher with the BSE smallcap gauge climbing 1.63 per cent

and midcap index advancing

Among the BSE sectoral

indices, Energy, metal, Oil and

Gas, Commodities, Utilities,

Services, Power, healthcare,

FMCG and Industrials were the

Telecommunication and Realty

As many as 3,007 stocks advanced while 989 declined

and 107 remained unchanged on the BSE. The market

capitalisation of BSE-listed

firms climbed by ₹4,53,808.84

Crore to ₹3,97,57,850.59 Crore

momentum. Among sectors,

the Oil and Gas and Metal

indices rallied over 2 per cent

booking was observed in IT

and Realty stocks," Shrikant

Head

intraday

their

indices

positive

profit

Equity

0.65 per cent.

gainers.

were the laggards.

(\$4.57 Trillion).

continued

whereas

Chouhan,

'The benchmark

India Semicon Mission-2 in the works: IT Secretary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GANDHINAGAR

The government is ready with an outline of next ohase of India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and discussions are on internally for its rollout, a senior government official said on Thursday.

Speaking at IESA Vision Summit, Ministry of Electronics and IT Secretary Krishnan said the government is also mulling supporting ambitious chip design projects in the well country as as semiconductor packaging designs.

"The next stage of ISM is in the works. We have had discussions, discussions with many of the stakeholders, including many amongst you, as to how to design the programme. The design and the outline is ready, and there's undergoing detailed discussions internally in the government," he said.

Krishnan in his virtual speech said that the second phase of ISM proposes to provide support for gases and other elements that are required for semiconductor production.

He said that the first phase of ISM had a total outlay of ₹76,000 Crore comprising ₹65,000 Crore for chip manufacturing and packaging units, ₹10,000 Crore for modernising semiconductor lab at Mohali and ₹1,000 Crore for the design-linked incentive

scheme. "We have committed more than ₹60,000 Crore to the

five major units which are currently under construction. In addition, we have a few more projects which are under evaluation and are expected to be awarded quickly," Krishnan said. He said there is a need to provide more support to

make the fabless ecosystem work more efficiently.

CitiCorp Investment Bank settle FPI rules violation case with SEBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELH

itiCorp Investment Bank (Singapore) Ltd on Thursday settled with SEBI a case relating to issuance of offshore derivative instruments to Symmetry Master Fund Ltd without completing the KYC norms, on payment of ₹36 Lakh.

This came after CitiCorp filed a settlement suo motu application with SEBI proposing to settle the alleged violation of FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investors) rules, "by neither admitting nor denying the findings of fact and conclusions of law" under settlement rules.

Acknowledging the settlement, the markets regulator in its order on Thursday said "any proceedings that may be initiated for the violations ...

applicant". It was alleged that the applicant issued an offshore derivative (ODI) instrument Symmetry Master Fund Ltd on December 19, 2023 without complying with the Know Your Client (KYC) norms as required under the FPI

Regulations. The applicant mentioned that the onboarding and KYC checks with respect to the ODI subscriber —SMFL— was completed on January 10, 2024. There was also an alleged delay on the part of the applicant in depositing the regulatory fee collected from the subscriber of the ODI. The regulatory fee of \$800 corresponding to the ODI issued to SMFL on December 19. 2023 should have been deposited immediately with Sebi by the applicant. Instead, it was deposited with SEBI on

Are settled in respect of the February 26, 2024 with a delay of 69 days.

These findings pointed to violations of FPI regulations. As per another separate to settlement order, BCI Industries and its promoter and MD Rajinder Mittal settled with Sebi a case of violation of regulatory norms on payment of settlement amount. BCL Industries and Mittal

remitted ₹14.30 Lakh and ₹28.6 Lakh respectively. The two entities allegedly failed to disclose Manoj Finvest Private Ltd (MFPL) as part of the promoter group in terms of Sebi ICDR (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) rule. Also, Mittal allegedly failed to cover MFPL under code of conduct of BCL to regulate, monitor and report trading by the designated persons and their immediate relatives under insider trading rules.

 $B_{nearly\ 610\ points\ to\ reclaim}^{enchmark}$ the 74,000 mark while Nifty closed above 22,500 on Thursday following heavy buying in Reliance on easing crude oil prices and firm global trends after US President Donald Trump softened stand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

on tariffs. Recovering from early losses, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 609.86 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 74,340.09, marking its second straight day of gains. During the day, it surged 660.57 points or 0.89 per cent to hit a high of 74,390.80. The broader Nifty of NSE advanced 207.40 points or 0.93 per cent to close at 22,544.70. In the session, the 50-share barometer jumped 219.15 points or 0.98 per cent to hit an intraday high of 22,556.45. From the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, NTPC,



Sensex rallies 610 points to reclaim the 74,000 mark

Sun Pharmaceuticals, Adani Ports and SEZ, Axis Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Titan and Bajaj Finance were the

were the laggards.

resilience, owing to positive global cues following Trump's Industries, Tata Steel, Bajaj

