DEHRADUN



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## 19 key proposals get cabinet nod

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

⊣he Yogi Adityanath cabinet, on Monday, approved 19 key proposals, including decisions related to agriculture, healthcare, industry, infrastructure and phasing out Rs 10,000 to Rs 25,000 physical stamp papers, replacing them with e-stamps to enhance transparency and prevent irregularities.

According to the decision, stamps worth over Rs 5,630 crore will be auctioned, with old stamps valid only until March 31, 2025.

Following the meeting, Finance Minister Suresh Khanna told reporters that all the proposals were discussed and unanimously approved. The proposals approved cover crucial sectors such as health, education, transport, urban development, and employ-

The finance minister told reporters that wheat procurement in the state will take place from March 17 to June 15 at the minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 2,425 per quintal, as announced by the Central government. He added that 6,500 procurement centres will be set up across the state by eight agencies, including the Food and Civil Supplies Department.

Among the other major decisions, the cabinet approved the free transfer of 14.05 acres of land from the Ballia district jail to the Medical Education Department for establishing a medical college in the district, named after freedom fighter Chittu Pandey. Out of the total land, 12.39 acres will be used for the medical college, while two acres will be developed into a memorial for freedom fighter Chittu Pandey.

In another decision, 4,570 square metres of land from the Government Agricultural School in Balipura village of Bulandshahr will be transferred to the Medical Education Department for establishing a nursing college. Nursing colleges are being set up in 27 autonomous medical colleges across the state.

### Land transfer for Agra Metro rail project approved

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh cabinet on Monday approved proposals for the transfer of land for the first and second phases of the Agra Metro Rail Project. The decision was taken in the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Disclosing this, State Finance Minister Suresh Khanna told reporters that for the first corridor of the Agra Metro Rail Project of UP Metro Rail Corporation Limited, 8,684.68 square metres of land belonging to the Horticulture and Food Processing Department has been transferred free of cost to the Housing and Urban Planning Department.

Similarly, 20,753 square metres of land belonging to the Home Department has also been transferred free of cost to the Housing and Urban Planning Department for the second corridor of the Agra Metro Rail Project. This land will be leased to the Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation for 90 years at a token price of Re 1, with a renewal provision of 30 years.

Furthermore, the Cabinet granted administrative and financial approval for the construction of an obstetrics and gynecology block at Uttar Pradesh Medical University in Saifai (Etawah). A pediatric block will also be included in the 300-bed hospital, with a budget of Rs 232.17 crore allocated for the proiect. This is an important initiative towards strengthening medical education and health services.

The cabinet also extended the State Smart City Scheme for two more years, covering all 17 munici pal corporations in Uttar Pradesh. Initially launched for five years, it is now being expanded under the State Smart City Mission.

The Central government selected 10 smart cities in the state in 2019-20, while the state government included seven cities: Ghaziabad, Meerut, Firozabad, Ayodhya, Mathura-Vrindavan, Shahjahanpur and Gorakhpur. This expansion will provide new momentum to urban development.

The cabinet also approved the transfer of 451.20 acres of land from closed spinning mills under the UP Cooperative Spinning Mills Sangh Limited in Kanpur to Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) for industrial use free of cost. It has been decided to transfer 71.02 acres of land in Mahmudabad (Sitapur), 55.31 acres in Fatehpur, 85.24 acres in Mauaima (Prayagraj), 78.92 acres in Bahadurganj (Ghazipur), 82.15 acres in Kampil (Farrukhabad) and 78.56 acres in Bulandshahr to UPSIDA among the closed units of UP Cooperative Spinning Mills Association Limited Kanpur. New industrial units will be established on these lands.

The government also approved transfer of 0.8 hectares of land free of cost for setting up a Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) in Lucknow node of the Defence Industrial Manufacturing Corridor. This facility will serve as a common testing centre for defense units in the region.

To promote tourism, the cabinet approved free transfer of 0.850 hectares of barren government land to the Tourism Department to rejuvenate Maharishi Dadhichi Kund in Hardoi district.

Additionally, the cabinet decided to extend the benefits of the Seventh Pay Commission to seven employees of the Science and Technology Council who have been serving for 25 years.

### Public representatives must rise above self-interest: Yogi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

hief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday emphasised that a public representative ✓ must be committed to serving the people selflessly, rising above personal interests.

Highlighting the government's welfare initiatives, the chief minister said, "At present, our government is providing free ration to 15 crore people across Uttar Pradesh. Over 1.04 crore poor ndividuals, including destitute women, elderly citizens, and differently abled persons, are receiving an annual pension of Rs 12,000. Additionally, Rs 2.5 crore farmers in the state are benefiting from the PM Kisan Samman

He further said that 56 lakh poor families have peen provided homes, and in the latest budget, the government has pledged to eradicate poverty completely within the next two years by ensuring housing, health cards, pensions, and employment for every underprivileged citizen.

Attending the '3 Years of Excellence, Sarojini Nagar Gratitude Day' event on Monday, Yogi inaugurated and laid the foundation for several development projects and explored the Sarojini Nagar Samvad and Development Exhibition'. The programme was organised by local MLA Dr Rajeshwar Singh at Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Law University

Sikh families from Sarojini Nagar presented prasad from Kartarpur Sahib to the CM.

Emphasising the festive spirit, Yogi remarked that the combination of vibrant colours and development initiatives has made Holi in Sarojini Nagar even more joyful. He pointed out that the event coincided with Rangbhari Ekadashi, when temples celebrate by playing Holi

The chief minister shared that projects worth Rs 32,000 crore have either been completed or are under construction. He highlighted a Rs 1,200 crore convention centre, which will seat 10,000 people, alongside a Defence Corridor, Uttar Pradesh's first forensic institute, and a medical facility comparable to SGPGI.

Referring to MLA Dr Rajeshwar Singh's journey from an Enforcement Directorate officer to a public servant, he said, "Often, bureaucrats lose direct connection with the people, but Rajeshwar Singh has maintained an active dialogue with citizens, ensuring the successful implementation of government schemes."

He congratulated the people of Sarojini Nagar, recalling that Dr Rajeshwar Singh was



CM Yogi Adityanath and MLA Dr Rajeshwar Singh Sarojini Nagar Samvad and Development Exhibition

elected MLA three years ago, and the region had seen significant progress since then.

Highlighting the ongoing and upcoming development projects in Sarojini Nagar, CM Yogi mentioned state-of-the-art highways, metro expansion, and airport facilities. He also noted the constituency's recognition as a hub for the Defence Corridor, Aerospace City, and AI City, with an AI-based data centre set to be inaugu-

rated in July. CM Yogi cited the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh as a powerful example of unity, where millions gathered without discrimination. He reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat,' emphasising unity for

a prosperous nation. CM Yogi reaffirmed the government's commitment to eradicating poverty and empowering people to lead self-reliant lives.

Praising Dr Rajeshwar Singh's efforts, he highlighted welfare initiatives, including sewing machines for women, job placements for youth, and bicycles, tablets, and sports kits for meritorious students.

Meanwhile, Yogi inaugurated several projects, including tablets for five meritorious students, 25 bicycles for deserving students, libraries for RWAs, sports kits for youth clubs, and smart class panels for schools. He also inaugurated open gyms, presented a trophy to the Sarojini Sports League winners, and launched the 11th Ran Bahadur Singh Digital Education and Empowerment Centre. Additionally, he celebrated the renovation of temples and the inauguration of statues of Lord Parshuram and late Kalyan

### HC poser to ASI on whitewashing of Sambhal mosque

Prayagraj (PTI): Hearing a matter related to the whitewashing of the Jama Masjid in Sambhal, the Allahabad High Court on Monday directed the counsel appearing for the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) to come up with specific averments as to what prejudice would whitewashing the outer walls of the

Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal passed the direction while hearing an objection raised by the mosque committee saying it sought permission only for whitewashing and lighting the outer side of the masjid, for which no specific reply was received from the ASI. The ASI is only talking about the interior side of the mosque, SFA Naqvi, counsel for the committee, argued.

Posting the matter for next hearing on March 12, Justice Agarwal directed the Sambhal district magistrate to produce the original agreement entered in 1927 between the administration and the mosque committee to handover the masjid to

On February 28, the ASI submitted a report stating that the interior of the mosque has been painted with ceramic colour and there is no need for whitewashing it at present.

In response, Naqvi submitted that they only wanted whitewashing and lighting of the outer walls of the mosque.

The court then asked the Archeological Survey of India to get the dust and overgrown grass on the mosque premises

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित हो कि श्रीमती शिव

दुलारी पत्नी लालता प्रसाद द्वारा पंजीकृत विक्रय

विलेख द्वारा खरीदी गई आराजी भूमिधरी एक

बिस्वा मिन्जुमला खसरा संख्या छ: सौ इक्यानबे

स्थित ग्राम भेलावॉ थाना कृष्णानगर, लखनऊ जो

कि मुख्य उपनिबन्धक लखनऊ के यहाँ रजिस्टर

नं-01 जिल्द संख्या 214.9 के पृष्ठ संख्या 110-

111 पर क्रमांक संख्या 1215 पर दिनांक,

08.04.1974 को पंजीकृत थी, वास्तव में खो गई

सूचना

मेरे पुत्र के जन्मप्रमाणपत्र अंक प्रमाणपत्र,

जीवनबीमा पॉलिसी आधारकार्ड सं.-

610177784593, टी.सी. पासपोर्ट में त्रटिवश नाम

अच्यत मिश्रा अंकित हो गया है। सही नाम अव्यान

मिश्रा (AVYAAN MISHRA) है। भविष्य में सही

नाम अव्यान मिश्रा (AVYAAN MISHRA) के

नाम से जाना पहचाना व लिखा जाए। दिनेश

नरायण मिश्रा पुत्र माधव प्रसाद मिश्रा, नि.म.नं.

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my daughter's name

from PRATISHTHA SAHU To

NIKITA SAHU for all future purposes, Dileep Kumar S/o Laxmi

Narayan Sahu R/o 58 A, New Azad

**NOTICE** 

Original Possession Letter of my

house no. 4E-219 Avas Vikas-2

Hanspuram Kanpur Nagar has been lost Somewhere.Used by others will

be illegal, Anil kumar s/o bhoore Lal

Chaudhary R/O B 248 EWS Barra 7

**NOTICE** 

register, my name is mentioned as

Niharika whereas in Aadhaar Card, it

is Kumari Niharika. My correct name

be ready as Niharika instead of

Kumari Niharika which is also

mentioned in educational records.

Niharika D/o Shri Shiv Kumar, Vill &

Post Jalalpur, Block & Tehsil

Bidhuna, Distt Auraiya (Uttar

Pradesh) Pin code 206255

Kanpur Nagar

Nagar Satbari Road, Kanpur-208011

247 ग्रा॰ व पो॰ पडरी कला उन्नाव।

है जिसका प्रयोग अवैध एवं अनुचित होगा।

#### **NOTICE**

In my army record No.2985141M Havildar, spelling of my wife's name and date of birth have wrongly been mentioned as Bandana Mishra and 20.8.1967. Her name's correct spelling and date of birth Vandana Mishra and 25.7.1969 respectively as mentioned in her Aadhaar and PAN cards.

#### **NOTICE**

my son,s correct name is Pradynesh Dwivedi S/0 Akhilesh Kumar Dwivedi Which is in educational records by mistake written AAdhar Card as Vansh Dwivedi which my son house hold name in future will be known Pradynesh Dwivedi S/0 Akhilesh Kumar Dwivedi. R/0 16 B Hariom Nagar, Sitapur Road Madiyaon Lucknow.

#### **NOTICE**

my correct name is Yaduraj Singh S/o Jaiveer Singh R/o Gram mahekapur Kanpur dehat which is mentioned pen card aadhar card all educational Records by mistake policy no.233769364 my name is mentioned as saurabh yadav which is my household name In future I will be known yaduraj singh I have completed all legal formalities regarding the above by me

#### **NOTICE**

It is informed to all, my daughter's name has been entered as godiya in her adhar card 373009866249 by mistake. While in birth certificate her actual name Samriddhi Verma has written. In future she will be known by her actual name Samriddhi Verma only. Namrata D/oRamsagar Verma Verma, R/o- Flat no -A1-1507, Rishita Manhattan, sector-7 Extension Gomti Nagar Lucknow UP.226010

#### 4 members of solvers' gang held PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

→he UP Special Task Force (STF) arrested four members of a gang involved in cheating during the main examination for the Group-D recruitment at the Allahabad High

The arrests took place in the Chinhat and Gomti Nagar Extension areas here.

Those arrested were identified as Vedprakash. a resident of Firozabad (solver), Rinku Gujjar from Firozabad (main candidate for the exam) Harendra from Mathura (solver), and Banwari from Bharatpur, Rajasthan (solver).

The accused were apprehended at Pragya Girls' Inter College, Semra Chinhat, and near a school in Gomti Nagar Extension.

During the operation, the STF seized a mobile phone, four admit cards, six forged Aadhaar cards, four OMR sheets, four question booklets, two master plan charts, two room number plan charts, and two attendance sheets with photographs. A spokesperson revealed that the STF was tasked with taking strong action against cheating mafia who facilitate cheating and provide solvers for the main examination (Group-D) conducted by the Allahabad High Court in various districts of Uttar Pradesh.

As part of the investigation, several STF teams were assigned to gather intelligence and take action. On March 9, two separate teams received tips about solvers sitting in for the original canites in the Group-D information, STF teams swiftly reached the locations and arrested the accused.

During interrogation, Vedprakash told the police that he runs a coaching centre for competitive exams and also appears for exams on behalf of other candidates. He admitted to taking exams for candidates in exchange for a fee.

Vedprakash further explained that he had met Rinku Gujjar, who was preparing for the exam. Rinku had applied for the Lekhpal recruitment exam, and Vedprakash had appeared in his place. Similarly, he had been appearing in the Group-D recruitment exam in place of Rinku.

On Rinku's instructions, Vedprakash had also prepared Harendra and Banwari to appear in the exam for two other candidates. The STF has initiated further investigation to bust the gang and prevent further cheating activities.

#### **RESTAURATEUR DIES AS RIFLE GOES OFF ACCIDENTALLY**

A restaurateur, Jitendra Bhadauria from Kanpur, who ran his establishemt in Alambagh, succumbed to firearm injuries to his head under mysterious circumstances while en route to attend a marriage ceremony in the Bijnor police station area on Monday night.

According to DCP (South) Nipun Agarwal, Jitendra, along with his driver Suresh Pratap Singh from Barabanki, was going to the party in an i10 car

'When they reached CRPF Gate number one in the Bijnor police station area, Jitendra turned around to pick up his rifle, which which went off accidentally," the DCP said, citing the driver's statement. The driver has been detained and is being interrogated by the police.

The DCP further explained that Jitendra susined firearm injuries as the rifle dentally. "The driver reported that the rifle went off when Jitendra picked it up. It was likely not locked, and the trigger was accidentally pressed," he said. Jitendra suffered a gunshot wound to his throat, with the bullet travelling through his temple in an upward trajectory. Further probe

### NCC cadets take part in cleanliness drive in Maha Kumbh Mela area

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

ollowing the successful organisation of → Maha Kumbh 2025, the Prayagraj Mela Authority has been conducting regular cleanliness drives to maintain hygiene in the fair area. As part of this initiative, a comprehensive cleanliness drive was organised in Sector 7 on Monday, in which around 90 cadets from Uttar Pradesh 6 UP Girls Battalion NCC and UP Naval

The campaign was spearheaded by Subedar Major Harvinder Singh, Lieutenant Colonel Farah Diba and PI Arvind Kumar. The cadets took responsibility for garbage collection and disposal, ensuring that the Kumbh Mela area remained clean and environmentally balanced.

The campaign aimed at maintaining cleanliness and preserving the environmental balance in the Kumbh Mela area. The cleanliness drive was organised under the guidance of the Prayagraj Mela Authority. The initiative was supported by Deputy District Magistrate (SDM) Ashutosh, Health and Sanitation Officer (SMO) Dr Vivek Kumar Pandey and other officials who were present to oversee the efforts. The two-hour campaign witnessed dedicated involvement from who carried out the cleanling ties with full commitment and energy. As a token of appreciation, cadets were honoured during the closing ceremony, where they were provided food packets, jute and cotton bags to encourage their continued commitment towards social service.

#### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER: RWSS DIVISION:BERHAMPUR Near Jarada Bunglow, Pin- 760004, Ph. 0680-229 eerwss \_bam@nic.in rwssbam@gmail.com NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Berhampur, Ganjam on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites bids in Double Cover system according to the norm of "e" Procurement system in online mode for electrification works in Ganjam District from the eligible contractors as per DTCN.

Bid Identification No. EERWSSBAM-ID-16-of- 2024-25

Name of the work	Execution of different works of different P.W.S. Scheme in Ganjam District.		
No of Work (Tender)	01 Nos.		
Estimated cost (Approximate)	178.02 Lakhs		
Period of completion	210 days		
Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal.	From 12-03-2025 at11.00 hrs to 31-03-2025-02-2025 up to 17.00 hrs		
Last date & time for seeking clarification	28-03-2025 up to 17.00 hrs		
Dt. of opening of Bid	02-04-2025 at 11.00 hrs		
Late date / Time for receipt of bids in the Portal	31-03-2025 up to 17.00 hrs		
Name & address of the Officer inviting tender.	Superintending Engineer, RWSS Division, Near Jarada Bunglow, Berhampur-760004, Dist. Ganjam, Odisha.		
	No of Work (Tender) Estimated cost (Approximate) Period of completion Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal. Last date & time for seeking clarification Dt. of opening of Bid Late date / Time for receipt of bids in the Portal Name & address of the Officer		

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersorissa.gov.in Superintending Engineer

#### districts to be revised soon Lucknow (PNS): The Yogi Adityanath government is set to revise

land circle rates in several districts, including Lucknow.

Land circle rates in several

Prioritising areas where rates have remained unchanged for years, the process has already been completed in 37 districts since January 1, 2024, with ongoing and upcoming revisions in others. The primary beneficiaries of this revision will be farmers, as it will enable them to receive fair compensation for their land during acquisitions under law. This focus aligns with the government's vision of advancing development projects across the state. As per Rule 4(1) of the Second Amendment Rules of the Uttar Pradesh Stamp (Property Valuation) Act, 2013, district magistrates are responsible for setting the minimum price per hectare or square metre for agricultural and non-agricultural land in August each year. If necessary, they may also revise these rates mid-year. This provision has facilitated the completion of the revision process in 37 districts this year.

In a recent review meeting chaired by the chief secretary, directives were issued to expedite the revision process in districts where it has been pending for years. These districts include Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Baghpat, Etawah, Kannauj, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Meerut, Maharajganj, Kushinagar, Ayodhya, Ambedkar Nagar, Etah, Kasganj, Muzaffarnagar, Budaun, Jhansi, Jalaun, Lalitpur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Kaushambi and Prayagraj. The process will be initiated soon in these areas. Meanwhile, revision is underway in districts such as Shamli, Saharanpur, Mirzapur, Aligarh, Banda, Hamirpur, Agra, Sultanpur, Amethi and Gautam

#### BTech student stabbed to death

Agra (PTI): A 24-year-old BTech student was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants while watching a cricket match with his friends, police said on Monday. Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Hariparvat, Aditya,

said that the victim, Siddhant Govindam, was watching the India-New Zealand match on his mobile phone along with three friends—Shubham, Shashank, and Siddharth—at JCB Ground. The group was also having a small party when unidentified individuals attacked them. "Siddhant was stabbed, leading to his death. CCTV footage is being examined, and multiple teams have been deployed to investigate the case from all possible angles," he added.

According to Govindam's father, Anil Govindam he had received a call from his son on Sunday evening before he left home on his scooter. "Around 10 pm, I got a call from the police, and that's when I found out about his murder," he said. According to his cousin, Akhilesh, Siddhant was a fourth-year Electronics BTech student at Dayalbagh Institute. He was the only son in the family and lived with his father and younger sister. His mother had passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### LDA officials discuss beautification plan for heritage zone

Lucknow (PNS): A meeting chaired by Vice-Chairman of Lucknow Development Authority (LDA), Prathmesh Kumar, was held on Monday to discuss the beautification plan for the city's heritage zone. The goal is to create a route for tourists visiting the area and promote Awadhi culture. The meeting was also attended by LDA Secretary Vivek Srivastava.

Divisional Lucknow Commissioner Roshan Jacob has tasked the VC with overseeing the beautification of the heritage zone to attract more tourists. She has directed that the project be completed within four months, and the LDA will collaborate with the district magistrate to finalise the plan.

The VC He noted that the area needs to be hygienic and well-maintained to appeal to tourists who are eager to learn about Awadhi culture. He further pointed out that many localities in the area are currently unclean, making it less inviting for visitors. Additionally, the Hazratganj area and its surrounding markets, which serve as the entry point to the heritage zone, will also undergo beautification, even though they are not officially part of the heritage zone. The VC stressed the importance of improving food stalls to ensure they meet hygiene standards. In line with the beautification efforts, the VC also proposed that buildings within the heritage zone be painted in uniform colours to maintain a cohesive aesthetic.

#### Legal Cell: HDFC Bank Ltd, D-58/52 A-2A A-5 🗅 HDFC BANK M S Plaza Rathyatra Crossing Varanasi, Ve understand your world Uttar Pradesh - 221010 Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of the HDFC Bank Ltd. under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest

APPENDIX IV [RULE 8(1)] (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notices, and calling upon to pay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice

RWS&S Division, Berhampur

POSSESSION NOTICE

05-12-2024

06-03-2025

VARANASI

Customer Name

Description of the Immovable Property

1. M/s Hanuman Store Through Its Propritor Mr. Pavan Kumar
Nawaigaria (Borrower) 2. M/s Kuber International Through Its
Propritor Mr. Prakash Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 3. Mr. Pavan Kumar
Nawaigaria S/o Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Co-borrower & Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Co-borrower & Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Co-borrower & Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria) 6. Mrs. Vimia Devi W/o Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria Through Its Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria) 6. Mrs. Swati Dickaria (Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria) 6. Mrs. Swati Dickaria Ji, South-House Of Meera Devi & Others.
Goel Dic Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Legal Heir Of Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria) 7. Mrs. shveta Devi Nawaigaria W/o Sh. Pavan Kumar
Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Pradesh-22100 1. (property Owned By Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Pradesh-22100 1. (property Owned By Late Chhote Lal Nawaigaria (Co-borrower) 8. Mrs. shweta Navaigaria W/o Sh. Prakash Pradesh-22100 1. (property Owned By Late Chhote Lal Pradesh-13(2) Notice Date :

The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) and the public in general that the undersigned ha taken possession of the property described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on above mentioned dates. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to charge of the HDFC Bank Ltd. for an amount of notices mentioned above and interest thereon together with expenses and charges etc. less amount paid, if any. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-sectio

Details are given as under:

Nawalgaria (Co-Borrower)

**Customer Name** 

Description of the Immovable Property

13(2) Notice Date : 05-12-2024 Notice Amt.: Rs.1,76,82,327.00/-Possession Date 06-03-2025 VARANAS

(8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Authorised Officer, HDFC Bank Ltd

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www.dailypioneer.com

VIJAYWADA

## Language war intensifies

BHOPAL

LUCKNOW



**DEEPAK KUMAR JHA** New Delhi

arliament resumed its second leg of Budget Session with a massive confrontation between the Centre and the Opposition over the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP) in Tamil Nadu (TN), instigating a fresh round of lan-

Face-off was also witnessed in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha over alleged discrepancies in voter lists leading to several adjournments. At one point, Speaker Om Birla cautioned the Opposition to either to fall in line or face strict action.

DMK MP Kanimozhi filed a notice for breach of Parliamentary privilege against Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in response to his remarks on the NEP issue and TN Chief Minister MK Stalin. The TN government and the Centre have been at loggerheads over the implementation of the new NEP and the three-language formula.

Pradhan criticised the TN government for refusing to implement the NEP and Stalin doing a "U-turn" on the issue for "politics," which drew protests from the DMK and other Opposition members disrupting proceedings in the upper house.

They are dishonest and they are ruining the future of the students of Tamil Nadu ... They are misleading the people," Pradhan said while replying to a query on the Centre not releasing funds for the PM Schools for Rising

India (PM SHRI) scheme.

Hitting back, the DMK said it had clearly told the minister "we cannot accept" the NEP "in full" and the three-language formula "is not acceptable to Tamil Nadu". It said the Centre cannot stop the release of budgetry allocation for education on the issue of implementing the NEP.

Stalin too hit out at Pradhan, alleging he spoke with "arrogance" and asked him to "control his tongue". The TN CM asserted that the state government did not come forward to implement the Centre's PM SHRI scheme and when that is the case, he said nobody could persuade him further in this regard.

They are dishonest and they are ruining the future of the students of Tamil Nadu ... They are misleading

DMK MPs also raised slogans of "stop the victimisation of south Indian states". Congress' Karti Chidambaram said there was societal and

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN, UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

political unanimity in Tamil Nadu about non-acceptance of the three-language policy. Remarks by DMK member Dayanidhi Maran drew a sharp rebuke from Speaker Om Birla, who warned him of strong action. "Be careful while speaking, whatever you said was not on record. Had it been on record, I would have ensured proper action against you. I will

do it. You say the same thing on record and I

will take action against you immediately," the Birla said.

BHUBANESWAR

The Speaker asked Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju to bring a resolution for action against Maran and if the government fails then Speaker will have to act. "I will not tolerate any harm to the dignity of the House," the Speaker said.

In his reply, Pradhan said the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government has changed its stand on implementing the centrally-sponsored scheme PM SHRI which envisaged strengthening the schools managed by central, state or

The state concerned has to sign an MoU with the central government that it would implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and in return, the central government provides

"The Tamil Nadu government had initially agreed to sign the MoU. But now they have changed the stand. Many non-BJP-ruled states, including Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh, have signed the agreement," the Minister said.

DMK member Kanimozhi told the House that she was "very pained and hurt" by a particular word used by the minister. "The truth is that the chief minister of Tamil Nadu had written to the minister as well as the prime minister saying that we have issues with NEP and cannot accept it in total. He had also requested to release the funds," she said.

### Fashion show in picturesque Gulmarg angers Kashmir Assembly

DEHRADUN

**MOHIT KANDHARI** ■ Jammu

fashion show organised during the holy month of Ramzan by two Delhi-based designers in the famous ski resort of Gulmarg has created a piquant situation for Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah as it was seen by the religious clerics and common Kashmiris as 'an act of spreading obscenity' and hurting their 'religious sentiments'.

CHANDIGARH

Though the event was organised in Gulmarg on March 7 but Chief Minister Omar Abdullah came in the line of fire on Monday after several members belonging to the Opposition benches cornered him on the floor of the Assembly demanding action against the organisers and those who facilitated the event in the

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Sunil Sharma openly challenged the Chief Ministers' claim that he was unaware of the event.

Sharma alleged his (Omar Abdullah) family members own the hotel where the event took place.

Omar, however, clarified that it was a private function without any government involvement.

Former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti also criticised the event, calling it "deplorable" and an attack on Kashmiri values. She said, "It is deplorable that private hoteliers are allowed to promote such vulgarity through these events, which blatantly contradict our cultural values. The government cannot absolve itself of responsibility by labelling this a private affair.'

Talking to reporters outside the legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma Monday said, "Omar Abdullah lies both inside the Assembly and outside. How is it possible that such a big function was happening in a hotel



HYDERABAD

such a big function was happening in a hotel owned by your relatives and you had no dea?He should accept the truth instead of lying

– SUNIL SHARMA, LOP JAMMU ASSEMBLY

owned by your relatives and you had no idea? You must have organised this programme yourself. Now, since people have raised this issue, you are claiming an inquiry will be conducted. He should accept the truth instead of lying," Sharma said.

He added that the excise department had issued a short-term licence for the event, suggesting that authorities had prior knowledge.

On Sunday Mirwaiz Umar Farooq also criticised the event and issued a warning saying that "obscenity" in the name of tourism promotion will not be tolerated.

As the visuals of the fashion show started trending on various social media platforms it prompted Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to order an inquiry into the matter.

Ābdullah responded to Umar Farooq's post, saying the shock and anger are totally understandable.

"The images I have seen show a complete disregard for local sensitivities and that too during this holy month. My office has been in touch with the local authorities and I have asked for a report to be submitted within the next 24 hours. Further action, as appropriate, will follow from this report," the chief minister wrote on X.

Following criticism of the event, desingers Shivan and Narresh posted a statement of apology on their official X page.

'We deeply regret any hurt caused by our recent presentation in Gulmarg during the holy month of Ramadan. Our sole intention was to celebrate creativity and the ski & apres-ski lifestyle, without any desire to offend anyone or any religious sen-

"Respect for all cultures and traditions is at our heart, and we acknowledge the concerns raised. We sincerely apologise for any unintended discomfort and appreciate the feedback from our community. We remain committed to being more mindful and respectful," they said in the statement.

#### Vanuatu dumps **Lalit Modi**



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ New Delhi/Port Vila

ugitive businessman and former Indian Premier League(IPL)founder Lalit Modi's citizenship of Vanuatu was cancelled by island nation's Prime Minister Jotham Napat on Monday. He said the fugitive was attempting to avoid his extradition.

On March 7, Modi filed an application with the Indian high commission in London to surrender his Indian passport. He is known to have acquired citizenship of Vanuatu, a South Pacific Island nation. He left India in 2010 and is said to have been living in London.

An official media release by the Republic of Vanuatu stated, "I have instructed the Citizenship Commission to cancel the Vanuatu passport issued to Lalit Modi following recent revelations in internation-

"While all standard background checks, including Interpol screenings, conducted during his application showed no criminal convictions, I have been made aware in the past 24 hours that Interpol twice rejected Indian authorities' requests to issue an alert notice on Lalit Modi due to lack of substantive judicial evidence," the statement said. Napat said any such "alert" would have triggered an automatic rejection of Lalit Modi's citizenship application.

The release also stated that the "Prime Minister emphasised that holding a Vanuatu passport is a privilege, not a right, and applicants must seek citizenship for legitimate reasons.'

None of those legitimate reasons include attempting to avoid extradition, which the recent facts brought to light clearly indicate was Modi's intention," the statement said.

India sent a request to the government of Vanuatu to cancel Modi's passport along with certain details of his case, it was learnt.

The Vanuatu prime minister suggested that the application for citizenship of the island nation by Lalit Modi should not have been accepted by the authorities in

## Gun violence chokes national highway

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

man was shot dead in Ghazipur flower market in the early hours of Monday allegedly due to a rivalry between two sparring groups of the area. Following the murder, the friends and family of the deceased, Delhi-Meerut Expressway, causing traffic disruption up to several kilometers during the morning peak hours. Local residents blocked traffic, demanding swift action against the culprits responsible for the murder of a 32-year-old man. The traffic jam during the morning peak hour led to longer office hours. Several students who were supposed to appear in the Board examination were also stuck in the traffic.

Massive jam from Akshardham to Ghaziabad, forced Delhi Traffic Police has issued a travel advisory stating that traffic movement is affected on both carriageways of NH-24 due to the protest. "Commuters heading towards Indirapuram and Ghaziabad are advised to avoid NH-24 and use Noida Link Road as an alternate route. The incident has heightened tensions in the area, with allegations of organised crime and illegal activities surfacing.

According to police, the victim, identified as Rohit Chawda, was shot dead near Phool Mandi on National Highway-24 late Sunday night. According to Delhi Police, they received a medico-legal case (MLC) report from Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, where Chawda was declared dead on arrival after suffering a gunshot wound. He was a resident of Ghazipur village and lived with his



Police said they have registered a case

around 2 am in the Ghazipur area

under sections of the Arms Act and for murder and two suspects have been detained. Multiple teams are investigating the case. "We received information that a man was injured. When police reached the hospital, we found that he had been shot. Two people have been detained, and further investigation is underway," said Vineet Kumar, Additional DCP-I, East District.The murder triggered strong protests in the area. Locals blocked the main road and raised slogans demanding immediate action.

One of the protesters, Virender Singh said, "We have a Hindu brother here in Ghazipur village. He was shot at night by jihadists. He was from the Gujar community. It happened around 2am. The problem was that these people were dominating the area, collecting money, and running illegal businesses. This brother spoke out against them and said this kind of domination won't be allowed. maternal uncle. The incident took place Because of that, he was shot twice and

died on the spot. His name was Rohit. He was from Ghazipur, and his father is not around. He lived with his maternal uncle. He had three brothers, and he was the oldest."

Another protester, Chaudhary Karam Singh Rawat, said, "This is about the Delhi Police and the administration. If they wanted, they could have arrested the person who killed our child by now. We are suffering because of this. Muslims from Rohingya have settled here with money. If they wanted, the police could have arrested them by now. If we don't get justice, there will be violence and bloodshed. The road will be blocked until

we get justice.' Lambasting the BJP government, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said that the law and order situation in Delhi has completely collapsed under BJP's "doubleengine" government, with criminals operating fearlessly and broad daylight murders becoming routine.

#### Beleagured Air India grounded by two hoax bomb threats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

**▼**wo Air India international flights had to turn back mid air after a security threat and clogged toilets respectively. An Air India flight en route to New York returned to Mumbai after a note threatenlet. The note was reportedly found by a passenger. It read: "There is a bomb in the flight." Over 322 people including 19 crew members were on board when the flight took off and landed safely at the Mumbai Airport. The aircraft underwent mandatory checks by the security agencies. In a separate incident another Air India flight en route from Chicago to Delhi had to return to Chicago after flying for more than 10 hours on Thursday following a technical glitch that left 11 of its 12 toilets unusable.

An Air India (Boeing 777-300 ER aircraft) flight travelling to New York returned to Mumbai four hours after take-off after the crew received a threat. According to flight tracking website Flightradar24, the Air India flight, which was headed to New York's John F Kennedy International Airport, was diverted to Mumbai over Azerbaijan. Following its landing, bombdetection procedures were carried out.

According to sources, the threat is believed to be a hoax. The flight took off from Mumbai around 2 am in the morning and returned to Mumbai around 10.30 am. Flight number AI-119, from Mumbai airport to John F Kennedy airport in New York, takes about 15 hours to complete the

The flight, Air India has said, will now take off at 5 am Tuesday. Air India said in a statement that the decision to return to Mumbai was taken after a potential secu-

rity threat. It said the passengers have been provided accommodation, meals and other

A potential security threat was detected mid-flight on AI119 operating Mumbai-New York (JFK) today, 10 March 2025. After following the necessary protocols, the irned to Mii interest of the safety and security of all on board. The flight landed safely back in Mumbai at 1025 Hrs (local time)," the air-

According to the airline, the flight landed safely back in Mumbai at 1025 am (local time). "The aircraft is undergoing mandatory checks by security agencies, and Air India is extending its full cooperation to the authorities," it said. The flight has been rescheduled to operate at 5 am on March 11. All passengers have been offered hotel accommodation, meals, and other assistance until then, the airline said. "Our colleagues on the ground are making sure to minimise the inconvenience caused to our passengers by this disruption. As always, Air India accords the highest priority to the safety of passengers and crew," it said.

In another incident, an Air India flight en route from Chicago to Delhi had to return to Chicago after flying for more than 10 hours on Thursday following a technical glitch that left 11 of its 12 toilets unusable.

According to flight radar 24.com, the Boeing 777-337 ER aircraft returned to Chicago's ORD airport after being airborne for over 10 hours. The Boeing 777-300 ER aircraft, which accommodates more than 340 passengers across first, business and economy classes, is equipped with 10 toilets, including two designated for first-class

### Metro network in India accelerates to be third largest in world

RAJESH KUMAR New Delhi

eeping with the pace of 'Viksit Bharat', India is on the tracks to overtake United States to become the world's second largest operating metro system of the world.

Currently, according to the Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, India has the third largest metro network system in the world with 1,011 km in length. Centre has sought the support of State governments to come forward to develop the new age local transportation system and to become the world's largest metro network.

"We started metro projects in 2002 at the time of Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. Today, we have 1,011 km of metro projects operating in 23 cities. In addition to that, we have another 979 km under construction. Metro is either in operation or under construction in 29 cities in the country," Puri said in Parliament.