Research at Kotak Securities Broader markets also closed said. Mitalee Agrawal honoured with Grand Queen 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

Mitalee Agrawal,



Rupee falls six paise against US dollar NITI Aayog, India SME Forum launch 'A Million Women Arise' initiative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The rupee snapped its three-day rally and settled with a loss of six paise at 87.12 against the US dollar 87.18 Thursday amic uncertainty over trade tariffs and persistent foreign fund outflows. Forex traders said the depreciation in the Indian rupee was influenced by several factors, including the weakening of regional currencies, investors, and a recovery in global commodity prices, all of which put downward pressure on the local currency. While a positive equity market, weakness of the American currency in the overseas market and easing crude oil prices contained the losses for the local unit.

RUPEE ₹ VS DOLLAR \$ 1 USD = 87.12 INR* 87.06 (+13p) 87.19

four-month low as the US decided to delay implementing higher tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico. Choudhary further

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

¬overnment think tank UNITI Aayog and the India SME Forum on Thursday launched a joint initiative, A said the rupee is Million trade

Finserv, Hindustan Unilever,

major gainers. Mahindra, Kotak Tech Mahindra Bank, Zomato, Tata Motors, and IndusInd Bank

to create a cohesive support

system through access to

finance, markets, compliance

support, skilling, mentorship,

and networking". Vinod Kumar, President India

SME Forum said, "Through

poration with N

this col

"The Indian indices exhibited Reliance

softened tariff stance on automakers from Canada and Mexico amidst the weakening dollar index," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

A correction in crude oil prices, influenced by a slowdown in demand and further economic stimulus from China, ignited optimism in the energy and metals sectors, Nair added.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened stronger at 86.96 and touched the high of 86.88 against the greenback during the day. The unit later turned volatile and hit the day's low of 87.16

Mar 03 Mar 04 Mar 05 Mar 06 Feb 27 Feb 28 (Inverted Scale) selling pressure from foreign before ending the session at rupee. Traders may take cues

87.12 against the dollar, 6 paise lower from its previous closing level. On Wednesday, the rupee settled 13 paise higher at 87.06 against the US dollar, registering the third straight day of gain. In the preceding two sessions, the unit had gained 18 paise.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the rupee lost initial gains and fell against the US dollar on selling pressure by FIIs, while the American currency fell to a

with a slight positive bias on domestic and weakness in the US dollar. However, FII outflows may cap sharp gains in the local unit. "Uncertainty over the trade tariff issue may

also weigh on the from weekly unemployment claims data from the US and ECB monetary policy decision. \$-₹ spot price is expected to trade in a range of 86.80 to 87.25," he added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.31 per cent at 103.95.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.17 per cent but stayed at six-month low levels of \$69.42 per barrel in futures trade.

empower women

entrepreneurs across India. positive Addressing the launch event markets here, Ankita Pandey, Director, Ministry of MSME, said that women-owned enterprises make up 35 per cent of India's six crore registered MSMEs, yet they face unique challenges, including gender bias and limited access to markets.

"The Ministry of MSME is committed to addressing these gaps through initiatives that enhance formalisation. mentorship, capacity-building, and e-commerce integration, she shared.

Anna Roy, Principal Economic Advisor, NITI Aayog and Mission Director, WEP emphasised, "The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) is a public-private Platform partnership, bringing together key ministries, including MSME, to support women entrepreneurs. By integrating existing programmes, we aim

Aayog, we aim to extend WEP's initiatives to Millions of aspiring women entrepreneurs, providing them with the knowledge and support needed to build successful businesses". Besides, India SME Forum also formalised strategic а partnership with IndiGo, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the event for providing MSMEs with improved travel solutions, reinforcing their growth and

mobility. The partnership will offer the Forum members exclusive travel benefits, customised allowances, and seamless connectivity to support their business expansion. Through this initiative, IndiGo will introduce tailored travel solutions that will enhance accessibility, reduce costs, and foster growth opportunities for SMEs across India," a statement said.

corporate communication and strategic management, has been honored with the prestigious Grand Queen 2025 Corporate Communication Leader award by the Young Lions Club.

This accolade recognises her exemplary contributions to the field, spanning academia, corporate leadership, and community engagement.

'Every woman is born a princess ready to take charge of a Queen. Anyone who celebrates is a Celebrity," Mitalee remarked on her achievement.

With nearly 15 years of expertise, Agrawal has spearheaded strategic and operational initiatives at four premier institutions of importance national University of including Hyderabad, Central of University of Andhra Pradesh, IIT Hyderabad, and

Pioneer Photo IIIT Raichur. Agrawal's remarkable She has also led technocommercial operations for a USA-based multinational

company, packaging overseeing the publication of over 500 Safety, Installation, Maintenance, and Operational (SIMO) manuals and 300+ operation videos. Currently, she leads Business Development, MarCom, and Community Engagement at the Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (CCoE) Hyderabad, an initiative of NASSCOM and the Government of Telangana.

journey has been recognised with multiple accolades, including the Chanakya Award by PRCI (twice) for Social Media and Relations Management, e4m 40 Under 40 Award for PR and Corporate Communication and the Dynamic Women Leadership Award in Communication. Further solidifying her stature as a multifaceted leader, she was recently crowned Mrs India Telangana 2025, adding to her legacy of excellence across diverse domains.

Adani Foundation felicitates over 1,000 'Lakhpati Didis' ahead of International Women's Day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE MUNDRA (GUJARAT)

Ahead of the upcoming International Women's Day on March 08, 2025, the Adani Foundation felicitated more than 1,000 'Lakhpati Didis' at an event in Mundra in Kutch, Gujarat. The Foundation has been working tirelessly in Kutch and beyond to empower women and make them self-reliant. By providing them with necessary support and guidance and facilitating their skill development and entrepreneurship opportunities, the Foundation is committed to enhancing their socio-economic

conditions and promoting their financial independence. Reiterating its commitment towards creating a genderinclusive workforce and society, the Foundation also celebrated the collective resilience of over

Solar on the occasion. The Foundation has played an

instrumental role in mobilising, encouraging and counselling the women to join Adani Solar across an array of job roles, including technical associates, engineering positions in Human Resources (HR). manufacturing and production departments. Moreover, the Foundation has also supported over 850 women become self-reliant by enhancing their entrepreneurial skills.

Ms Manisha Chandra (IAS), Commissioner of Rural Development and Secretary to Government of Gujarat, sent her wishes on the occasion. In a recorded video message, she applauded the Foundation's commitment towards creating an inclusive workforce, saying, "It's a matter of great pride to witness women shattering stereotypes and become financially independent. Such initiatives uplift women at 614 women working at Adani the grassroots and inspire



School, Mundra, also graced the event among other distinguished guests.

generations to come." Ms Ami CSR Head, Gujarat, Adani Shah, Director, Adani Public Foundation, emphasized the Foundation, emphasized the collective responsibility of society promoting gender "For women to truly towards gender equality.

community, and the corporate sector is essential. When women are empowered to balance their professional and personal lives, they not only excel in their careers but also drive a positive change within their families and society," she said.

At its business unit, Adani Solar boasts of dedicated facilities for women employees, showcasing its commitment of promoting gender inclusivity at workplaces. These include the availability of locker rooms, canteens and pink toilets, as well as transportation facilities with security personnel, thereby ensuring women's comfort and safety in the workplace.

Sharing her journey, Ms Gadhavi Sonal Ram, a Technical Associate at Adani Solar, says, "Today, I am financially independent and able to support my family, which is nothing short of a dream come true for me. Earlier, it was On the occasion, Ms Pankti Shah, progress, the support of family, unimaginable for girls in my

community to step out for work due to the unavailability of safe transportation. But with the Adani Solar's dedicated transport facility, I commute to my workplace comfortably, with my family assured about my safety." For nearly three decades, the Adani Foundation has been dedicated to empowering women across the country through a series of targeted interventions, as part of its Butterfly Effect framework. This unique framework has been specifically designed to address the evolving needs of women throughout their lives, right from infancy to old age. With a sharp focus on enabling economic activity, the Foundation is catalysing transformation for women in the core areas of education, healthcare, sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship, and community development

initiatives that empower them to

themselves and their families. Through its dedicated initiatives, the Foundation has positively transformed the lives of over two million girls and women across

the country. Since 1996, the Adani Foundation, social welfare and development arm of the Adani Group, has remained agile and deeply committed to making strategic social investments for sustainable outcomes across India. It is empowering and enriching the lives of children, women, youth, and marginalised communities in the core areas of education, health and nutrition, sustainable livelihoods, climate action, and community development. The strategies of the Foundation are integrated in national priorities and global Sustainable Development Goals. The Adani Foundation is currently operating in 6,769 villages across 19 states, positively make meaningful choices for impacting 9.1 Million lives.

NEW DELHI | FRIDAY | MARCH 7, 2025

www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/

ne pioneer



THAT SHAPED THE WORLD

For centuries, women writers have challenged norms, reshaped narratives and transformed literature with their powerful voices, says SAKSHI PRIYA

THE ROAD AHEAD

TODAY, WOMEN WRITERS DOMINATE BESTSELLER LISTS, WIN PRESTIGIOUS **AWARDS AND CONTINUE TO REDEFINE LITERATURE MARGARET ATWOOD'S** THE HANDMAID'S TALE **REMAINS RELEVANT IN DISCUSSIONS ON** WOMEN'S RIGHTS. **BERNARDINE EVARISTO BECAME THE FIRST BLACK** WOMAN TO WIN THE **BOOKER PRIZE, PROVING THAT DIVERSE VOICES CAN NO LONGER BE** SIDELINED. IN INDIA WRITERS LIKE MEENA **KANDASAMY, AVNI DOSHI** AND JANICE PARIAT ARE **PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF** STORYTELLING; **ENSURING WOMEN'S** NARRATIVES REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF LITERARY DISCOURSE.