He said that between 2002 and till date, intensive project, as the projects require India has the third largest operating metro system in the world after China and the US, and we are at 1,011 km, and America at about 1,400 km.

"In becoming the second largest network of urban transport...We need the cooperation of state governments. We have all state governments cooperating with us, some more effectively than others. I find that when proposals are sent to us in a comprehensive way, then the chances of the proposal getting approved is higher,"

He also said land and urban transport are State subjects, but the Central government supports states in establishing metro networks in terms of financial support and funding from external agencies.

Replying to supplementaries in the Rajya Sabha during Question Hour, the minister said he cannot give an assurance to a Member of Parliament on a capital-

detailed examination in terms of finances and feasibility.

He also urged states to send detailed project reports, along with relevant documentation, to enable the Centre to examine them expeditiously.

In Delhi, we have about 400 km in NCR region and at any given day, we have more than 70 lakh people using the metro

- HARDEEP SINGH PURI, UNION MINISTER

He was responding to a question on the metro rail project in Chennai, cleared by the Union Cabinet last October. Puri was also asked about clearing pending projects for the Madurai and Coimbatore metro projects, to which the minister said he cannot give an assurance without a proper examination of the projects.

assurance on Madurai and Coimbatore projects, the minister said, "It is not my job as a cabinet minister to give assurances on the floor of Parliament without the proposal having examined and the implications having examined".

He stressed that all capital-intensive projects will go through detailed scrutiny, and only then, they will be approved. Each project is evaluated in terms of its viability.

He said that for any metro project to progress, it is important that the central government receives a detailed project. The DPR from Madurai and Coimbatore had a composite mobility plan missing at

that time, he stressed, adding that all state government should forward their plans

with proper documentation. "In Delhi, we have about 400 km in NCR region and at any given day, we have more than 70 lakh people using the

To a question on the minister giving an metro system," he said while giving an example of a successful transport system.

He also informed the central government approved 28.5 Km for the metro system in Gurugram and the NCRTC corridor, connecting Gurugram, was kept on hold by the AAP government for three

"Now with the change in the government in Delhi, I am sure we will be able to get this done as well. We could not have moved from zero in 2002 to 1,011 km unless the state governments cooperated," he noted.

Speaking about the Chennai metro project, the minister, who held the charge of Housing and Urban Development earlier, on behalf of his colleague Manohar Lal Khattar said the Chennai metro has a long history, and the proposal was originally sent to us in 2017 for 107 km of metro at

a cost of Rs 85,000 crore.



## In a first, LMC meeting postponed due to incomplete quorum

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** ■ Lucknow

or the first time in the history of Lucknow Municipal Corporation, the executive committee meeting, scheduled to pass the budget for the financial year 2025-26 on Monday, was postponed to March 18 due to incomplete quorum. Eight BJP councillors and two from the SP were absent without prior notice, preventing the passage of the municipal

Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, visibly upset by the absences, described the situation as a significant setback to the proceedings and suggested it was an intentional effort to undermine her authority.

Councillors pointed out that this was the first time in municipal corporation's history that the quorum was not met, causing a major disruption to the meeting. The meeting, originally scheduled for 9 am, had been communicated to all exec-

phone. A discussion regarding the budget was also held at the mayor's residence on Sunday, ahead of the meeting.

However, only Deputy Chairman Girish Gupta and Ranjit Singh from the BJP attended the meeting, while eight other BJP councillors were absent without providing any explanation.

The missing councillors included Anup Kamal Saxena, Umesh Sanwal, Mukesh Singh Monty, Anurag Mishra, Bhrigunath Shukla, Charanjit Gandhi, Krishna Narayan Singh, and Gauri Saawariya.

In response, the LMC administration has sought an explanation from the councillors in question, emphasising that the failure to hold the budget meeting could hamper the city's development plans.

Addressing mediapersons at the LMC headquarters, Kharkwal expressed her frustration, claiming the absence of the councillors was a deliberate attempt to

that the meeting had been rescheduled to 9 am on Monday due to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's programme, and all councillors had been informed.

She added that a meeting had been held at her residence on Sunday, where the budget was discussed with the heads of BJP and SP corporators. She expressed confusion over the lack of attendance on Monday and stated she would send a letter to the BJP city president to inquire about the councillors' absence.

Asked if the issue of increasing the corporators' fund had contributed to the absence of councillors, Kharkwal confirmed that the matter had been raised during the Sunday meeting. She assured the corporators that she would present the issue in the executive committee meeting. However, she clarified that decisions regarding the budget would be made by the municipal commissioner and chief finance officer, who would assess the revenue and financial condi-

Mukesh Singh Chauhan, a Congress corporator from Ismailganj, called the incident unfortunate, stating that the delay in the meeting would impact development work in the city.

He described the incident as a "black chapter" in the LMC history and suggested that the "internal rift" between the mayor and BJP councillors had worsened. Chauhan urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to intervene to ensure that the city's development activities were not delayed. Anurag Mishra, a BJP corporator from Chowk, who also did not attend the meeting, stated that the developmental works of his area were not on the agenda. He emphasised that LMC executive committee members should be consulted when the agenda is prepared for

## B'day party invitees attacked by group over old dispute

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

group of neighbours allegedly attacked the guests at a birthday **A**party over an old dispute in Mahanagar late Sunday night. The accused allegedly threw bricks from the roof at the guests, and then chased and stabbed those who ran for cover. Three individuals sustained serious injuries in the incident, while police registered a case and arrested three accused.

During the attack, women and children reportedly took cover under tables to protect themselves.

As per reports, Sonu Rawat, a resident of Birbal Sahni Marg, Shivdham Basti in Mahanagar, had organised a birthday party for his son on Sunday.

Rawat, in his complaint to the police, stated that several neighbours and relatives attended the party. The trouble began when a neighbour, Sabbir, and his son Aman started abusing the guests from the roof. When they were confronted, they allegedly began throwing bricks at the guests, causing chaos and a stampede. Initial investigations revealed that some of the invitees were involved in a previous dispute with the accused.

Upon seeing these individuals, Shabbir and his associates allegedly hurled bricks and wielded knives while shouting slogans. Rawat claimed that he suffered fracture as a brick hit him on the head.

He further alleged that Shabbir, Aman, Arman, Chhotu, Salman, and others arrived armed with knives and sticks, overturned chairs, and lobbed objects at the

under tables to avoid the attackers. Monu and Vijay also suffered head injuries during the assault. Terrified, the guests contacted the police,

In fear, women and children took shelter

who arrived at the scene and rushed the injured to the hospital.

Sonu Rawat claimed that Shabbir had a long-standing dispute with his neighbour Vicky Kanaujia, who was also invited to the party.

The attackers apparently took the opportunity to escalate the conflict when they

confirmed that a case has been filed against the attackers and they had been booked for assault, rioting, and violation of the SC/ST Act. Three accused, including Shabbir and Shahid, have been arrested and sent to jail.

#### Candidate caught using Bluetooth device in exam

A team from the Special Task Force (STF) apprehended an examinee using a Bluetooth device to cheat during the written exam for Agniveers and nursing staff at the AMC Centre in Lucknow Cantonment.

The accused, who arrived for the exam wearing the Bluetooth device, was spotted by Military Intelligence officers, who immediately alerted the STF. According to reports, the STF recovered a Bluetooth device, an Aadhaar card, a SIM card, and other items from the accused. A case has been registered against him at the Cantonment police station.

A police spokesman shared that during the exam, a young man was observed repeatedly moving his hands into his pocket, arousing suspicion. He was then asked to remain seated for further observation.

When questioned by the Military Intelligence team, the accused, identified as Praveen Kumar from Utwara in Khair, Aligarh, became visibly nervous. In a subsequent search, the Bluetooth device was found in his pants pocket.

During interrogation, Praveen admitted to receiving answers via the device from someone outside the exam centre.

The Military Intelligence team then removed him from the exam hall and informed the STF. The STF arrived at the scene, took Praveen into custody, and questioned him further. He confessed to using the Bluetooth device to cheat, and mentioned that a companion outside the centre was helping him with the answers. However, upon receiving information that Praveen had been caught, the accomplice fled the scene. The STF has arrested Praveen and filed a case against him at the Cantonment police station. They have Inspector, Mahanagar, Akhilesh Mishra, launched a manhunt for his accomplice.

### 15-km ABS system to boost train ops

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

he Lucknow division of North Eastern Railway (NER) is set to see more trains in operation with the completion of a 15 km automatic block signalling (ABS) system between Munderwa, Orwara, and Basti railway lines, which began operations on Sunday.

This development is expected to boost passenger volume in eastern Uttar Pradesh and address the growing demand for more trains in the region.

Additionally, the freight business is anticipated to see an uptick as a result of this improvement.

PRO of NER's Lucknow division, Mahesh Gupta, stated that the work was completed under the guidance of Divisional Railway Manager, Lucknow, Gaurav Agarwal. "In response to the growing passenger and freight traffic across Indian Railways, infrastructure development and expansion are being carried out at a fast signalling on this rail section, the operagate interlockings.

tion of more trains has become easier, and the railway line's capacity has increased," Gupta said. On the occasion, several officials were present, including Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (Project) RK Singh, Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (Planning) Neelabh Mahesh, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operations) Vikram Kumar, Station Director of Gorakhpur JP Singh, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer Vaibhav Srivastava, Senior Divisional Operation Manager (Coaching) Arijit Singh, and Deputy Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (Project) Satyadev Pathak. "Currently, the 60 km rail section between Domingarh and Basti is equipped with an automatic signaling system. This was a complex non-interlocking signaling process," Gupta added, explaining that three mainline stations were converted, three new auto hut works were completed, and eight new ELB gates pace. With the completion of automatic were inaugurated, including two new LC

### Fraudster selling fake liquor arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

n an effort to exploit Bacchus lovers during the upcoming Holi festival, a fraudster attempted to sell fake liquor. However, the Lucknow police, who were on high alert, apprehended the accused during a routine check on Monday.

According to the police, the accused was selling his own homemade liquor, labelling it with fake hallmarks and stickers of wellknown brands.

The fraudster had planned to sell liquor worth around Rs 2.5 lakh during the Holi festivities. He was arrested by Thakurganj police during the inspection.

Inspector, Thakurganj, stated that the

police team had been conducting a checking drive in preparation for Holi. They received a tip-off from an informer that a person near the Mari Mata temple was selling fake liquor.

The individual was allegedly putting fake brand stickers and hallmarks on empty bottles and selling them as genuine liquor,

even adding QR codes to the lids. Acting on this information, the police raided the location and recovered 22 boxes of fake and adulterated liquor, along with four sacks of empty bottles and caps of various

liquor brands. It was only after the raid that the fake hallmarks and QR codes were discovered. The accused, identified as Anil Singh (35), a resident of Ekta Nagar Baraura Hussainbari in Thakurganj, confessed to the police that he had been smuggling liquor from other states into Lucknow. He would fill the bottles with adulterated liquor, affix fake brand labels and QR codes, and sell them without a licence at prices slightly lower than market rates. The police further revealed that Anil had a criminal history, having been previously jailed under the Gambling Act and for other cases. A police spokesman confirmed that 22 boxes of counterfeit liquor, worth Rs 2.5 lakh, were recovered, and the bot-

tles were found to be labelled with fake saw Vicky at the event.

#### Holi celebrations begin with Rangbhari Ekadashi PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

**¬**housands of devotees thronged the Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) in Varanasi on Monday to celebrate Rangbhari Ekadashi with traditional gaiety and religious fervour. As per tradition, with Rangbhari Ekadashi the people start playing Holi in this holy city after seeking Vishwanath. Due to the rush of devotees, lanes near KV temple were flooded with abir and gulal. As per tradition, a grand 'shobha yatra' of Lord Shiva, Goddess Gaura (Parvati) and deity Ganesh was taken out from the residence of former Mahant of temple Late Kulpati Tiwari at Tedi Neem. The main attraction was silver idols of deities kept on silver chariot decorated with flowers. During the procession, devotees were playing Holi with abir and gulal and chanted the traditional slogan of 'Har Har Mahadev'. It culminated at KVT and the idols of Lord Shiva and other deities were kept in the sanctum sanctorum. According to the tradition, the engagement of Shiv and Parvati is done on the occasion of Basant Panchmi, while the marriage of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati takes place on the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri and Rangbhari Ekadashi is celebrated for 'Gauna' (Vidai)' of Goddess Parvati and the Holi is played to celebrate it. Though the festival has been celebrated at the temple for the last 361 year, it was really given a new shape in 1917 by the ninth generation of the former Mahant family, Mahant Prasad Tiwari. Since 1918 the then Mahant house was decorated on the occasion and silver idols were carried from there. In 1934 when freedom movement was going on, Pt Jawaharlal Nehru along with his mother Swaroop Rani came here on the occasion to offer prayers in Kashi Vishwanath temple. Pt Nehru had given a letter to then Mahant Pt Mahabir Prasad Tiwari to offer Khadi garments of Lord Shiva in order to popularise Khadi movement. Earlier, the house of former mahant was

close to KV temple which was acquired for the development of Shri Kashi Vishwanath



Devotees attend Holi celebrations at Sri Krishna Janmasthan temple Mathura on Monday

Dham (corridor). Later late Dr Tiwari's family shifted to Tedi Neem area and it was the sixth time when the procession was taken out from there via Sakshi Vinavak. Kotwalpura, Dundhiraj Ganesh and Annapurna Mandir and then reached KVT amidst the beat of dhak, damru and

Meanwhile, the Banke Bihari temple in Vrindavan, on Monday, began its grand Holi celebrations with Tesu and saffroninfused coloured water on the occasion of Rangbhari Ekadashi of the Falgun Shukla Paksha, officials said.

The tradition of wet Holi was also observed in temples across the Braj region as the festivities commenced.

In the Jagmohan hall of the temple, Thakur Banke Bihari Maharaj, dressed in white and seated on a silver throne, began the celebrations by sprinkling colours on devotees with gold and silver water guns, marking the official start of Holi with colours at all temples in the region.

"On Rangbhari Ekadashi, pure saffron-infused colour is prepared for Banke Bihari Ji. The sevayats first sprinkle this colour on the deity using gold and silver pichkaris (water guns), marking the traditional beginning of Holi," temple priest Prahlad Vallabh Goswami said.

"Now, every day until Purnima (full

Moon), Holi will be played in the temple with Tesu flower colours, chandan (sandalwood), abir and gulal," he added.

On Dhulandi, the day after Holi, Thakur Ii does not sprinkle colours on devotees Instead, he adorns a pink royal attire, sits on a golden throne, and watches his devotees play Holi, Goswami said.

A traditional 'chaupai' (procession) was also taken out by the temple sevayats, with members of the Goswami community singing devotional Holi songs and congratulatory verses. Apart from Banke Bihari temple, Holi with Tesu colours also commenced at Thakur Radha Vallabh, Thakur Radha Damodar, Thakur Radha Shyamsundar, Thakur Radha Raman, Thakur Radha Gopinath, Thakur Madan Mohan temples, as well as at Yashodanandan Dham and Goda Haridev temples. Sevayats sprinkled Tesu and saffron-infused colours on devotees, creating a vibrant and divine atmosphere filled with hues of red, pink, blue and yellow, officials said. Special offerings of chaats, jalebi and thandai were made to Thakur Ji during the festival. Other delicacies included pakodi, dal-pakodi, dahi-bada, gujiya, sonthgujiya, pani tikkiya, khaja, samosa and aloo gola. Thandai made with saffron, almonds, cashews, pistachios, poppy seeds, melon seeds, fennel, black pepper and rose petals mixed with milk was also offered as

As part of Rangbhari Ekadashi, the annual Priya-Pritam Rangili Holi procession from the Radha Vallabh temple began at 1 pm, touring the city before concluding in the temple courtyard in the

Devotees witnessed deities Priya-Pritam with the crowd.

With a large influx of devotees, the district administration heightened security arrangements. Police imposed a strict ban on three- and four-wheeled vehicles in areas with processions to ensure smooth traffic flow. Thousands of devotees also performed the Nagariya Parikrama (circumambulation of the town).

Superintendent of Police (City) Arvind Kumar personally oversaw the security arrangements, ensuring devotees had an uninterrupted 'darshan' of Thakur Ji and could enjoy the Holi celebrations safely.

A 'Rang Bhari Ekadashi' procession ahead of Holi was taken out in Sambhal on Monday amid tight police security, officials said, adding that peace prevailed across the city. The Shri Shyam Seva Samiti organised the procession, which passed through Arya Samaj Road. It featured over a dozen decorative tableaux, while devotees celebrated by throwing gulal (colored powder). Given past tensions, heavy police deployment was ensured, with officials closely monitoring the event.