WHY WOMEN'S STORIES MATTER WOMEN'S LITERATURE IS NOT A NICHE; IT **IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR COLLECTIVE HUMAN EXPERIENCE. IT CHALLENGES STEREOTYPES AND DEEPENS** EMPATHY. EVERY BOOK WRITTEN BY A WOMAN CARRIES WITHIN IT THE STRUGGLES, DREAMS AND HISTORIES OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE HER.

r centuries, women have used literature as a means of resistance, self-expression and transformation. Yet, history has often overlooked their contributions, celebrating male writers while marginalising women's voices. From medieval poets to contemporary literary powerhouses, women writers have not only broken barriers but also redefined storytelling, shaping cultural and social narratives across the world.

The Struggle for Recognition

In earlier times, societal norms denied women access to education, making it difficult for them to enter the literary world. Many resorted to pseudonyms to get published. Mary Ann Evans wrote as George Eliot, while the Brontë sisters first published under the names Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. Even Jane Austen's early works were signed "By a Lady." Despite these challenges, their narratives carried immense depth, challenging gender roles, class structures and moral dilemmas in ways that few male writers dared to explore.

In India, the struggle was even more pronounced. For centuries, women's stories remained within the oral tradition, passed down through generations but rarely written. It was only in the 19th century that writers like Toru Dutt and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain began breaking societal constraints. Hossain's Sultana's Dream, published in 1905, imagined a world where women ruled and men were confined to their homes, questioning patriarchal norms in a way that was revolutionary for its time

The 20th century marked a turning point globally and in India. Women writers not only published under their real names but also dicconsciousness and tated literary trends. Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own questioned the systemic suppression of women's voices in

literature.



Nobel laureate Toni Morrison chronicled the Black female experience America with in unmatched brilliance. Meanwhile, Amrita Pritam became a literary icon with her evocative poetry on love and Partition, particularly Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu. Mahasweta Devi's writings on tribal commu-

oman.

Know

Vhy the

Sings

aged Bird

nities and marginalised women forced society to confront uncomfortable truths.

Literature as Change

Women's literature has never been just about storytelling, it has also been a tool for activism. Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex laid the foundation for feminist thought. Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings exposed racism and misogyny with raw honesty. In India, Ismat

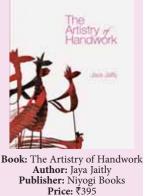
Chughtai's Lihaaf challenged conservative mindsets with its bold depiction of female desire. Kamala Das's poetry and autobiographical works fearlessly explored themes of identity, love and rebellion, inspiring generations women to embrace their truths. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's We Should

All Be Feminists reframed gender discussions for a new generation. In contemporary Indian literature, writers like Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri and Perumal Murugan continue to challenge social norms, bringing stories of the unheard into

mainstream cultural

discourse.

Book: Legends and lore of Krishna's Braj Author: Juhi Sinha Publisher: Niyogi Books Price: ₹1750



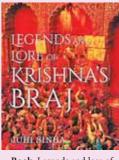
THIS WOMEN'S DAY, LET US NOT **ONLY CELEBRATE WOMEN** WRITERS BUT ALSO READ THEM, AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES AND RECOGNISE THEIR ROLE IN SHAPING OUR WORLD, **ONE STORY AT A TIME**

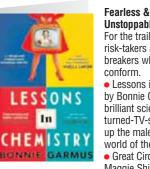


Book: Woman Who Climbed Trees Author: Smriti Ravindra Publisher: HarperCollins Price: ₹599



Book: Everything the light touches Author: Janice Pariat Publisher: HarperCollins Price: ₹599





Unstoppable For the trailblazers risk-takers and rulebreakers who refuse to conform Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus - A brilliant scientistturned-TV-star shakes up the male-dominated world of the 1960s. Great Circle by Maggie Shipstead - A

JEORGE

daring female pilot battles societal constraints to chase her dream of flving

ith Women's Day approaching, we celebrate the resilience, strength and complexity of women through literature. From fearless heroines to deep explorations of sisterhood, identity and psychological suspense, these books capture the essence of being bold, unapologetic and true to oneself.

Stronger Together Because the women everything who stand by us, our know friends, sisters and chosen family, shape about who we become. parties, dates Everything | Know About Love by Dolly he, love Alderton - A raw witty memoir on dolly friendship. alderton 4 heartbreak and growing up

Unapologetically Herself

For those embracing every part of who they are

- Open When by Julie Smith A heartfelt guide to self-care, resilience and mental well-being
- The Path to Self-Love by Ruby Dhal A warm, empowering roadmap to putting vourself first.
- The Book You Want Everyone You Love to Read by Philippa Perry - A witty and wise take on relationships, selfdiscovery and emotional well-being

Strength, Sisterhood & Survival Women on the Edge Complex heroines, unsettling twists and gripping suspense that will keep you hooked. Strange Sally self-love Diamond by Liz Nugent - A woman with a traumatic past unearths chilling family secrets. None of This Is True by Lisa



Jewell - A journalist's chance meeting with a mysterious woman spirals into a terrifying nightmare. The Crash by Freida McFadden - Trapped in a snowstorm, a pregnant woman realises her safe haven isn't what it seems. • The Wrong Sister

by Claire Douglas - A dark, twisted tale of sisterhood gone terribly wrong.

Books That Uplift and Inspire Women

BY TEAM VIVA

ere's a specially curated list of books from Rupa and Aleph, celebrating the strength, L resilience and brilliance of women.

She Storms the

Norms - Anisha

Motwani &

Priyadarshini





Narendra

this book shares inspiring stories of women who have shattered

must-read for those who dare to challenge the status quo.

Anisha Motwani is a business leader, speaker and author of the bestselling Storm the Norm. She serves as an independent director on various boards and has been recognised among the '50 Most Powerful Women in Indian Business' by Business Today.

Priyadarshini Narendra is a marketing and strategy expert with decades of experience in advertising, consumer research and consulting. She has authored fiction books and contributes to discussions on women in the workplace.

1700 in 70: A Walk for a Cause - Gita GITA BALAKRISHNAN **Balakrishnan**

Follow architect Gita Balakrishnan's extraordinary 1,700-km journey across India on foot, exploring design's impact on life and culture. A

story

Gita Balakrishnan is an architect and founder of the Ethos Foundation, which promotes design awareness. An avid marathon runner, she has embarked on multiple walking expeditions,

advocating for the role of design in everyday life.

Beyond the Bell: Preparing Students for Life - Chitra

A transformative beyond acad emics, focusvalues and personal growth to help students thrive in a rapidly changing world.

0

About the Author

friends, jobs,

Chitra Prasad is an educationist with three decades of experience and head of the NSN Group of Schools. With a strong focus on values-based learning, she integrates spirituality into education to shape well-rounded individuals.

A Stitch in Time: The Biba Story -Meena Bindra

The inspiring journey of Meena Bindra, who built Biba from a home-based venture into a fashion empire A compelling story of passion, perseverance and the rise of India's fashion industry. About the Author

Meena Bindra, a pioneer in Indian fashion, founded Biba, transforming the

salwar kameez into a modern style statement From a small home-run business to a leading brand, her journey is a testament to innovation

These books offer wisdom, courage and motivation, perfect for Women's Day and beyond.

A Story of True Friendship

A touching story celebrating the strength, trust and support found in women friendships across generations, says TEAM VIVA

Walt

Riends

BOUT THE BOO

Book: The Wall Friends Club

Edited by: Varsha Seshan

Publisher: HarperCollins

Price: ₹175

Wb

s International Women's Day approaches, there is no better time to celebrate the power friendship, resilience and support. The Wall Friends Club by Varsha Seshan beautifully captures the essence of human connection, showing how even the most unexpected friendships can shape our lives in meaningful ways. Told through an epistolary for-

path

Ruby Dha

mat, the novel follows two young protagonists, Anandi and Sriya, who form an unlikely bond through letters slipped into a hidden gap in a wall. Despite never meeting, their relationship grows into something deeply special, proving that true friendship goes beyond physical presence.

Varsha Seshan, speaking about the book, shares, "I love letters, old-fashioned letters, not just emails. I also had several pen pals as a child, which made me wonder ... could two children who never meet grow to be the best of friends? An epistolary novel has always seemed an exciting genre to explore, so here is my first one: The Wall Friends Club.'

At its core, the story is about breaking barriers, embracing differences and finding comfort in the written word. Anandi and Sriya start as strangers, hesitant yet curious, unsure of who will find their letters. But as their exchanges continue, their letters become a refuge, a place where they can share their dreams, fears and small moments of joy. Their honest and heartfelt conversations reflect the beauty of friendships where trust

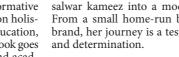
and support come naturally, unburdened by the complexities of adulthood.

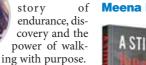
The Wall Friends Club truly special is its timeless message about women's friendships. It reminds readers, especially girls, of the importance of lifting each other up rather than competing or tearing each other down.

The characters, though young, face real struggles, doubts, insecurities and moments of selfreflection. Their journey resonates with anyone who has ever felt unsure about their place in the world or struggled to find their voice.

Since International Women's Day is around the corner, this book is a perfect fit as it carries a powerful message about kindness, connection and the importance of supporting one another.







About the Author

societal barriers and self-doubt to redefine success. A

About the Authors



THE

Prasad BEL

guide on holistic education, this book goes ing on life skills,



sports 12

We will play according to situation: Ravindra 300 women boxers to compete in national championship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE

ashing New Zealand Rachin opener Ravindra feels adapting to the conditions will be key to succeed on an "unknown" Dubai surface in the Champions Trophy (CT) final against India on Sunday. Except the group match against India in Dubai, New Zealand have played all their games in Pakistan. The Kiwis had also played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa.