Sambhal's Additional Superintendent of Police Shreesh Chandra said, "The Ekadashi procession is being taken out as per tradition, and peace is being maintained across the city. Adequate police force has been deployed, and all suspicious activities are being monitored through CCTV surveillance." Security measures were heightened following the November 24 violence last year, when four people were killed and several others injured during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid. The survey was conducted after claims that the mosque was allegedly built over the ruins of a demolished Hindu temple during the Mughal era.s

### Yadupati Singhania remembered



he city of Kanpur proudly remembered its worthy son Yadupati Singhania on the occasion of first Yadupati Singhania Memorial Lecture, held at the Merchant's Chamber auditorium. The programme started with lighting of the lamp ceremony in presence of Sushila Singhania, Chairperson JK Cements Ltd, Dr Manindra Agarwal, guest of honour, Director IIT Kanpur, Dr Priya Abraham, Chief Orator and Professor CMC Vellore, Abhishek Singhania, Chairman GHS-IMR, Varsha Singhania, Vice-Chairperson SPSEC and Partho P Kar, Joint MD JayKay Enterprises Ltd. In his welcome address, Abhishek Singhania remembered Yadupati Singhania as a visionary leader who left his impression on the Indian industry. Singhania said that the Yadupati Singhania Memorial Lecture will now be organised every year. This annual event will serve as a platform where renowned experts from the world of science and technology will deliver insightful lectures on groundbreaking topics, creating a knowledge-driven ecosystem in Kanpur, a place close to Yadupati Singhania's

The guest of honour, Dr Manindra Agarwal, recalled Yadupati's memories with IIT as a student, an alumnus, a philanthroper and guide who enriched the institute with innovative ideas equally. The Annual Yadupati Singĥania Memorial Lecture will attract innovation and research both nationally and internationally benefitting the city and the country which will be playing a pivotal role in the future economy. A monograph "Yadupati Singhania Cementing History" dedicated to the life and achievements of Yadupati Singhania was unveiled by Sushila Singhania, Dr. Manindra Agarwal, Dr Priva Abraham, Abhishek Singhania, Varsha Singhania, Partho P Kar, AK Saraogi, Deputy MD and CFO JK Cement and Dr Rahul Goyal, Director, GHS-IMR. The monograph highlights Yadupati's pioneering

contributions to the industry, his commitment to innovation, his legacy as a leader and visionary entrepreneur, his

generosity and philanthropy. The inaugural Yadupati Singhania Memorial Lecture featured Dr Priya Abraham as the chief orator, a distinguished scientist and a leading figure in India's COVID-19 vaccine research, as Director National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. During the lecture, Dr. Abraham delivered an insightful and thought-provoking talk on "Waging a war against the unseen enemy." Her session delved deep into the challenges posed by emerging infectious diseases, scientific breakthroughs in vaccine development, and future of global health security. Her expertise and visionary outlook provided invaluable insights, making the event truly enlightening. Partho P Kar emphasised the importance of this publication, stating, {The monograph is not just a book; it is a reflection of Shri Yadupati Singhania's relentless pursuit of excellence. It will serve as an inspiration for young entrepreneurs, students and industry professionals. The vote of thanks was proposed by Deputy MD and CFO J K Cement AK Saraogi. The programme which ended with the national anthem was attended by prominent personalities of Kanpur from fields of medicine, industry, economy, academia, administration, media and sports.

#### **Holi Fest**

A two-day Holi Fest was organised col-

### 5 die as car collides with container in Basti

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

ive persons were killed and three others were critically injured in a tragic road accident on National Highway 27 under Nagar Kotwali police station of Basti district early Monday morning. Those injured in the accident have been admitted to a hospital. According to reports, the accident occurred around 7 am when a car collided with a container near a Tata agency in Gotwa around 7 am on Monday. The container heading towards Ayodhya from Basti changed lanes and collided with the car coming from the opposite direction. The occupants of the car

were going from Gujarat to Bihar. Five occupants of the car died on the spot. They were identified as Shivraj Singh. son of Hompal Singh Asmoli in Sambhal, Shakeel, Vishwajeet, Baharan and car driver Prem, son of Nandlal of Gorakhpur. According to the CO, the victims were coming from Gujarat and going to Bihar and Gorakhpur. He said the condition of injured Chhagur Yadav and Bhual, both residents of Gopalganj, Bihar, and Anirudh, resident of Gorakhpur, was said to be critical by the doctors. A case was registered in this regard and further investigations are on. The bodies were sent for autopsy and

efforts are being made to arrest the driver of the container involved in the accident.

In a separate road accident, a couple was killed and their two children were injured when a truck rammed into their SUV on Ranchi-Rewa highway in Sonbhadra on Monday. The accident occurred near Kolinduba village when Nageshwar Gupta (48) was returning home with his wife Munni Devi (42) and his two children after attending a religious event in Harnakachar village, Circle Officer Pradeep Singh Chandel said. As their vehicle reached near Harnakachar village late at night, it collided with a truck. The couple died

on the spot, while the two children sustained critical injuries. The truck driver fled the scene with the vehicle, and efforts are underway to nab him.

In Etah, a woman was killed and six others, including two policemen, were seriously injured when a speeding car hit a police vehicle on Monday. The accident occurred around 7 am when six people travelling in the car were en route from Kannauj to Loni in Ghaziabad. It is suspected that the driver dozed off and lost control of the vehicle, which hit a police jeep in the Kotwali Dehat area. Salma (45) died on

lectively by Jwala Devi Vidya Mandir PG College and Inter College on Monday under the supervision of Principal Prof Anupama Kushwaha. It will be followed by a Holi Milan programme on March 12 in which all faculty members and students will participate. The function was formally inaugurated by joint secretary, JDVM PG College, Kanpur, Rohit Singh Tomar. The objective of organising the Holi Mela was to bring together the faculty members and students to participate



## **Government controling Railway Board: Opposition**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ailways (Amendment) Rajya Sabha on of the Monday, with Opposition Railway MPs accused the Government Board is lost. It is Bill 2024 was passed in autonomy Railway Board and avoiding nowhere scrutiny by a parliamentary panel. The bill, which was passed by the Lok Sabha in December last year, seeks to enhance the functioning and independence of the Railway Board. Responding to the charges of the opposition, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that new amendments are meant for simplification and for reforms and infrastructure upgradation. With the inclusion of the Railway Board under the 1989 Railway Act, the appointment, qualifications, tenure and criteria for the Chairman and Members of the Board will be the responsibility of the Central Government.

The Bill also includes provisions to appoint an independent regulator that will oversee matters like fare determination and ensure the competitiveness of the Railways.

"You have just gone for 'governmentalisation' of the Railway Board," Congress member Vivek K Tankha said while initiating discussion on

Alleging that under the proposed legislation there is no

Board is lost and the func-



Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday

Demanding that the Railway Board must be given autonomy, Tankha said, "If you are thinking about the modernisation of the Railways, then India cannot have a modern railway system if the Railway Board is not autonomous.

If you are not empowering your institutions, if you are not allowing freedom of decision making to your institutions, India is not going to become a developed country".

He also demanded accountability from the Minister for

Expressing similar sentiments, Sushmita Dev (TMC) said the proposed legislation is repealing the 1890 and 1905 Acts and "the provisions of 1905 Act have been inserted into the 1989 Railway Act", which is a "200 section Act and covers almost every subject and every issue in the Railways Ministry".

"Was it not the apt time for the Railway Minister to review that entire Act of (19)89, make amendments to it and then send that bill to an appropriate committee for

select committee?" Dev asked. She further said, "There could only be one reason that these committees will actually compel the Minister for a reality check, a reality that he is not comfortable with". Taking part in the discussion, Manoj Jha, RJD, said overall members are expressing their concerns over the situation of the Railways more than speaking on the Bill.

"Where I come from, the names of the trains like Shramshakti, Shramjeevi, Jansadhaaran - reflect the situation there. We still don't for railways.

He also alleged that during the Mahakumbh, the regular coolies at the Prayagraj railway station were replaced by outsourced coolies.

Haris Beeran of Muslim League asked if there was any consultation with stakeholders and "if not, the Bill should be referred to a committee".

P Sandosh Kumar of CPI asked the Minister to "focus more on Rail than Reels", and alleged that during the 10 vears of the NDA regime, there were 678 railway accidents - which is 68 accidents per year and is increasing day by day. At least 15 per cent of security-related posts are vacant, he said, adding steps should be taken to fill these posts while asking the minister to restore the discount for senior citizens in Railways.

Refuting the charges by the opposition members, BJP member Subhash Barala said the bill aims to make the functioning of railways more smooth

transparent, more accountable and all the railway zones and the divisional managers would be given more autonomy and financial powers.

Similarly, BJP's Geeta alias Chandraprabha and Sikandar Kumar said the Bill will strengthen the Railway board by giving it more power. It gives a legal sanction to the railway board by amending the Act. So far, the board has been functioning without con-

Subhashish Khuntia of the

BJP said his state Odisha is ing it has the "same impor- rorist incidents, particularly being ignored by the Railways, and JMM's Sarfraz Ahmad expressed similar sentiments that Jharkhand hasn't been given its due despite the state contributing a lot of revenue

mance as the Railways Minister. Taking part in the discussion, NCP's Prafful Patel highlighted the importance of Railways in the country's transportation system, say-

to the country. Former prime

minister HD Devegowda JD

(S) welcomed the Bill while

lauding Vaishnaw's perfor-

tance today as they did years

Dharmshila Gupta (BJP) said the Bill would give the Railway Board more rights and strengthen the required legal framework to provide stability to railway employees.

Brij Lal (BJP) said the Narendra Modi-led government has taken various measures to improve the Railways, including boosting its network connectivity, safety, security and cleanliness, among others. He said there was a notable decrease in terinvolving Railways after the current dispensation first came to power in 2014.

Pradeep Kumar Verma (BJP) termed the proposed legislation a "revolutionary step" towards the 'Modi Ki Guarantee' and a crucial step towards reforming the Indian Railways, which will help realise the vision of better rail connectivity for the middle class. He said the Bill provides higher autonomy to the Railway Board and will enable the railways to undertake various reforms.

#### बेंक ऑफ इण्डिया Bank of India

**POSSESSION** NOTICE

Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest, Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, had issued a Demand Notice, calling borrower to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of same. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public n general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/les described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section 13 (4) of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the dates mentioned hereunder. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the propertyles and any dealings with the property lies will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India for mentioned amount and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets Previously 13 (4) published on dated 10.03.2024 Due to error we withdraw previous publication

S. No.	Name & Address of the Borrowers & Guarantors	Description of Immovable property mortgaged / Owner of the property	Amount o/s as mention in the Notice u/s 13(2) Date of Demand & Possession Notice
	BRANCH - MUSAFIRKHANA		
1.	Borrower: Mr. Shailesh Kumar Singh S/o Ram Niranjan Add: Village-lolepur, Pargana - Meeranpur Tehsil-Sadar Sultanpur-228001 Co-borrower: Mrs. Vandana Singh W/o	EQM of property situated at plot No-50mi (Area 2040 Sqft) Village Lolepur, Pargana-Miranpur, Tehsill sadar, Sultanpur, UP-228001 <b>Owner:-</b> Vandana Singh w/o	Rs.10,69,753.97 + Interest & other charges
	Shailesh Kumar Singh Village & Post Hamjabad, Tehsil-Jaisingpur Sultanpur-228132 Guarantor: Mr. Hari Prasad Singh Add:- village & Post Ravaniya Sultanpur -227813	Shailesh Kumar Singh Boundaries:- East: Road, West: House of Ram Kumar, North:- Road, South: Plot	
		of Izhar Ahmad	Possesion Notice dt. 07.3.2025
	Date: 11 03 2025	Place-Musafirkhana Authorised Of	ficer: Bank of India

#### बेंक ऑफ़ बडोदा Bank of Baroda

Regional Office, Kanpur Dehat Region: 118/330 2nd Floor, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpuri, Kanpur-12

**DEMAND NOTICE** Branch : Station Road, Lalitput

Here by this is to inform that under named borrower has not repaid principal and interest thereon of the loan Therefore the loan become NPA on below Dated. A notice under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 was issued at last known address, which was returned undelivered. Therefore we again inform to under named borrower/ Guaranton by this public notice to repay the loan amount due including interest and other expenses as mentioned in 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act 2002.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets, that after publication of public auction/inviting quotation private treaty your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available

Name and Address of Borrower / Guarantor and Security agreement with brief description of securities/N.P.A. Date & Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice

Borrower: Smt. Gudiya W/o Shri Irfan and Shri Shri Irfan S/o Shri Esmaail, R/o: 359, Nadipura, Azad Chowk, Lalitpur and Land No. 365Mi, Ward No. 15, Behind New Tehsil, Mohalla Pisnari, Lalitpur and also at Jushyan Ki Gali, Nadipura, Lalitpur. **Guarantor**: Shri Kamal Kumar S/o Shri Harlal, R/o: 480 Property: Residential House Bearing Land No. 365Mi, Ward No. 15, Behind New Tehsil, Near Canal, Pisnari, Tehsil & Distt. Lalitpur in the name of Smt. Gudiya W/o Shri Irfan and Shri Shri Irfan S/o Shri Esmaail, Area: 148.60 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: Land of Seller, South: Rasta 15 Ft. Wide, East: Plot

of Kanija West : Land of Seller O/s Amount as per Demand Notice: Rs. 6,70,869.00 + Intt. upto Dt. 09-11-2024 + Others Charges **Authorised Officer** 

Date: 11-03-2025

Place : Lalitpur

## Regional Office: Lucknow Aryavart Bhawan 569/20/K/1 Sneh Nagar VIP Road Opp Awadh Hospital Alambagh Lucknow

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized officer of ARYAVART BANK, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers. conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the securities Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand notice in the account mentioned hereunder on the dates mentioned before the names calling upon the for our ower and quarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notices along with interest within 60 days from the borrower and guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notices along with interest within 60 days from the date of receipts said notices. The borrower/legal heirs of borrower and guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notices are hereby given to the Borrower /legal Heirs of borrower and guarantor in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the properties described here below in excercise of power of conferred on him under sub-section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against each property. The borrower /legal Heirs of borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealing with the under noted property will be subject to the charge of ARYAVART BANK for the amount with interest and other charges etc. thereon.

The Borrower's/Guarantors attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets Details of Properties whose possession has been taken are as follows

#### Amt. due as per demand notice Date Demand Notice Date of Possession Name & Address of the Description of the Borrowers/Guarantors/Branch (1). Shri. Ful Chandra Tiwari S/o Shri Hari Prasad Tiwari Residential Property: All Part and Parsa 3,43,990.40/of the property situated at Plot No. 02, (Borrower & Mortgagor), Plot No. 2, Khasra No. 249 Adil Nagar, ward Shankar Purwa, Kalyanpur Lucknow-226022 Part of Khasara No. 249, Min. Situated a (2). M/S. Manish Enterprises (Borrower) Prop: Ful Chandra Adil Nagar, Ward-Shankarpurwa thereon 31.12.2024 Tiwari, Plot No. 2, Khasra No. 249 Adil Nagar, ward Shankar Pargana Teshil & District Lucknow, TITLE 05.03.2025 Purwa, Kalyanpur Lucknow-226022 HOLDER- Shri Ful Chandra Tiwari S/ 3). Shri. Raghvendra Prasad Pandey S/o Shri Jagat Prasad Shri Hari Prasad Tiwari, Details o Pandey (Guarantor), Plot No.1, Adil Nagar, Kalyanpur Lucknow Property As Per Sale Deed Dated 17.06.2003. Boundaries: East: Rasta 16' Feet. West: Plot No.-9. North: Araiee Samiti, South: Aragee Deegar

Shri, Pawan Kumar Pathak S/o Shri, Triyagi Narayan Pathak (Guarantor), 6A/763, Gopesh Kunj, Raiberreli Road, Vrindavan Area: 46.47 Sgmt (1). Shri. Santosh Kumar S/o Shri Achchhelal (Mortgagor & Residential Property: All Part and Parsa

Borrower), House no. 118, Vill-Rajjupur (Dervan) Post- of the property situated at Plot Part of Chemapur, Dervan Ambedkar Nagar, Khempur Uttar Pradesh-Khasara No. 432, Village-Narauna Pargana- Kakori, Teshil & Distric (2). Shri Dharmendra Kumar S/o Late Lalta Prasad Lucknow, TITLE HOLDER- Shri Santosl

(Guarantor), Village-Rajjupur (Dervan) Post-Khemapur, (Dervan Ambedkar Nagar, Khempur Uttar Pradesh-224157

(3). Shri. Pinku Kumar S/o Shri Bahadur (Guarantor Rahimabad, Malihabad Mohajjepur, Ruseta Lucknow-227116 Branch: Khushhalganj

(1). Smt. Shashi Pandey W/o Shri Netra Panday (Borrower Mortgagor), House No. 610/1863, Keshav Nagar, Sitapur Road (2). Shri Netra Panday S/o Shri Amarnath Pandey (Co- Village-Faizullaganj, Pargana, Tehsil o Borrower), House No. 610/1863, Keshav Nagar, Sitapur Road

(3). Shri. Amit Srivastava S/o Shri. Ram Lakhan Srivastava Guarantor), House No. 4, Moti Nagar Lucknow-226004 (4). Shri. Sumit Kumar Srivastava S/o Shri. Shivanano Maharai, House No. 602, 6TH Floor Pushpa Apartment Vikas

Nagar Lucknow-226022

(1). Smt. Gayatri Devi Gupta W/o Shri Girdhari Lal Gupta Residential Property: All part and (Mortgagor & Guarantor), House no. 24A, Satyam Vihar Colon Manas City, Sugamau, Cimap Lucknow-226015 (2). Shri Ankur Gupta S/o Shri Girdhari Lal Gupta (Borrower),

House no. 24A, Satyam Vihar Colony Manas City, Sugamau Cimap Lucknow-226015 (3). Shri. Tika Ram Maurya S/o Shri Shiv Charan Maurya

(4). Shri Sunil Kumar Gupta S/o Shri Ramnath Gupta (Guarantor), Sector-17, Indira Nagar, Sabji Mandi, Indira Nagar, Lucknow-226016 & House No. 113/A, Vinay Vihar, Sugama

(Guarantor), House No. 3/931, Jankipuram Vistar Lucknow-

North: House Build on Plot No. 381 South: House Build on Plot No. 383 Area: 1200 Sq. feet, 111.52 Sq.ml parasol of the Part of plot No. 24, Curved ipon Khasra No. 556, Village-Sugamau District-Lucknow. TITLE HOLDER- Smt Gayatri Devi Gupta W/o Shri Girdhari La Gupta. Details of Property As Per Sale Deed Dated 06.03.2006. Boundaries East: Rasta 20' Feet. West: Plot Samit North: Balance Plot of Seller, South: Plo

Area: 700 Sq. Feet, 65.06 sq.mt

Kumar S/o Shri Achchhev Lal. Details of

Property As Per Sale Deed Dated

01.09.2018, Boundaries: East: Plo

Dharmendra Kumar, West: Plot Virendra

Kumar, North: Rasta 20' Ft. Wide, South:

Residential Property: All part and parsa

of the property situated at Plot No. 382,

part of Khasra No. 299, Situated a

District-Lucknow, TITLE HOLDER- Smt

Shasi Panday W/o Shri Shrinetra Panday

Details of Property As Per Sale Dee

Dated 20.06.2008, Boundaries: East

Plot No. 379, West: 25' Ft. Wide Road

Area: 1000 Sq Feet, 92.396 Sqmt

Aaraji Selle

6,60,438.57/and interest 27.12.2024 06.03.2025

11,67,251.87/

and interest

thereon

05.03.2025

Rs. 13,87,748.02/-

thereon

05.03.2025

Branch: Chandar **Authorised Officer** Date: 11.03.2025

No. 23

#### liberty and sovereignty of the accidents and stampedes at scrutiny? Why is it that the have any Vande Bharat train." Railway Board, he said, "The railway stations, including the government shy away from he said, asking if 100 per cent stitutional sanction. very freedom of the Railway recent one in the national a standing committee, from a electrification was required

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

→he Congress and some other Opposition parties staged a walkout from the Rajya Sabha on Monday after their notices for discussions on issues ranging from 'duplicate' voter ID cards to US funding to voter turnout were rejected, even as Union minister J P Nadda insisted that the government is ready to discuss any issue provided they are under the rules.