India, on the other, have played all their matches in Dubai and are familiar with the conditions.

"We do not quite know what the Dubai pitch is. We saw in our (group) game against India the ball turning but the other day didn't turn so much. We found ourselves adapting and playing according to situations, which we will need to do on Sunday again.

"We will see in the next couple of days and hopefully it's a good cricket wicket," said



good over a period of time.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Royal Challengers Bengaluru

and by 81 runs against UP Warriorz — have propelled

them to the second position

On Friday, the second-ranked

Giants, with six points in as many games, will have the

perfect opportunity to put

their recent ascent to test

against a formidable Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE

table with 10 points.

in the five-team points table.

LUCKNOW

preparation, coming here

time and continue to play well Ravindra after an emphatic 50-run win over South Africa in the semifinal here on for my team," he said. He is also aware about the Wednesday. expectations from the side in Ravindra scored only six any big ICC event.

against India in the group, falling to Hardik Pandya while going for an upper cut, but the left-hander hopes for a better outing in the final. "You get out pretty much every time you bat. Hopefully

I can bat for a longer period of

the eyes on the prize," he

The 2027 ODI World Cup will co-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Walter was expectedly asked about South Africa going down in a knockout game of

another global event. Last year, the Proteas lost the T20 World Cup final to India from

early, we can see we are cooking reasonably well. Trust and ability around the group is great." Ravindra (108) smashed his "Whenever you approach a second century of the tournament on Wednesday

tournament, you expect and together with Kane Williamson (102) starred in hopefully to be among the top four teams and lucky enough we have been consistently New Zealand's win. Senior middle-order batter We are happy with our

Daryl Mitchell, who made 49 off 37 balls in the semifinal,

said the loss to India in the group stage is a thing of the past not and the final will be a new day

"The final is a new day and really excited to stuck into that challenge and adapt to whatever conditions and surfaces we get on the day and find wave to win moments find ways to win moments throughout that game. "Hopefully, we can put some pressure on them and walk

away with white jacket," he said.

Mitchell is not interested in poking his nose in the talks surrounding an unfair advantage to India because of playing all their matches at one venue. "Just really happy with winning the game today and

moving onto the final, it's an exciting Mitchell said. opportunity,"

"That's the nature of international cricket. We do a lot of travelling and we are used to that. It's not for me to decided how the tournament should be planned. I am just excited to be in an ICC final and looking forward to play in a few days time?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

As many as 300 pugilists will compete for glory at the 8th Elite Women's National Boxing

Championship in Greater Noida from March 21-27. Organised in association with the UP Boxing Association, the tournament returns to the venue that hosted its last edition in 2023

Held under the World Boxing and Boxing Federation of India (BFI) competition guidelines, the championship is open to boxers born between January 1, 1984, and December 31, 2005.

Each state unit can field a maximum of 10 boxers, with entries by numbers closing on March 10 and final name confirmation due by March 15. The action officially begins on March 20 with the arrivals, draw, and technical meeting. The opening rounds will take place from March 21 to 24, followed by the quarter-finals



on March 25 and the semifinals on March 26, leading up to the finals on March 27.

The tournament will follow a three-round format, with each bout consisting of threeminute rounds with a oneminute rest period. The tenpoint must-scoring system will be in place, and all matches will adhere to World Boxing Technical & Boxing Competition Rules.

Boxers will also be required to undergo a daily weigh-in throughout the competition. Beyond the 300 competing boxers, the championship will

also bring together over 100 coaches and support staff, along with 60 technical officials, ensuring a top-tier spectacle.

Defending champions Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) will be looking to retain their title after a dominant performance in the previous edition, where they clinched five gold medals, one silver, and two bronzes.

RSPB nudged Haryana by eight points, the latter finishing second with seven medals, including three golds, three silvers, and a bronze.

We are still evolving as a team: Rob Walter

added

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE

Yet another knockout stage heartbreak at yet another ICC event. But perennial bridesmaid South Africa remains on the right track two years before the ODI World Cup at home, feels the team's head coach Rob Walter after its semifinal exit from the Champions Trophy here.

a commanding position. "I don't think it was any one particular thing that resulted in the loss, probably a couple. Having topped their group, South Africa came up short in We could have handled the the second semifinal against last 10 overs (while bowling) a little bit better. They got away New Zealand here on Wednesday night and went down by 50 runs in a chase of from us a little bit. 'There was a period sort of in 362. Walter said there are the middle of the innings where Kane (Wiiliamson) and enough positives to take back home notwithstanding a Rachin (Ravindra) started to

tough loss. rnow

With two consecutive wins firming up their bid for a spot in the Women's Premier League (WPL) playoffs, Gujarat Giants will look to carry forward the momentum in their top-of-the-table clash against Delhi Capitals here on Friday. Gujarat Giants were Gujarat Giants were languishing at the bottom of the WPL points table but two big wins — by six wickets over

Gujarat Giants eye on WPL playoffs

process, also better their net run rate to seal their spot in the final

It seems like things are falling in place at last for the Giants, who showed determination against all odds to beat RCB in a low-scoring thriller, with skipper Ashleigh Gardner (58 out) and Phoebe not Litchfield (30 not out) taking the side over the line.