The opposition MPs raised slogans after Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh, said a dozen notices under Rule 267, which calls for setting aside the business of the day to take up discussions on urgent matters, have been

Citing the rejection, Harivansh did Mallikarjun Kharge to make his submis-

The opposition MPs then protested

for a while before staging a walkout. Leader of the House and Union minister Nadda termed the walkout "irresponsible behaviour" and suggested that the opposition MPs, including Congress chief Kharge, should go for a refresher course on the rules of the



LoP in the Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi speaks in the House during the Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Monday

He also termed the practice of opponot allow Leader of Opposition sition MPs giving notices under Rule 267 despite elaborate ruling by the chair tution of Parliament". "They are not interested in debate. They want to give an impression that the government does not want to answer queries or enter into a debate. "The government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is ready to discuss anything under this roof. But there are certain rules and regulations

for debates in the House," Nadda said, adding that the MPs will get an opportunity to raise their issues during the debate on the Union Budget over the cussion. There is a provision for short duration discussions and there is a provision for long duration discussions. They (opposition) don't read the rules," Nadda said, as he asked the opposition MPs to first read the rules and learn to debate. "This is irresponsible behaviour by the opposition... In a way, it is an

attempt to malign Parliament and democracy," Nadda alleged. "They (opposition MPs) should go for a refresher course. They should understand the rules and regulations (of the House). The government is ready to discuss anything," Nadda added. Earlier, Harivansh said 12 notices had been received under Rule 267. Tiruchi N Siva of DMK, CPI's Santosh Kumar P, Vaiko of MDMK, CPI's P P Suneer, and P Wilson of DMK demanded discussions on concerns regarding the upcoming delimitation exercise in the southern states. Trinamool Congress members Saket Gokhale and Sagarika Ghose, along with Pramod Tiwari and Ajay Maken of the Congress demanded discussions over the alleged lapse by the Election Commission in issuing multiple 'duplicate' voter ID cards across states.

ed a discussion on the financial loss incurred by the small investors due to the continued decline in stock market indices, Ramji Lal Suman of the Samajwadi Party called for a discussion over a statement made by US President Donald Trump on American funding to increase voter turnout in India.

court should be set up for speedy jus-

tice to victims. He also suggested set-

ting up a fund to compensate victims

of cyber frauds. Seth urged the gov-

ernment to take stringent and effec-

tive measures against cyber crimes to

safeguard hard-earned income of cit-

In her Zero Hour mention, BIP MP

Rekha Sharma expressed concern

over the problems faced by the Asha

workers appointed under the National

#### **VP Dhankhar** recovering at **AIIMS in Delhi**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

rice-President lagdeep Dhankhar is recovering at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, and his progress is satisfactory,



sources said on Monday. He was admitted in the hospital on Sunday after he com plained of uneasiness and chest pain.

Dhankhar, 73, was admitted to the critical care unit under Dr Rajiv Narang, head of cardiology at AIIMS Delhi. A group of doctors is monitoring his condition. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the hospital on Sunday afternoon and inquired about Dhankhar's health. In a social media post, the Prime Minister said, "I pray for his good health and speedy recovery."

#### Set up fast track court for cyber crimes: BJP MP PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ssues including cyber crimes and bank frauds besides meagre salary of Asha workers were flagged in the Rajya Sabha on Monday. Rajya Sabha BJP member Sanjay Seth expressed concerns over the rising cases of cyber crimes and bank frauds in the country and demanded setting up of a fast track court to deal with

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour in the House, Seth said a large number of people use digital and online payment systems, but due to inadequate security measures, many of them lose their hard-earned income to cyber frauds within sec-

He cited an incident where a person committed suicide after losing the money he had accumulated for his daughter's marriage to a cyber fraud. He also said senior citizens too lose their pensions to cyber frauds. Seth stressed that while digital India is being promoted in the coun-

try, the financial security of citizens too should get equal priority. He made a strong case for technical upgradation to strengthen cyber security in banks, including small and

Sanjay Seth speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament PTI Sharma said despite the indispens-

The BJP MP said a special fast track

#### She said Asha workers serve as the backbone of the rural and communitv health care system, acting as a crucial link between the government and people. They implement key health care initiatives, including maternal and child health services, immunisation drives, disease prevention program and various welfare schemes.

able role of improving public health, Asha workers continue to receive a meager honorarium that does not reflect the importance of

## Delhi court rejects parole plea of MP Rashid

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Delhi court on Monday rejected the plea of jailed Jammu and Kashmir MP Engineer Rashid seeking custody parole to attend the upcoming Parliament session.

Additional sessions judge Chander Jit Singh dismissed the plea and posted the order on Rashid's regular bail plea on March 19.

On March 3, the court asked the NIA to respond to the plea, following which it reserved its verdict after hearing the arguments.

The application, filed by advocate Vikhyat Oberoi for Rashid on February 27, sought the relief on the grounds that Rashid was a parliamentarian and needed to attend the upcoming session to fulfil his pub-

Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in Baramulla.

Rashid's regular bail application is currently pending before the court. The second part of Parliament's Budget session would begin on March 10 and end on April 4. The judge on September 10 granted interim bail to Rashid to enable him to campaign for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Rashid surrendered himself before Tihar Jail on October 27. Rashid has been lodged in Tihar jail since 2019 after

arrested was the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a 2017 terror funding case.

Elections to the 90-member J-K assembly were held in three phases from September 18 to October 1. The results were declared on October 8 in which

the National Conference-Congress alliance attained a clear majority with 48 seats. The Delhi High Court on February 24 directed the sessions judge to expeditiously decide the bail plea of Rashid in the case.

The high court passed the directions in view of a December 24, 2024 order, by which the sessions court requested the district judge to transfer the case to a court designated to try lawmakers.

Rashid's name cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was

the NIA for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir Valley. The NIA filed a chargesheet against several persons, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahudd, in the case.





# Veni, Vidi, Vici <sub>-</sub>

Team India lifts Champion's trophy after its convincing win over New Zealand

n a moment of glory that will be etched in the annals of cricketing history, Team India triumphed over New Zealand by four wickets to claim the prestigious ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai. It was a victory built on sheer determination, extraordinary skill, and unwavering composure under pressure. The win not only solidifies India's dominance in the white-ball game but also reaffirms cricket's role as a unifying force in the country.

From the very first match of the tournament, India exuded an aura of invincibility. The final against New Zealand was no exception. Restricting the Kiwis to a manageable 251-7, the Indian bowling attack-led by the mesmerising spin quartet of Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy, Axar Patel, and Ravindra Jadeja—choked the opposition with relentless precision. Their 38 overs were a masterclass in control, stifling the run flow and forcing mistakes from the New Zealand batters.

Despite an early setback with Virat Kohli's dismissal, Rohit Sharma took charge, setting the tone with a swashbuckling 76. His aggression ensured that India never fell behind the asking rate. KL Rahul, displaying nerves of steel, finished the chase with calculated precision, epitomizing India's new-found ability to remain composed in high-pressure situations.

Cricket in India is more than just a sport—it is a cultural phenomenon that binds people across diverse backgrounds. From the bustling streets of Mumbai to the remote villages of Jharkhand, the game ignites passion, fosters a shared national identity, and transcends all barriers of class, religion, and language.

This Champions Trophy victory serves as yet another reminder of the unifying power of cricket. The entire nation erupted in celebration, as millions came together to revel in the team's success. This win is not just about silverware-it is about inspiring a generation, bringing people together in collective joy, and reinforcing the sport's unparalleled significance in the Indian ethos.

Winning an ICC event is always a morale booster, and this triumph will serve as a catalyst for greater success. For Team India, it instills belief and momentum as they gear up for future global tournaments. Rohit Sharma's leadership, the resurgence of spin dominance, and the depth in both batting and bowling ensure that India will remain a formidable force in world cricket.

Beyond the current squad, this victory will inspire countless young cricketers who dream of donning the blue jersey. Seeing their heroes lift the Champions Trophy will fuel aspirations across the country, encouraging budding cricketers to work harder and aim for the grandest stages.

Accolades pours from all quarters on team India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the Indian cricket team and said they have played wonderfully through the tournament. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said India's run in the Champions Trophy was marked by brilliant individual performances. Former Delhi CM and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal also extended his congratulations to the Indian

This Champions Trophy triumph is a testament to India's cricketing excellence and a harbinger of more success to come. The synergy between experienced stalwarts and young stars showcases a team that is built for sustained dominance.

As India basks in the glory of yet another ICC triumph, one thing is certain-this victory is not just about cricket, but about a nation united by its love for the game, standing tall on the world stage, and looking ahead



India charges us massive tariffs.

Massive. You can't even sell anything in India... They have agreed, by the way, they want to cut their tariffs way down now because somebody is finally exposing them for what they have done.

DONALD J TRUMP. PRESIDENT OF THE USA



## India Braces for Impact as Trump's Reciprocal Tariffs Take Effect on April 2

With key sectors like pharmaceuticals and automobiles at risk, India could face an annual trade loss of up to \$7 billion. There is an urgent need to find a diplomatic solution before it escalates into a full-fledged trade war

S President Donald Trump's announcement of reciprocal tariffs on India, set to take effect on April 2, has caused serious concern in New Delhi. India's high import taxes on American goods have long been a contentious issue, now straining trade relations further.

This move is not without consequences. It puts key exports such as jewelry and pharmaceuticals at risk, potentially leading to a significant annual loss of up to \$7 billion for India. The looming question is: How much will this trade war cost India? Can New Delhi negotiate a way out before the damage is done? This million-dollar question keeps policymakers and trade experts on edge, underscoring the gravity of the situation.

India currently imposes much higher import taxes on US products than the US does on Indian goods, with a gap exceeding 10 percentage points. If the US lowers these tariffs, India's exports to the US could decline by \$2 Billion to \$7 Billion in the financial year 2025-26, according to India Ratings and Research.

India maintains a trade surplus of over \$36 Billion with the United States. The share of Indian exports to the US rose from 16.9 per cent in 2019-20 to 17.7 per cent in 2023-24, which may have prompted tariff actions by the Trump administration.

During his campaign, Trump criticised Indian tariffs on several US exports and suggested the possibility of imposing reciprocal taxes on Indian goods.

He believes it is time for the US to use tariffs to establish fairer trade. "Under the Trump administration, you will pay a tariff, and in some cases, the cost will be passed on to consumers," he stated, insisting that the US will no longer tolerate unfair trading practices.

India imposes tariffs as high as 100 per cent on certain US products, creating what the Trump administration views as an unfair trade system. On April 2, reciprocal tariffs will take effect, meaning that any tariffs imposed by India will be matched by the

Additionally, if India uses non-monetary barriers to limit US market access, the US. will implement similar restrictions. A report by Crisil Intelligence warns that



these reciprocal tariffs could significantly harm India's exports, which contribute about 22 per cent of the country's GDP. Coupled with the challenges posed by slowing global trade growth and rising economic uncertainties, this situation could further strain India's economy. In response, the Commerce and Industry Ministry has initiated stakeholder consultations to assess the potential impact of increased US tar-

According to a recent Crisil Intelligence report, India's wide tariff gap with the US could have serious consequences if the US moves to equalise tariffs. Bloomberg economists echo this concern, noting that India's economy may face significant set-

Industry and trade experts in India argue that certain top exports-such as automobile parts, electronics, textiles, diamonds, jewelry, chemicals, and pharmaceuticalscould be severely affected if the US imposes restrictions. The most vulnerable sectors include chemicals, metal products, and jewelry, followed by automobiles, pharma-



ceuticals, and food products.

Furthermore, if President Trump penalises US. companies employing imported talent, India's outsourcing and IT services industry could face significant constraints.

Commerce Minister

Piyush Goyal began his US visit on Monday to meet with the new US Trade Representative, Jamieson Greer, who is overseeing the implementation of Trump's tariff plan. Greer was also part of Trump's first administration, which targeted China and, in doing so, opened export opportunities for India, particularly in the electron

Despite these tariff disputes, the United States remains India's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching \$118.2 Billion in the 2024 fiscal year. India main-

tained a trade surplus of \$36.8 Billion during this period. Trump has criticised India for imposing 100 per cent tariffs on automobiles, claiming such trade imbalances have allowed foreign countries to take advantage of the US for decades.

Like with other trade partners, the Trump administration intends to use tariffs as leverage to expand market access for American goods in India.

New Delhi must act quickly to address this challenge. One option is to engage in negotiations and lower tariffs. Both sides aim to increase market access, reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers, and deepen supply chain integration.

India should focus on bilateral negotiations to lower tariffs and diversify its export mar-

This strategy could help India navigate the impending trade challenges more effectively. A balanced, give-and-take approach will be key to overcoming this situation.

(The author is a popular columnist. Views expressed are

### The Unmatched Multitasking Skills of Women

#### SECOND **Opinion**

ccelerate Action, the theme of this year's International Women's Day is both timely and vital. It is of the utmost importance to take a moment to contemplate the unique skills that women possess, which even the most advanced AIdriven robots cannot replicate. Even though artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionised sectors by simplifying jobs and increasing productivity, it

is still incapable of matching the nuanced and deeply human multitasking talents that women easily demonstrate daily. Women can accomplish several tasks with empathy, emotional intelligence, and adaptability, which are attributes that no algorithm can completely replicate. Women can perform multiple tasks simultaneously.

Multitasking encompasses not only the simultaneous execution of many tasks but also the capacity to manage diverse jobs with effortless proficiency. In both professional and domestic settings, women manage multiple tasks, including swift decision-making, emotional acumen, and innovative problem-solving. In the professional environment, women frequently lead high-stakes projects, coach peers, and manage team relationships while also addressing personal obligations. Within the household, they effortlessly transition between roles as carers, financial strategists, educators, and providers of emotional support. Their capacity



understand, much less to implement. One of the defining strengths of women's multitasking abilities is their agility in decision-making, even in the most unpredictable situations. AI operates within predefined parameters and algorithms, excelling in structured environments where data is abundant. However, real life is often chaotic, requiring decisions to be made with incomplete information, intuition, and adaptabilityqualities that women exhibit daily.

Consider a nurse in a hospital emergency room who is simultaneously monitoring multiple patients, making split-second decisions, and comforting distressed families. Her abil ity to assess a patient's condition, liaise with doctors, and offer emotional support all at once goes beyond mere task execution—it embodies human instinct, prioritisation, and care. No AI-driven robot can truly replace such intricate decision-making layered with empathy. While AI can enhance efficiency, automate routine tasks, and provide datadriven insights, it lacks the human touch that is central to multitasking.

AI-driven robots may be able to perform designated tasks in controlled environments, but they do not possess the depth of human interaction, compassion, or intuition required in complex, real-world situations. Women's multitasking is not just about efficiency but also about the ability to connect, empathise, and inspire—traits that no AI can

to sustain equilibrium in these intersecting replicate. While we are moving further into an era driven the multitasking abilities of women; rather, it should be to improve such abilities with technology while ensuring that their human strengths continue to be prioritised. India offers countless examples of women who exemplify unparalleled multitasking abilities in varied fields.

To cite a few, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, the founder of Biocon, Chanda Kochhar, the former CEO of ICICI Bank, Dr N. Kalaiselvi, Secretary, DSIR and Director General, CSIR, Dr. Tessy Thomas, the first woman to lead an Indian missile project and hundreds of others. As we celebrate International Women's Day 2025, it is essential to recognise that while AI can augment specific tasks, it can never replicate the intricate multitasking abilities of women. Women's ability to think, feel, and act simultaneously with an unparalleled blend of intuition, intelligence, and empathy remains their superpower—one that even the most advanced robots cannot

'Accelerate Action' should not be about replacing human capabilities with AI but about leveraging technology to enhance and support women's indispensable contributions to society. The future of progress lies not in automation alone but in the harmonious coexistence of human intelligence and technology, with women leading the way in shaping a world that values both efficiency and empathy.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

## Letters to the Editor

#### Freebies or political bribes?

Madam — The newly formed Delhi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government approved the Mahila Samridhi Yojana on Women's Day, providing ₹2,500 to women from economically weaker sections. With a budget allocation of ₹5100 Crores, women earning up to ₹2.5 Lakh annually and aged 18-60 years are eligible. But one thing I am unable to understand is what crime those women have done who are above 60 years or those who earn more than ₹2.5 Lakhs. Why didn't you specify these conditions in the manifesto? Didn't you know it was a ploy to garner votes that would-

n't be fulfilled after you win the elections? Though we should not forget that PM Modi started this 'revadi' war of free LPG, free PDS, free housing, free MODI care, and free "Samman" of ₹6000 to Kissans. Actually, the freebie culture is the biggest drain on taxpayers' money. It is open bribery. The politicians are feeding parasites, which will harm the country. There will be no funds for development. Why not the Election Commission (EC) stop this malpractice for free and fair elections? Whatsoever, when the opposition distributes freebies, it's called 'loot' in the name of the Gandhi-Nehru family, but when the BJP distributes freebies, it's called 'seva'. In reality, all governments are going back, but how will the country progress? We will never be a developed nation as people make the nation, and our people vote for a five kg ration and ₹2500.

#### BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

#### **India wins Champions Trophy**

Madam— Apropos to "Champions bring the trophy home! Jai Ho," published on March 10, 2025. India clinched a thrilling four-wicket win over New Zealand to clinch the marquee ICC event for a record-breaking third time. Under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, Team India has now won the Asia Cup, ICC T20 World Cup and ICC Champions Trophy and overall this is the seventh ICC white ball trophy for Team India.

When pace sensation Bumrah was ruled out for the Champions Trophy, it was believed that it was going to be a huge setback for Team India, but without him and only Shami to spearhead the pace attack, our fast bowling arsenal looked really thin, but our spin quartet bowled like a well-oiled machine, turning the screws on opposition batsmen with relentless precision.

Our batting line-up was versatile and reliable, and everyone chipped in to the tournament with four allrounders; our team's balance was perfect. And just to remember that players like Pant, Jaiswal and Arshdeep could not even get a game in the tournament goes to show the depth of our talent pool.

The Indian team is now second place in the ICC Trophies list behind Australia, with only the ICC WTC trophy missing from the cabinet. The men in blue have once again proved that they have what it takes to win!

BAL GOVIND INOIDA

#### **Conflict in Syria**

Madam — At a time when Muslims around the world are observing the holy month of Ramadan, Syria has witnessed another wave of violence that has claimed hundreds of lives in just the last two days. The humanitarian situation remains critical with widespread displacement, heavily damaged infrastructure and nearly 15 million people in need of humanitarian support

Dead bodies lying in streets are suggesting a danse macabre in the coastal region of the country, particularly in Latakia and Tartus provinces. This is the deadliest sectarian conflict since the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad in December 2024. Though the interim government has blamed the killing of two Syrian defence personnel in an ambush in Latakia province by Assad militia remnants for triggering the violence, the deep involvement of the army in violent retaliation against Alawites and Christians, who largely support Assad, proves that this violence has been engineered by the interim government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa itself.

Besides this escalated violence being a serious jolt to peace efforts in the country, the way all ethnic groups are reluctant to shun violence, the future of stability and peace appears to be bleak in the country. Partitioning Syria into two separate nations based on the Sunni and Shiite populations holds the key to the solution to this problem. MANOJ PARASHAR I GHAZIABAD

**OPPOSITION CRITICISES GOVERNMENT** 

on Tuesday questioned the government's decisions and accused it of putting the economy in crisis. They said that the economy is being overtaken by a crisis created by the government. Congress launched a scathing attack on the government by targeting the increasing prevalence of gold loans in the country. Congress general secretary and communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh, citing the Reserve Bank of India's February data, said that a massive jump of 71.3 per cent has been seen in gold loans. Ramesh also said on X. "India's economy is caught in a crisis created by the government. The macroeconomic slowdown that continues till 2024 has led to a 300 percent jump in gold loans in the last five years. The gold loan figure has crossed the level of ₹1 Lakh Crore

The main opposition party, Congress,

Bank loans have slowed down in every sector from housing to cars, but crisis loans like gold loans are at their peak. Not only this, the report of Niti Aayog shows that gold loans account for 40 per cent of all loans issued to

for the first time.

women. The number of women taking loans by pledging gold has increased by more than 22 percent in the last five years.

Should it be considered that the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme, launched with great fanfare by the Narendra Modi government, has proved to be a 'complete failure' like demonetisation and the 'Make in India' initiative? Rising prices, falling private investment, and rising unemployment issues are badly affecting the common people. Perhaps due to these reasons. gold loans have become a big failure.

The gold kept in homes is taken out only in case of emergency. This is not just an allegation of the opposition, but RBI also seems to be unhappy and concerned with this trend. That is why RBI is planning to implement a strict under writing process for gold loans, to ensure ethical business practices and financial stability. This includes better background checks of borrowers and monitoring of the end use of funds to prevent irregularities found in recent

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur



## Spiralling food subsidy: The urgent need for reform

FIRST Olumn

India's food subsidy bill continues to rise despite budget projections suggesting otherwise. Without structural reforms in procurement and distribution, the financial strain on the exchequer is set to escalate, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of India's food security programmes

n the Union Budget for 2025-26, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has allocated ₹203,420 Crore for food subsidy which is a marginal three per cent increase from the revised estimate (RE) for the current financial year (FY) at ₹197,000 Crore. The RE for FY 2024-25 by itself is lower than the budget estimate (BE) of ₹205,250 Crore she had fixed while presenting that budget on July 23, 2024.

Food subsidy payments during FY 2023-24 and FY 2022-23 were ₹211,394 Crores and ₹287,000 Crore respectively. From these numbers, one gets a sense that since FY 2022-23, food subsidies have been on a downward trajectory. This may not reveal the true picture.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), the Centre asks the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food and organize its distribution to around 820 Million people for free. The entire cost i.e. MSP (minimum support price) paid to farmers plus handling and distribution cost (HDC) is reimbursed to the FCI or other state agencies as a subsidy. The money comes from the Union Budget's allocation for 'food subsidy'.

While, the PMGKAY has been in force since

While, the PMGKAY has been in force since January 1, 2023, before that, the Centre was giving food to 820 Million persons (seven kg of cereals per person per month to 120 Million poorest of the poor persons covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana or AAY families and five kg of cereals per person per month to the remaining 700 million) at a heavily subsidized price of ₹2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

In addition, since April 2020, it has been giving five kg of food per person per month for "free" to all 820 Million beneficiaries under PMGKAY to mitigate the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic. From January 1, 2023, it merged the free part of PMGKAY with the regular food security schemes under NFSA. This arrangement will continue for five years till the end of CY 2028 as per the announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2023. Against this backdrop, FY 2022-23 was an unusual year as 700 Million beneficiaries got five kg of cereals each per month for free under the PMGKAY. In addition, during April - December 2022, they got five kg of cereals each at a throwaway price of ₹3/kg and ₹2/kg for rice and wheat, respectively under the NFSA.

Likewise, beneficiaries under the AAY received five kg each per month under PMGKAY throughout the FY plus seven kg a month at ₹3/2/kg for rice/wheat during April - December 2022 under the NFSA. It was a doubling of the quantity supplied at throwaway/zero price during nine months of the FY that contributed to an unusually high subsidy outgo of ₹287,000 Crore. During FY 2023-24, the 'double quantity' effect was not present as



five kg a month supplies to all beneficiaries at ₹3/2 per kg under the NFSA were withdrawn. This should have led to a massive reduction in subsidy outgo from the FY 2022-23 level. But, that didn't happen. The payments during FY 2023-24 were substantial at ₹211,394 Crores. A hike in MSP of all 14 Kharif crops by 5-10 per cent announced in June 2023, besides an increase in HDC, led to higher subsidy payment.

Look at things from another angle. While, presenting the budget for FY 2023-24, Sitharaman had kept the BE for food subsidy at ₹197,000 Crore. Against this, RE turned out to be ₹14,394 Crore more indicating that the potential savings in subsidy due to dissipation of 'double quantity' effect were partially offset by increase in MSP and other costs associated with distribution of food.

Coming to FY 2024-25, the FM has put the RE for the year at ₹197,000 Crore which is even lower than the BE of ₹205,250 Crore. This is anomalous. Only a month before the presentation of the bud-



vailing situation was pointing towards a slippage of around ₹20,000 Crore from the BE. The higher subsidy requirement of about ₹225,000 Crore was expected primarily due to the rising costs of holding on to a huge stockpile of rice, besides the increase in MSP of wheat and rice.

Then, as part of the cen-

get for FY 2025-26, the pre-

Then, as part of the central pool stock, the FCI was holding around 50 Million ton including 34 Million ton of rice and 16 Million ton of wheat (this stock excluded 34 Million ton of rice receivable from millers). The stock was against the buffer of 21.41 Million ton for January 1. Put simply, the stock holding was four times what was required.

At a fundamental level, the problem lies in the government using state agencies not just to meet

food requirements under the PMGKAY but also to extend price support to farmers. Under what has come to be known as 'open-ended' procurement, it buys from farmers unlimited quantities at MSP. For the last many years, the FCI has been procuring over 50 Million tons of rice every year even while supplying around 36 - 38 Million tons under PMGKAY to the states.

This mismatch has inevitably led to a huge pileup of stocks and associated high carrying costs which bloats the subsidy bill. The Centre has pinned its hope of trimming subsidy (as per RE) on liquidating its burgeoning stocks. But, given the situation on the ground, this seems unlikely. Till about a month back, response to the open market sale of rice by FCI from its stocks was poor with only 0.7 million tons of rice sold at the subsidised rate of ₹28/kg (during 2023-24 also, the agency could sell only 0.1 million tons).

A recent order from the food ministry let state governments and their corporations purchase up to 1.2 million tons of rice, and ethanol distilleries

buy up to 2.4 million tons at a reduced rate of ₹22.55/kg - a 20 per cent discount from the earlier price of ₹28/kg - won't make any dent on the mammoth stocks.

The actual subsidy outgo during FY 2024-25 will be close to ₹225,000 Crore instead of ₹197,000 Crore being the RE given in the budget. Considering that the agencies will be saddled with high stocks even during FY 2025-26 and further annual increase in the MSP and HDC (in the past, MSP of paddy and wheat has been increasing 6 - 7 per cent in kharif and rabi seasons annually and the control of the past, MSP of paddy and wheat has been increasing 6 - 7 per cent in kharif and rabi seasons annually and the control of the past of the control of the past of th ally and this trend is expected to continue), it is unlikely that subsidy payments will be contained within the budgeted level of ₹203,420 Crore. Far from a declining trend that the figures mentioned in the budget would seem to suggest, food sub-sidy has actually been on a rising trajectory and this trend will continue in the future as well. How the Scheme has been crafted, an escalating trend is inevitable. The coverage of PMGKAY is 'universal' (820 Million beneficiaries and at least 100 Million waiting to be included), assurance of giving them 'free' food eternally, purchase of 'unlimited' quantum of food from farmers at MSP resulting in high stocks with FCI and agencies and associated high carrying cost, reimbursement of handling and distribution cost to them on 'actual' basis and pilferage of subsidised food.

#### Conclusion

The trajectory of food subsidy in India is not on a downward slope, as the budget figures might suggest, but rather on a continuous rise due to the structural inefficiencies within the system. The universal coverage of PMGKAY, along with the open-ended procurement of food grains at MSP, has resulted in excessive stock accumulation, driving up costs related to storage, handling, and distribution

Despite attempts to trim the subsidy bill through stock liquidation, market demand has remained weak, making a significant reduction in expenditure unlikely.

Moreover, factors such as annual increases in MSP and handling costs, as well as the Supreme Court's directive to include an additional 100 million beneficiaries under food security programs, will only exacerbate the financial burden.

While the budgeted estimate for FY 2025-26 has been set at ₹203,420 Crore, the actual expenditure is expected to exceed this projection, just as it has in previous years.

Unless the government undertakes fundamental reforms, such as rationalising procurement, improving targeting mechanisms, and curbing inefficiencies, food subsidy will continue to spiral upwards.

(The author a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal)

# Trump's reciprocal tariffs and the US trade deficit: A deeper look

uring a recent meeting, US President Donald Trump praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling him "a great leader." However, in the same breath, Trump announced reciprocal tariffs on India, labelling the country as the "tariff king" and "a hard place to do business." He blamed India's high tariffs for the growing trade deficit between the two nations.

Trump's proposed reciprocal tariff policy means that the US will impose equivalent tariffs on countries that charge higher tariffs on American exports. He argues that the US trade deficit stems from high tariffs imposed by other countries on US goods. The US exports goods worth approximately \$2 Trillion globally while importing around \$3.3 Trillion, leading to a trade deficit of about \$1 Trillion. The US has a trade deficit with 57 countries, a trade surplus with 39, and negligible trade with 122. But is high tariffs the primary cause of this deficit?

#### US Trade Deficit with Major Countries

The United States has significant trade deficits with several countries, with China leading the list at a deficit of \$300 Billion, resulting from \$148 Billion in exports and \$448 Billion in imports. Mexico follows with a trade deficit of \$157 Billion, as the US exports \$323 Billion while importing \$480 Billion. Vietnam ranks third, with a deficit of \$109 Billion, based on \$10 Billion in exports and \$119 Billion in imports. Other major trade deficit partners include Germany (\$86 Billion), Canada (\$78 Billion), Japan (\$75 Billion), and Ireland (\$66 Billion). South Korea (\$55 Billion), Taiwan (\$50 Billion), and India (\$47 Billion) also contribute to the overall trade imbalance. Additional countries with notable trade deficits include Italy (\$46 Billion), Thailand (\$43 Billion), Malaysia (\$28 Billion), Switzerland (\$25 Billion), and Indonesia (\$18 Billion). The remaining nations on the list are Austria and France, each with a \$14 Billion deficit, Cambodia (\$12 Billion), Sweden (\$10 Billion), and Slovakia (\$8 Billion). These figures highlight the countries where the US imports significantly more than it exports, contributing to its overall trade deficit.

#### Is High Tariff the Reason for the US Trade Deficit?

China, the country with which the US has the highest trade deficit, has an effective tariff of just 3.07 per cent and a Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff of 3.09 per cent. Despite accusations of unfair trade practices and currency manipulation, China has successfully positioned itself as the "factory of the world," offering competitively priced goods.

Mexico, the second-largest contributor to the US trade deficit, is deeply integrated with the US economy. Under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), most US products enter Mexico duty-free, provided they meet rules-of-origin requirements.

Despite this tariff-free access, the US still records a \$157 Billion trade deficit with Mexico, showing that tariffs are not the root cause.

Vietnam has emerged as a manufacturing

powerhouse, with its exports tripling from \$124 Billion in 2012 to \$384 Billion in 2022. Yet,

ANANT SWARUP

deficit with Germany.

its effective tariff rate stands at just 1.07 per cent, with an MFN rate of 4.98 per cent. The growth of Vietnam's exports is primarily due to low labour costs, streamlined supply chains, and favourable trade agreements rather than high tariffs.

SWARUP

Similarly, Germany, which exports and imports roughly \$1.6

Trillion worth of goods annually, has an effective tariff of 1.44 per cent, almost the same as the US's 1.54 per cent. Despite these comparable rates, the US still has an \$86 Billion trade

This raises the question: if high tariffs were the primary cause of trade deficits, why does the US have such a significant gap with Germany? Among the 20 countries with which the US has the highest trade deficits, only South Korea (8.88 per cent effective tariff) and India (11.36 per cent effective tariff) impose relatively higher tariffs. However, many of these countries themselves have global trade deficits, meaning other nations successfully export to them-even when the US struggles.

#### The Real Cause of the US Trade Deficit

The primary reason for the US trade deficit is not high tariffs abroad, but rather the changing structure of the US economy. Over time, the US has shifted away from low-cost, labour-intensive manufacturing, outsourcing these industries to other countries while focusing on high-tech and specialised production.

Moreover, many US multinational corporations manufacture abroad and re-import goods, which increases the trade deficit. However, the royalties and profits earned by these companies are not factored into trade deficit calculations.

Additionally, the US services trade is often overlooked. In 2022, the US exported \$900 Billion worth of services while importing \$671

Billion, resulting in a \$200 Billion services trade surplus-which offsets part of the goods deficit. Economic research has shown that imposing high tariffs does not necessarily boost manufacturing or enhance economic integration.

While it may be a politically attractive move, trade wars often lead to long-term economic damage. Trump's decision to escalate tariffs will shape global trade dynamics in the coming years, and its real impact remains to be seen.

#### Conclusion

The US trade deficit is a complex issue influenced by multiple factors beyond high tariffs. While President Trump has targeted countries like India for their tariff policies, data shows that the largest trade imbalances exist even with nations that have low tariffs, such as China, Mexico, and Germany.

This suggests that tariffs are not the primary cause of the deficit. Instead, the shift in the US economy toward high-tech industries, outsourcing of manufacturing, and global supply chain strategies play a more significant role.

Additionally, US multinational corporations manufacture goods abroad and re-import them, further widening the trade gap.

The services sector, which generates a trade surplus for the US, is often overlooked in trade deficit discussions. Economic research suggests that imposing high tariffs does not necessarily revive domestic manufacturing but can lead to broader economic consequences.

As Trump's tariff policies unfold, their longterm impact on global trade and the US economy remains uncertain.

In 2023, the US-India bilateral trade in goods and services stood at \$190.08 Billion (\$123.89 Billion in goods and \$66.19 Billion in services trade). That year, India's merchandise exports to the US stood at \$83.77 Billion, while imports were \$40.12 Billion, leaving a trade gap of \$43.65 Billion in favour of India.

The country's services export to America was \$36.33 Billion in 2023, while imports were aggregated at \$29.86 Billion. The trade gap (difference between imports and exports) was \$6.47 Billion in favour of New Delhi.

During 2021-24, America was the largest trading partner of India. The US is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus. India has received \$67.8 Billion in foreign direct investments from America during April 2000 and September 2024.

Thus India will have to diversify its export basket and reduce its American-centric approach to tide over the loses that might result from the Trump imposed tariffs.

(The author is former Additional Secreatry, Department of Commerce; views are personal)

# Holistic approach to overcoming addiction

**VALLURI** 

arilal Gandhi was addicted to alcohol. He tried in vain to give up drinking but could never kick the habit and eventually succumbed to the lethal disease called alcoholism. He became a quotidian smoker.

Gandhiji's son was also said to have committed adultery and for a brief turned an apostate as he got converted to Islam to be known as Abdullah Gandhi.

Abdullah Gandhi.

Tobacco and excessive consumption of alcohol lead to severe physical and psychological disorders. It has a deleterious

logical disorders. It has a deleterious and debilitating effect on the human body. Any individual can be addicted to sex, substance, food (bulimia), cinema, television, or even social media. Such addictions weaken our resolve diminish our aura and deplete our physical and mental

Addiction is a compulsive, chronic, physiological, or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behaviour, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-

defined symptoms (such as anxiety, irritability, tremors, or nausea) upon withdrawal or abstinence.

Talking of smoking, some lawmakers came up with outlandish theories stating that there is inadequate Indian evidence to correlate tobacco and cancer.

WHO estimates that tobacco caused 8.5 Million deaths in 2024 and over 100 million deaths over the 20th century. Similarly, the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention describes tobacco as "the single most important preventable risk to human health in developed countries and important cause of premature death worldwide."

Smoking is a major risk factor for heart attacks, strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) including emphysema and chronic bronchitis and cancer (particularly lung cancer, cancers of the larynx and mouth, and pancreatic cancer).

Cigarettes sold in underdeveloped countries tend to have higher tar content and are less likely to be filtered, potentially increasing vulnerability to tobacco smoking-related diseases in these regions.

Given this grim scenario, how does one quit smoking and or those addicted to Bacchus, give up drinking? It is recommended to take up courses in the Art of Living to combat these addictions.