Capitals, who sit atop the The Giants then demolished Delhi Capitals, who have UP Warriorz by 81 runs in already booked a place in the playoffs, would be keen to their previous outing, riding on Beth Mooney's stunning record a win and take their 96 not out and a collective tally to 12 points and, in the show from their bowlers to

Additionally, with MI having three more games left, the Giants will be keen to keep their fate in their hands and not depend on the outcomes of other games.

Giants' pacers, in particular, exploited the new ball and

conditions to good effect, blowing away UP Warriorz's batting after Mooney missed recording the first-ever ton by any player in this WPL. Their recent performances

Their recent performances would surely fuel their fire but the Giants will have to be wary of the all-round strength of the Delhi Capitals, who too would be keen for a win, for it would help them finish at the top and qualify directly for the final.

Currently, Delhi Capitals hold the top spot with 10 points from seven matches. They are in pole position to finish first, which would ensure direct entry into the title round. The teams finishing second and third will face off in the

Eliminator next week. Meg Lanning has blown hot

and cold this season but still remains dangerous, while India batter Shafali Verma (260 runs) has lit up the tournament with her aggressive stroke-play. Jess Jonassen has made all-round contributions for Delhi with 128 runs and joint secondhighest nine wickets

100 **PSG** lose to Liverpool in Champions League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PARIS

Paris Saint-Germain's Wasteful finishing came back to haunt the French team in a 1-0 loss to Liverpool in the first leg of the Champions League round of 16.

Harvey Elliott's late goal on Wednesday punished PSG at Parc des Princes. It was only Liverpool's second attempt on target compared to whopping 28 for PSG.

galore Wasted chances galore hampered PSG during the group stage — where it lost to Arsenal, Atletico Madrid and Bayern Munich, scoring just one goal in those t But coach Luis Enrique's side had turned the corner in fine style with 40 goals scored in 10 straight wins before this game. PSG had 12 attempts on goal in the first half alone where Liverpool could not cope with PSG's pace, movement and constant positional switches on a night where Liverpool's 30-goal top scorer Mohamed

scored with a brilliant curling shot from the right of the penalty area in the 20th minute but the Georgia star's effort was ruled out for a razor-thin offside following a video review.

VAR went in Liverpool's favour a second time minutes later, when referee Davide Massa checked for a red card check to see whether Ibrahima Konaté had pushed Barcola in the back. But no

foul was given. Kvaratskhelia went close with a free kick early in the second half and had another low shot saved.

Former England captain David Beckham was among the crowd at Parc des Prince He played half a season for PSG after joining in 2013

during the start of the club's

Galactico era and then

It was turning into a night of

frustration for this PSG side.

A corner almost went in, until

Dominik Szoboszlai stuck a

leg out on the line. Then, with the clock ticking,

Alisson made the save of the

night when he somehow got

both hands at full stretch to substitute Désiré Doué's

bending shot from 20 meters.

Luis Enrique said before the

game that Liverpool were

Europe's counterattack specialists and he was proved

The return leg is on next Tuesday at Anfield and the

winner faces either Aston

Villa or Club Brugge in the

midfielder

retired.

Liverpool

right.



put some managed to significant partnerships together. We had guys contributing significantly with the bat. From a bowling significantly point of view, I think our biggest development was our accuracy. We were able to be very accurate as a seam unit," said Walter in the post-match press conference.

"And that's something that we have been working really hard on. Every game we play is a learning opportunity. We just keep trying to take the little lessons. Today is a hard lesson, you feel it a little bit more, because it's the end of a campaign.

"But we certainly continue to keep learning from things, little bits here and there, that we can do better. We're still evolving as a team; there's no doubt in my mind. Two and a half years to 2027 and that's

heir rates a bit missed a few opportunities there," he explained.

"...When we were batting. We were just starting to get going and that partnership got broken and really slowed us down in the middle and obviously we saw Dave

(Miller) play unbelievably well in the end to get a hundred...You know you're just one partnership away from doing something special," said Walter. Williamson With and Ravindra easily manipulating the bowlers, it seemed South

Africa ran out of ideas. However, Walter did not agree to that. "No, I don't think that's entirely accurate. We certainly

tried to change it up, we tried to change the pace. I think the ball wasn't really gripping at that stage in the early phases, so the ball kept sliding on."

same time.