We need to breathe properly to increase our Prana level to combat these addictions. The pivot of the Art of Living Courses is the unique breathing technique called the Sudarshan Kriya.

Sudarshan Kriya harmonises the rhythms of the body and emotions and puts them back in tune with the rhythms of nature.

Being in sync, we feel positive about ourselves, love flows naturally in all relationships (say what was lacking between Gandhiji and his son Harilal Gandhi).

Sudarshan Kriya's technique enables us to skillfully use the breath to feel positive about ourselves and our lives and start having control over our emotions. It reinforces the default rhythm

within an individual and negative emotions of discontent and unhappiness get

purged.

Regular practice of Sudarshan Kriya, pranayama, yoga, and meditation brings

about a 360-degree change in the personality of an addict or a person who is only looking back in anger.

A renowned cardiologist from Hyderabad, Dr Ramachandra of Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals recommends

Sudarshan Kriya to all his patients for a quick rehab. Further, he opines this breathing technique is almost akin to hyperventilation and relaxes an individual tremendously. Regular practice of this breathing is for the product of the practice.

ing technique infuses energy, prana, and optimism and puts a person in an auto mode (default mode of nature).

We are cannonaded with almost 60,000 thousand thoughts a day. Most of them are negative in nature. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar says breath is like a string and your mind is like a kite. Proper breathing ensures you float and do not crash land in the journey of your life.

#### So let us breathe our problems away. **Conclusion**

In a world where addiction to substances and behaviors can erode physical and mental wellbeing, finding effective ways to reclaim control is essential. Harilal Gandhi's struggles serve as a stark reminder of how unchecked dependencies can lead to suffering, not just for the individual but for their loved ones as well.

The impact of smoking, alcoholism, and other addictions is undeniable, with grave consequences on health and longevity. Yet, amidst this challenge, hope lies in adopting holistic wellness practices. Sudarshan Kriya, pranayama, yoga, and meditation offer scientifically backed methods to counter addiction and regain inner harmony.

These techniques not only cleanse the body and mind but also foster emotional resilience, allowing individuals to break free from destructive

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



## Vaishnaw rejects allegations over power generation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ NEW DELHI

nion Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday rebutted allegations of the Kerala unit of the Congress against him on share of non-fossil fuels in Ĭndia's energy mix.

The Kerala unit of the Congress, in a post on X, had called Vaishnaw a "liar" over his remarks that 45 per cent of India's power generation capacity was from non-fossil fuels and claimed that over 74 per cent of the country's power generation was from

become 120 per cent. How confidently are

Vaishnaw pointed out that there was a difference between energy generated and power generation capacity.

you fooling your audience Mr. Reel Minister," the Kerala unit of the Congress said, sharing a pie graph of power generation in the country.

Vaishnaw pointed out that there was a difference between energy generated and power generation capacity.

"Energy generated and power generation "If we add your 45 per cent, it will capacity are two different things. For example: thermal power plant of 100 MW

can generate more energy than a solar plant of similar capacity," the union minister said.

The minister also shared a pie graph that showed coal-based power plants forming 47.29 per cent of the total 466 GW installed capacity for power generation.

Non-fossil sources, including solar, hydro, wind and nuclear, form 47.25 per cent of the energy mix.

Addressing a media conclave, Vaishnaw had said more than 45 per cent of India's power generation capacity was from non-

He said Railways planned to achieve 100 per cent electrification of its network by this



Family members of Gurpreet Singh, who was among the eight workers trapped after the Telangana tunnel collapse, mourn his death at their village Cheema Kalan, in Tarn Taran district. His body was

### Tunnel collapse victim's corpse sent home

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** ■ NAGARKURNOOL family. The body could be extricated follow-

≺he mortal remains of Gurpreet Singh, whose dead body was recovered from the partially collapsed SLBC tunnel here, were sent to his native place in Punjab, even as rescue operations continued on Monday to locate the remaining seven persons.

Gurpreet Singh, who worked as a Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) operator for Robbins Co, was among the eight men trapped inside the tunnel after its partial collapse on February 22. The body was transported in a special ambulance following postmortem and other procedures at Nagarkurnool civil hospital, official sources said. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 25 lakh to his

ing "very careful" digging and other efforts for more than 48 hours. It was buried under silt at a depth of about 10 feet, a senior official said on Sunday. Singh was identified based on his earring on the left ear lobe and tattoo on the right hand. The search for the remaining workers continues, the official has said. Apart from Gurpreet Singh, seven others trapped include Manoj Kumar (UP), Sunny Singh (J&K), Gurpreet Singh (Punjab) and Sandeep Sahu, Jegta Xess, and Anuj Sahu, all from Jharkhand. The eight persons -- engineers and labourers -- got trapped in the Srisailam Left Bank Canal (SLBC) project tunnel after a portion of it collapsed on February 22. Experts from the NDRF, Indian Army, Navy and other agencies were making relentless efforts to pull them out to safety

#### Punjab, UP, **Kerala top list of** war widows: **MoS Defence**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

s of December 31, 2024, the total number of widows of ex-servicemen Lin the country stands at 7,40,766, the government informed Parliament on Monday. Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth said this in a written response to a query in the Rajva Sabha.

The defence ministry was also asked whether the government regularly revises the monthly assistance provided to these widows, and if so, the details thereof.

"The total number of widows of ex-servicemen in the country is 7,40,766 as on 31 December 2024," the Union minister said. State-wise data of widows of ESM was also

shared in his written response. According to the data, 75,821 widows of ex-servicemen were registered in Punjab, 72,071 in Uttar Pradesh, 71,570 in Kerala, and 12,558 in Bihar, among other states and Union Territories.

However, the rank-wise data is not maintained, he said.

The ministry was also asked whether the government regularly revises the monthly assistance provided to these widows and whether the government has reviewed or plans to review welfare measures for war widows and families of armed forces personnel.

"The monthly assistance to widows is being provided as a family pension. A review of family pension is carried out based on the recommendations of the Pay Commissions and acceptance of the same by the government. A Dearness Relief, which is assessed periodically, may result in an increase in the amount disbursed." Seth said.

### **GDMA** issues notices to RMCs in city

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) has issued notices to four ready-mix concrete (RMC) plants are operational on Sector Dividing Road of Sector-112/114 and Sector Dividing Road of Sector-78/79A.

The authority officials visited various spots and found that 4 It is found that GMDA has constructed the said roads about 1 year back, and these RMC Plants have taken illegal access from sector dividing roads and furthermore roads have been severely damaged by the tippers as Plant Owners to explain the position in refslurry is spilled on the roads which also a leading cause of dust pollution.

Infrastructure Division of GMDA had informed to the Enforcement Wing of GMDA and R.S. Batth, DTP GMDA has Development Plan of GMUC-2031 AD issued notices by giving 48 hours to these and even the permissions of operating the

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

24-year-old man died after the

balcony of an abandoned building

Acollapsed in southwest Delhi's

Mahavir Enclave on Monday, a Delhi Fire

A call regarding the collapse was received at 1.55 pm. Four fire tenders and

rescue teams were immediately dispatched,

one person got buried under the debris. He

was brought out and rushed to the DDU

Hospital with critical injuries. However, he died on the way," the officer said.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

to a statement on Monday.

innovation ecosystem, it said.

37,000 to Rs 60,000 per month, according

research talent and strengthen India's

other financial incentives, including an

annual research contingency grant of Rs

20,000, a one-time laptop grant of Rs

50,000 and professional development sup-

minister withdrew the word that he had

used, it would be expunged from

ment, Air India cited a 'technical issue' as the

reason for the Delhi-bound flight's return to

Chicago. The statement read, "Upon landing

at Chicago, all passengers and crew disem-

barked normally and have been provided with

accommodation to minimise inconvenience.

Alternative arrangements are being made to

airline also mentioned that passengers are

being offered full refunds for cancellations and

free rescheduling if they choose. However, this

did little to ease the frustration of some cus-

tomers, who reported having to go through

Opposition parties led by the Congress

The fellowship hike is accompanied by

"We received another call at 3.10 pm that

Services official said.

the officer said.

erence to the Access Permission if any obtained by them. These RMC Plants are running within Residential/Commercial Zones of

The deceased has been identified as Md Kashif. He was passing by the area when

Upon reaching the spot, it was found

that the building was abandoned and very

old with four feet terrace protruding out

with construction over it, Deputy

Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit

Singh said. It was not immediately known

how old is the building. The owner of the building has been identified as Shoaib

Akhtar, he said, adding that a probe is

Shankar Kapoor has decided a survey of

port of Rs 2.5 lakh to fund participation in international conferences and work-

IIIT-Delhi Director Ranjan Bose empha-

advancing high-impact research. "The

vision of attracting the best students in the

country, fostering interdisciplinary and

industry-relevant research, and empower-

ing scholars to make meaningful contribu-

tions to global scientific progress," he said.

after alleged discrepancies in voter lists, with Rahul Gandhi raising the issue in the

Lok Sabha. "Questions have been raised by

the opposition in one voice in every state,

increased PhD fellowship aligns with our

dangerous buildings in Delhi.

**IIIT-Delhi increases PhD fellowship** 

▲increased its PhD fellowship from Rs 1.5 lakh for international research visits,

The move aims to attract top-tier sised that the institute is committed to

Language war intensifies

also demanded a detailed discussion in including Maharashtra," he said.

by two hoax bomb threats

In an official state-

comments, the Speaker said since the on the integrity of the electoral process

Beleagured Air India grounded

After Pradhan's Parliament on the doubts that have arisen

**▼**ndraprastha Institute of Information shops," the statement said.

Meanwhile, BJP spokesperson Praveen

the incident happened, the officer said.

same are being checked separately. 'We have issued notices and will take action in case no permission is found such

actions will continue in future also for betterment of Environment" said R.S. Batth. Apart from this, the development authority recently had issued notices to at least 40 real estate and other companies for

having failed to maintain and develop the green belts assigned to them under the corporate social responsibility.

The Adviser and Head of Urban Environment Division of the GMDA, Hardeep Singh Malik, said they had served a 30-day notice to these companies

to them and maintain them regularly. The authority has also asked these companies to send their personal representatives to his office within one week of the receipt of notice and submit a reply.

to start developing the green belts assigned

#### Man killed in Delhi building collapse

### MahaYuti recants Ladli Behen promise over fiscal health

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

s it presented a ₹45,892 crore revenue deficit budget for the year 2025-26, the BJP-led MahaYuti gov-Lernment on Monday kept on hold its poll promise of increasing the quantum of assistance under the "Mukhya Mantri Ladki Bahin Yojana" from ₹ 1,500 to ₹ 2,100 per woman per month, even as it proposed to mop up an additional revenue of ₹ 1,125 crore through fresh taxation measures.

Presenting a budget with a total outlay of ₹ 7,00,020 crore, Deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar made an allocation of ₹ 36,000 crore for the Mukhyamantri Majhi Laadki Bahin scheme. However, there was no mention of the proposed hike from ₹ 1500 to ₹ 2100 each per month for the beneficiaries in the budgetary proposals.

Talking to media persons here, chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said that the proposed hike would not be implemented from April this year. "We have to maintain the financial balance while fulfilling our promise. The poll promise will be fulfilled after the fiscal balance is achieved".

It may be recalled that the previous government had announced the ".. Mazi Ladki Bahin" scheme during the State Budget for 2024-25. During the State A tions, the women-friendly scheme proved to be a hit with the women voters across the state.

So much so that during the campaign for the Assembly polls, the BJP-led MahaYuti had promised to increase the quantum of assistance under the "Mukhya Mantri Ladki Bahin Yojana" from ₹ 1,500 to ₹ 2,100 per woman per month. In all, there are 2.34 crore beneficiary women in the age group 21 to 65 years under the scheme.

After the BJP-led MahaYuti returned to power, new chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said that the state government would continue the programme. "As far as increasing the quantum of assistance from ₹ Rs 1,500 to ₹ 2,100 per woman per month is concerned, we will review our financial position and make a formal announcement about it in the State Budget for 2025-26".

As part of the additional revenue generation measures, Ajit Pawar - who holds the Finance portfolio - proposed an increase in the motor vehicle tax by one percent on individual owned non-transport four wheeler CNG and LPG vehicles depending on the vehicle type and price. The current levied rate is 7 to 9 percent. The one percent hike will result in an additional revenue of around ₹ 150 crore.

Similarly, he proposed to levy motor vehicle tax at the rate of 6 percent on electric vehicles priced above ₹ 30 lakh. "The maximum limit of motor vehicles tax is proposed to increase from ₹ 20 lakh to ₹ 30 lakh. The proposed increase in the maximum limit of motor vehicle tax is expected to generate an additional revenue of around ₹ 170 crore," he said.



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis during the Budget session of state Assembly in Mumbai

Pawar said that Maharashtra would be number one in fulfilling the Prime Minister's dream of a developed India by 2047. "Maharashtra is number one in foreign direct investment. In Davos, Maharashtra signed MoUs with 56 companies worth ₹ 15.72 lakh crore, which will employ 16 lakh people," he said.

The budget for 2025-26 showed estimated revenue receipts stand at ₹ 5,60,964 crore, while the revenue expenditure is projected at ₹ 6,06,855 crore. "As a result, the estimated revenue deficit amounts to ₹45,891 crore,"

The Finance Minister said that as per the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, the government had successfully maintained the fiscal deficit below 3% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Additionally, the revenue deficit has consistentremained below 1 per cent of GSDP.

Pawar said that the Maharashtra government would announce its new industrial policy. "The Policy aims to attract investments worth ₹ 40 lakh crores and create 50 lakh jobs over its five-year period," he said.

In another announcement, he said that the Mumbai Metropolitan Region would be developed as an international level economic development center, i.e., a Growth Hub '. International level business centers will be established at seven locations, like Bandra-Kurla Complex, Kurla-Worli, Wadala, Goregaon, Navi Mumbai, Kharghar, and Virar-Boisar. "The objective is to increase the size of

the economy of Mumbai Metropolitan Region from the current \$140 billion to \$300 billion by 2030, and to \$1.5 trillion by 2047," he said.

On the infrastructure front, Pawar said that the third airport for Mumbai and the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train station will be established near the Vadhavan Port, in which the Maharashtra government has a share of 26 per cent. "The Vadhavan port will also be connected to the Samruddhi Mahamarg".

He said that the state government would soon announce a policy to provide financial incentives for modern, well-equipped boats to ensure safe travel from Gateway of Îndia, Mumbai to Mandwa and Elephanta. Under the phase-3 of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak

Yojana, the state government proposed to complete the construction of 1500 kms of road network in the year He said that the Namami Godavari Mission was being

Launched for Kumbh Mela in Nashik. He announced Memorials for Maratha Warriors, Dr. Ambedkar, Vajpayee, Bal Thackeray, and Savitribai Phule "A memorial for Maratha warriors will be built in Panipat, Haryana," he said.

"Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's memorial is under construction at Indu Mill land in Mumbai. A memorial for former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be established in Mumbai. ₹ 220 crore has been allocated for the Bal Thackeray memorial in Mumbai. A memorial for Savitribai Phule will be built in Satara district," he said.

### **Vanuatu dumps Lalit Modi**

rescheduled or refunded. This latest botch-up adds to the long list

of disasters for passengers travelling by Air India. This is not the first time in the recent past, that Air India has been questioned for its poor services. Numerous incidents of negligence have been reported, ranging from excessively long flight delays to broken seats fly the passengers to their destination." The and poorly behaved staff. Recently, an 82-year old Air India passen-

ger who fell and suffered a brain stroke after struggling to get a wheelchair, arrived at Indira Gandhi International airport along with her family "later than the recommended two numerous obstacles to have their flights hours before departure.

#### Metro network in India accelerates to be third largest in world

Tamil Nadu government as it was not accompanied by all the documents required to assess a project of this magnitude. In 2018, the government of Tamil Nadu proceeded with the project

of its own as a state project. "Then in January 2019, it was resubmitreduced cost of Rs 69,180 crore against Rs 85,000 crore earlier. The Government of

for 118.9 km length at a sanctioned cost of Rs 63,246 crore, as per a joint project.

"This project was approved in October 2024 for Rs 63,246 crore, of which the Government of India's contribution is Rs 7,424 crores in equity and subordinate debt. No funds demand has been received ted to the Centre for 118.9 km with a from the chief minister. We have already released Rs 5,000 crore and over Rs 33,000 crore has been financed through Tamil Nadu finally submitted a proposal external funding agencies," he noted.

Napat's office said the government of Vanuatu has significantly strengthened the due diligence aspect of 'Citizenship by Investment Programme over the past four years, resulting in a marked increase in applications failing the enhanced scrutiny undertaken by the country's financial intelligence unit.

The improved process implemented several years ago includes triple-agency checks, including Interpol verification, it said.

India does not have a mission in Vanuatu and the Indian high commission in New Zealand handles relations with the island nation.

In recent years, India has ramped up its outreach to the Pacific Island nations as part of the four-nation grouping Quad's efforts to counter China's growing

presence in that region. Last week, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Modi has filed an application with the Indian high commission in London to surrender his Indian pass-

"He has made an application for surrendering his passport in the high commission of India, London,' External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

If Lalit Modi's request for cancellation of the Indian passport is accepted, then he may become an illegal alien in the UK as Vanuatu is also revoking his citizenship.

The former IPL chief is wanted by Indian law enforcement agencies in connection with allegations that he was involved in embezzlement of crores of rupees during his stint as the top boss of the IPL.

### Gun violence chokes national highway

>> P1 "A young man was shot dead on the streets of Ghazipur, exposing the failure of the administration despite Union Home Minister Amit Shah's joint meeting with Delhi's Chief Minister and the police. With BJP in power, Delhi's people continue to feel unsafe as incidents of murder, robbery, and theft occur daily. However, instead of addressing the rising crime, CM Rekha Gupta and the BJP remain silent, their sole focus being relentless attacks on Arvind Kejriwal," the AAP said.