New Zealand batting mainstay Kane Williamson reckons India have "real clarity" on how they want to operate in Dubai, having played all their Champions Trophy (CT) games at the same venue but his team will also be reasonably wellprepared for the tournament finale due to its limited past familiarity with conditions. Williamson did not specifically say that India had an advantage of playing at one venue, choosing to compare it to New Zealand's understanding of conditions in Lahore, where they beat South Africa on Wednesday to set up a final clash against the Rohit Sharma-led side in Dubai on Sunday.

> New Żealand had played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa.

"I suppose having played there on a number of occasions; there's real clarity in how they want to operate," said Williamson when asked if India go into the final with an advantage of knowing the



India have 'real clarity' on how they

conditions.

"A little bit like our opportunity here, having played a number of times at this venue as well and I think that's part and parcel in cricket," he added.

Having scored a hundred in the semifinal, Williamson is high on confidence and looking forward to the final.

"It is what it is (India play all games in Dubai). Our focus is the next match, the location of that match, the opposition, they're all factors. Obviously, we played India once there," he said.

'The conditions are different, so it's important that we try and take away some of those positives and be nice and clear in how we're trying to operate come two or three-days' time in the final," he said referring to New Zealand's loss to India in the group stage. Both Williamson and Rachin Ravindra

struck hundreds to fashion New Zealand's emphatic win.

Williamson called Ravindra, who has score two hundreds in three games, a special talent.

It's a final, so it's exciting. If we go back to Rachin, an incredibly special talent. It's always great to bat with him. He goes out and he puts the team first and he plays with that freedom.

"When we were out there batting together, there were moments where there were some good spells and it was a little bit challenging. We tried to feed off each other and keep each other focused on the job," Williamson said.

Salah was kept quiet. Luckily goalkeeper Alisson was at his defiant best, however, making nine saves overall.

The imposing Brazilian twice denied Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and kept out attempts from Barcola Bradley and Ousmane Dembélé. There were also bad misses from Barcola and midfielder João Neves, who both shot over from good positions. Kvaratskhelia thought he had

quarterfinals.

Aravindh defeats Giri in Prague Masters Mushfiqur Rahim retires from ODIs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PRAGUE

 $G^{\text{randmaster}}_{\text{Chithambaram}} \xrightarrow{\text{Aravindh}}_{\text{rashed}}$ through the defenses of super-solid Anish Giri to jump in to sole lead after the end of the seventh round of Prague Masters chess tournament now underway here.

It was Aravindh all the way while R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with preevent rating favourite Wei Yi of China. Aravindh took his tally to five points out of a possible seven and now enjoys a half point lead over Praggnanandhaa who needs to catch up.



In the other decisive game 16-With just two rounds to come, Sam Shankland of United years old Gurel Ediz of Turkey States defeated Quang Leim scored over local Nguyen Le of Vietnam. Interestingly, both Quang Leim and Giri Thai Dai Van to reach a fifty percent score while David had drawn the first six games Navara of Czech Republic played out a draw with and the axe fell on them at the Vincent Keymer of Germany.

Wei Yi, Ediz, Keymer and Shankland on 3.5 points each and these four are a half point adrift of the trio of Giri, Navara and Le.Dai Van is alone at the bottom now with 2.5 points in his kitty. The battle lines are drawn between the two Indians only. Aravindh is a cool customer in normal positions with a deep eye for tactical complexities and a rare chance against Giri provided him to dismantle the king side and enter record books. There are as many as five

Aravindh on five and Pragg on 4.5 are now followed by

Indians in top 15 live world rankings and Viswanathan Anand stands at number 15.

Aravindh at 14, entered the top fifteen for the first time ever. It was a Queen's gambit declined wherein Giri overestimated his chances and pushed his king side pawns in trying to secure a space advantage. Aravindh came up with a shocker on his 24th turn when he put his knight in front of a pawn and it was a one-way tide thereon. Black's attack was soon impossible to handle and Aravindh won in 39 moves. Praggnanandhaa started with the English opening against Wei Yi and the game took shape in a Tarrasch defense wherein the Chinese was under some pressure but never really out of the game.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DHAKA

Veteran Bangladesh wicket-keeper batter Mushfiqur Rahim has retired from ODI cricket with immediate effect. The 37-year-old was part of Bangladesh's squad that exited the Champions Trophy (CT) from the group stage. He made the announcement on

social media.

'I am announcing mv retirement from the ODI format as of today. Alhamdulillah (Thank God) for everything. While our achivements may have been limited on a global level, one thing is certain: whenever I stepped onto the field for my country, I gave more than 100



per cent with dedication and honesty," Rahim wrote on his official Facebook page.

"The last few weeks have been very challenging for me, and I have come to realise that this is my destiny.

"Lastly, I would like to deeply thank my family, friends and my fans for whom I have played cricket for the last 19 years," he added.

Rahim made his ODI debut almost 20 years ago and ended up representing the country in 274 ODIs, aggregating 7795 runs at an average of 36.42. Only Tamim Iqbal (8357 runs) has scored more ODI runs than him for Bangladesh.

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