AAP leader and Kondli MLA, Kuldeep Kumar, lashed out at the BJP's so called "double-engine" government, calling it out for completely failing to main-

tain law and order in Delhi. Referring to the shocking murder in East Delhi's Ghazipur, he pointed out how criminals have become bolder. AAP's Chief Spokesperson, Priyanka Kakkar, highlighted the growing distress among Delhiites, who are now pleading with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta to tackle the deepening crisis of drug addiction. Drawing a stark contrast, the Chief AAP Spokesperson pointed to Punjab, where the AAP government has dismantled drug networks with 30,000 FIRs, the arrest of 6,500 smugglers, and a crackdown on corrupt law enforce-

#### **Fashion show in picturesque Gulmarg** angers Kashmir Assembly

ed from >> P1 Responding to the concerns expressed by the members in the Assembly Omar Abdullah said those who organised the fashion show have not applied their mind, showed disregard to the public sentiment and paid no attention to where they are organising it and its timing.

"Some people are saying that such a show should not have happened in the month of Ramzan. After

not have taken place any time of the year," he said. The chief minister said he wants to make it clear

what I have seen, I am of the opinion that it should

that there is no role of the government in organising the event. He also said if permission would have been sought from the government, it would not have given the permission for such an event. "If law has been violated, strict action will be taken.'

## **Ex-central banker Carney to replace Trudeau as PM**

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Toronto

ormer central banker Mark Carney will become Canada's next prime minister after the governing Liberal Party elected him its leader Sunday as the country deals with US President Donald Trump's trade war and annexation threat, and a federal election looms. Carney, 59, replaces Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who announced his resignation in January but remains prime minister until his successor is sworn in in the coming days. Carney won in a landslide, winning 85.9 per cent of the vote.

'There is someone who is trying to weaken our economy," Carney said.

"Donald Trump, as we know, has put unjustified tariffs on what we build, on what we sell and how we make a living. He's attacking Canadian families, workers and businesses and we cannot let him succeed and we won't." Carney said Canada will keep retaliatory tariffs in place until "the Americans show us respect."

'We didn't ask for this fight. But Canadians are always ready when someone else drops the gloves," Carney said. "The Americans, they should make no mistake, it. If they succeed they would destroy our

in trade, as in hockey, Canada will win."

Carney navigated crises when he was the head of the Bank of Canada and when in 2013 he became the first noncitizen to run the Bank of England since it was founded in 1694. His appointment won bipartisan praise in the U.K. after Canada recovered from the 2008 financial crisis faster than many other countries.

The opposition Conservatives hoped to make the election about Trudeau, whose popularity declined as food and housing prices rose and immigration surged.

Trump's trade war and his talk of making Canada the 51st US state have infuriated Canadians, who are booing the American anthem at NHL and NBA games. Some are canceling trips south of the border, and many are avoiding buying American goods when they can.

The surge in Canadian nationalism has bolstered the Liberal Party's chances in a parliamentary election expected within days or weeks, and Liberal showings have been improving steadily in opinion polls.

"The Americans want our resources, our water, our land, our country. Think about



Liberal Leader Mark Carney smiles as he delivers his victory speech during the Liberal leadership

way of life," Carney said. "In America health care is big business. In Canada it is a right."

Carney said America is "a melting pot. Canada is mosaic," he said. "America is not Canada. And Canada will never, ever will be a part of America in any way, shape or form." After decades of bilateral stability, the vote on Canada's next leader now is expected to focus on who is best equipped to deal with the United States.

"These are dark days, dark days brought on by a country we can no longer trust," Carney said. "We are getting over the shock but let us never forget the lessons. We have to look after ourselves and we have to look out for each other. We need to pull together in the tough days ahead."

Trump has postponed 25% tariffs on many goods from Canada and Mexico for a month, amid widespread fears of a broader trade war. But he has threatened other tariffs on steel, aluminum, dairy and other products. Carney picked up one endorsement after another from Cabinet ministers and members of Parliament since declaring his candidacy in January. He is a highly educated economist with Wall Street experience who has long been interested in entering politics and becoming prime minister, but he lacks political experience. In 2020, he began serving as the United Nations' special envoy for climate action and finance.

Carney is a former Goldman Sachs executive. He worked for 13 years in London, Tokyo, New York and Toronto, before being appointed deputy governor of the Bank of Canada in 2003.

The other top Liberal leadership candidate was former Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, who received just eight percent of the vote. Trudeau told Freeland in December that he no longer wanted her as finance minister, but that she could remain deputy prime minister and the point person for U.S.-Canada relations. Freeland resigned shortly after, releasing a scathing letter about the government that proved to be the last straw for Trudeau. Carney is expected to trigger an election shortly. Either he will call one, or the opposition parties in Parliament could force one with a no-confidence vote later this month. Trudeau urged Liberals supporters to get involved. This is a nation-defining moment. Democracy is not a given. Freedom is not a given. Even

Canada is not a given," Trudeau said.

## 2 British diplomats expelled from Russia over spying charges

ussia said on Monday it was Rexpelling two British diplomats based at the embassy in Moscow over spying allegations.

said in a statement quoted by the state

news agency RIA Novosti that the two diplomats had provided false personal while seeking permission to enter the country and had engaged in alleged intelligence and subversive activities that threatened Russia's security. It didn't offer any evidence.

According to the RIA Novosti report, a decision has been made to revoke diplomats'

accreditations and they have been ordered to leave Russia within two weeks. The Russian Foreign Ministry said in a separate statement that it summoned a British embassy official. "Moscow will not tolerate the activities of undeclared British intelligence officers on Russian territory," it said.

There was no immediate response from the UK authorities.

announced in September, and one more the previous 20 years combined.

in November. The UK called the moves at the time "baseless."

The expulsions came amid soaring tensions over the war in Ukraine and after London decided to revoke the credentials of an attache at the Russian Russia's Federal Security Service, or FSB, Embassy and limit Moscow's diplomatic activities in Britain.

month, London expelled a Russian diplomat response to November expulsion.

In May 2024, the UK expelled Russia's defence attache in London, alleging he was an undeclared intelligence officer, and it closed several Russian diplomatic properties in Britain that it said were being used for spying. Days later Russia reciprocated and expelled Britain's defense attache. Expulsions of diplomats

 both Western envoys working in Russia and Russians in the West — have become increasingly common since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. In 2023, the Russian news outlet RBC said Western countries and Japan had expelled a total of 670 Russian diplomats between the start of 2022 and October 2023, while Moscow by expelling 346 diplomats diplomats of spying. Six expulsions were According to RBC, that was more than in

### Syria announces end of military operation against Assad-linked gunmen

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Damascus

yria's interim government on Monday Sannounced the end of a days-long military operation against insurgents loyal to ousted president Bashar Assad and his family in the worst fighting since the end of the 13-year civil war in December.

The Defence Ministry's announcement comes after a surprise attack by gunmen from the Alawite community on a police patrol near the port city of Lattakia Thursday spiralled into widespread clashes across Syria's coastal region, during which monitoring groups said hundreds of civilians were killed.

Syria's new interim Islamist rulers are struggling to exert their authority across the country and reach political settlements with other minority communities, notably the Kurds of the northeast and the Druze in southern Syria.

To the remaining remnants of the defeated regime and its fleeing officers, our message is clear and explicit," said Defence

Ministry spokesperson Col. Hassan Abdel-

"If you return, we will also return, and ou will find before you men who do not know how to retreat and who will not have mercy on those whose hands are stained with the blood of the innocent."

Abdel-Ghani said that security forces will continue searching for sleeper cells and remnants of the insurgency of former government loyalists.

Though the government's counteroffensive was able to largely contain the insurgency, footage surfaced of what appeared to be retaliatory attacks targeting the broader minority Alawite community, an offshoot of Shia Islam whose adherents live mainly in Syria's western

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, said 1,130 people were killed in the clashes, including 830 civilians. The Associated Press could not independently verify

The interim government is made up of members of Sunni Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which led a lightning insurgency in December that overthrew Bashar Assad, ending over half a century of his family's dictatorial rule. The Assad family are Álawites. Interim President Ahmad Al-Sharaa

said the retaliatory attacks against Alawite civilians and mistreatment of prisoners were isolated incidents, and vowed to crack down on the perpetrators as he formed a committee to investigate the incident.

Abdel-Ghani says the security forces will allow the committee "the full opportunity to uncover the circumstances of the events, verify the facts, and rectify wrong-

Still, the footage of houses in several neighbourhoods set on fire and bloodied bodies laid on the streets alarmed Western governments, who have been urged by Al-Sharaa to lift economic sanctions on

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in

a statement issued Sunday urged Syrian authorities to "hold the perpetrators of these massacres" accountable. Rubio said the US "stands with Syria's religious and ethnic minorities, including its Christian, Druze, Alawite, and Kurdish communities".

Thousands of Syrians from the coastal area fled to neighbouring Lebanon, mostly through unofficial crossings. The UN refugee agency said in a statement that according to local authorities, 6,078 people have arrived in about a dozen villages in northern Lebanon's Akkar province fleeing the fighting, while arrivals in other parts of the country were still being veri-

Lebanon is hosting more than 755,000 registered Syrian refugees, with hundreds of thousands more believed to be unregistered. Since the fall of Assad, the flow had begun to reverse, with the UN reporting that nearly 260,000 Syrian refugees have returned home since November, about half of them coming from Lebanon

### Oil tanker, cargo ship collide in North Sea

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ London

n oil tanker and a cargo ship collided off the coast of eastern England Monday, setting both vessels on fire and triggering a major rescue oper-A ation, emergency services said.

Britain's Maritime and Coastguard Agency said several lifeboats and a coast guard rescue helicopter were dispatched to the scene in the North Sea, along with a coast guard plane and nearby vessels with firefighting capability.

The RNLI life boat agency said "there were reports that a number of people had abandoned the vessels following a collision and there were fires on both ships." It said three lifeboats were working on search and rescue at the scene alongside the coast guard.

The tanker, believed to be the US-flagged chemical and oil products carrier MV Stena Immaculate, was at anchor at the time, according to ship-tracking site Vessel Finder. The cargo vessel, container ship Solong, was sailing from Grangemouth in Scotland to Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

Coast guards said the alarm was raised at 9:48 am (0948 GMT). The site of the collision is off the coast of Hull, about 155 miles (250 km) north of London. Martyn Boyers, chief executive of the Port of Grimsby East, said 13 casualties were brought in on a Windcat 33 vessel, followed by another 10 on a harbor pilot

He said some crew were still unaccounted for.

#### Chinese military seeks more civilian high-tech inputs for modernisation PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ BEIJING Chinese military development was a

hinese military officials have called for increased fusion with the civil-✓ian sector, especially in emerging development and war readiness amid the significant strides made by China's hightech industry with the development of DeepSeek and other AI tools.

Officials of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), who constitute a large portion of the delegates in the ongoing annual session of China's Parliament, have advocated for the allocation of more civilian resources, especially in emerging technologies, official media reported on Monday.

The military delegates made the call during the annual session of China's national legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), and the advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), reported PLA Daily, the official organ of the Chinese military, on Monday. "We need to innovate the model of transforming local emerging field resources into war [preparation]," NPC deputy Liu Shuwei, a lieutenant general in the PLA Air Force, was quoted as saying by the PLA Daily.

Liu also called for research centres focused on key areas such as unmanned systems and underwater and cyberspace warfare, the Hong Kong- based South China Morning Post quoted the PLA Daily report. He urged Beijing to optimise the certification, bidding and procurement processes for the civilian sector's participation in military projects, saying this would



Chinese President Xi Jinping (left) and Premier Li Qiang arrive for the closing ceremony of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Monday.

help to streamline the flow of emerging civilian resources for military application. The PLA already controls several high-tech sectors, such as space, in which China has made significant advancements. Chinese President Xi Jinping, who heads the Central Military Commission, (CMC) the overall high command of the PLA, has also called for intensified joint civil-mili-

In his interaction with military officials during the parliament session last week, Xi urged efforts to effectively leverage the strengths and resources of the civilian sectors to enhance the quality and efficiency of military development, with an accelerated focus on developing new, high-quality combat capabilities.

focal point of the parliament session, as last week China announced a 7.2 per cent hike in defence spending, taking the total expenditure to USD 249 billion, the second

The CPPCC concluded its week-long session on Monday, while the NPC will end its meeting on Tuesday.

China's AI products, especially DeepSeek, have drawn global attention for their low-cost model, using only a fraction of the computing power required by established AI models like ChatGPT.

China's technological breakthroughs have dominated this year's parliament session, with lawmakers revelling in the AI breakthroughs and the development of new technologies. With DeepSeek's debut, the AI race has intensified between China and the US, which is the home to major global tech firms. Reports from the US indicated that the Donald Trump administration mulled banning DeepSeek from government devices.

On Mar 7, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in his annual press conference on the sidelines of the parliament session hit back at attempts to put curbs on China's tech products saying, "No mountains can stop the surging flow of a mighty river." Likewise, "high fences and small yards" cannot suppress the spirit of innovation, and decoupling and supply chain disruption will only lead to self-isolation.

Wang said science and technology should not be used to put up an iron curtain. Instead, they should be a shared wealth

#### Rohingyas in Lanka refuge protest outside UN office; call for permanent solution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Colombo

Rohingya refugees on Monday Astaged a protest opposite the UN office and demanded a permanent solution to their plight. Activist Rukii Fernando of a local group assisting them said the group, which arrived in 2022, were calling for immediate assistance, including food and housing.

"This group of 123 Rohingyas have been housed with friends and well wishers at Panadura (a Colombo south suburb)," Fernando told reporters.

They held placards opposite the UN office which read "Thank you Sri Lanka! You saved us from the sea, but now we are left to die on land", "We survived genocide. Will we now die from hunger and neglect?", "End our suffering. Give us a chance to build a future".

"Among us are widows and orphans who cry themselves to sleep in the arms of strangers; pregnant women who know their babies will be born into suffering and their tiny bodies destined to starve before they ever take their first steps. Men and women struggling to keep their families alive," said their communique handed to the UN refugee office.

Another group of 100 Rohingyas, who arrived on December 20 last year, after being rescued in the northern seas by the Sri Lanka Navy, are currently housed in an air force camp in the northeastern region.

### Germany's prospective new govt struggles to win support for defence, infra plans

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Berlin

rmany's Greens, whose support is needed for the prospective next government's plans to loosen debt rules for defense spending and draw up a huge infrastructure investment fund, said Monday that they won't support the package as things stand.

Conservative leader Friedrich Merz, who won last month's German election, is trying to put together a coalition with outgoing Chancellor Olaf Scholz's centre-left

Social Democrats. Last week, the two sides said they would seek to exempt some defense spending from the nation's tight self-imposed rules on running up debt, an issue of growing urgency as doubts increase about the US

commitment to European allies. They also want to set up a 500 billion euro (USD 533 billion) fund, financed by

borrowing, to invest in Germany's creaking infrastructure over the next 10 years and help restore the economy to growth.

Their plans will need a two-thirds majority in parliament because Germany's "debt brake" — which allows new borrowing worth only 0.35 per cent of annual gross domestic product — is anchored in he constitution.

And they are trying to get them through the outgoing parliament next week, rather than the newly elected one, because parties that for different reasons are unlikely to agree to the plans have just over onethird of the seats in the new chamber.

Since Merz's Union bloc and the Social Democrats don't have enough seats to pass the plans on their own, they need support from the environmentalist Greens.

The leadership of the Greens' parliamentary group decided Monday to recommend that their lawmakers reject the plans, co-

leader Katharina Droge said.

She said the Greens have long sought a reform of the "debt brake" to ease investment in the economy and measures against climate change, while Merz had insisted before the election that there was no need to finance such investments through borrowing.

Droge argued that the prospective coalition partners' proposed infrastructure fund wouldn't actually target useful investments, but instead serve as a "treasure chest" for measures such as tax cuts.

Asked about the Greens' comments, the general secretary of Merz's Christian Democratic Union, Carsten Linnemann, said talks would be held with the Greens "and then we will see how far we get".

His party also plans to talk to the probusiness Free Democrats, but that party has strongly criticised running up more

### One-day strike at 13 German airports brings most flights to halt

ASSOCIATED PRESS Berlin

one-day strike by workers at 13 German airports, including the Frankfurt and Munich hubs and all the country's other main destinations, caused the cancelation of most flights on Monday. The 24-hour walkout, which started at midnight, involves public-sector employees at the airports as well as ground and security staff. At Frankfurt Airport, 1,054 of the day's 1,116 scheduled takeoffs and landings had been cancelled, German news agency dpa reported, citing airport traffic management. All of Berlin Airport's regular departures and arrivals were cancelled, while Hamburg Airport said no departures would be possible. Cologne/Bonn Airport said there was no regular passenger service and Munich Airport advised travellers to expect a "greatly reduced flight schedule."

The ver.di service workers union's strike also targeted the Hamburg, Bremen, Hannover, Berlin, Duesseldorf, Dortmund, Cologne/Bonn, Leipzig/Halle, Stuttgart and Munich airports. At the smaller Weeze and Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden airports, only security workers were called out.

The union announced the strike on Friday. But at Hamburg Airport, it added a short-notice walkout on Sunday to the strike



on Monday, arguing that it must ensure the measure was effective. The so-called "warning strike," a common tactic in German wage negotiations, relates to two separate pay disputes: negotiations on a new pay and conditions contract for airport security workers, and a wider dispute over pay for employees of federal and municipal governments.

## **SEBI tightens norms for SME IPOs**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

arkets regulator SEBI has notified a stricter regulatory framework for small and medium enterprise (SME) IPOs by introducing a profitability requirement and capping a 20 per cent limit on offer-for-sale (OFS).

The reforms aim to provide SMEs with a sound track record an opportunity to raise funds from the public while protecting investor interests.

This move follows a rise in SME issues, which has driven significant investor participation.

With regard to profitability criteria, SEBIsaid SMEs planning to launch an IPO are required to have a minimum operating profits (earnings before interest, depreciation and tax or EBITDA) of Rs 1 crore for at least two out of the three previous financial years.

Also, the OFS component by selling shareholders in SME IPOs has been capped at 20 per cent of the total issue size. Additionally, selling shareholders will not be allowed to offload more than 50 per cent of their existing holdings, SEBI said

in a notification dated March 4. Further, promoters' shareholding over the Minimum Promoter Contribution (MPC) would be subject to a phased lock-in period. Half of the excess holding would be released after one year, while the remaining 50 per cent would be unlocked after

The allocation methodology for noninstitutional investors (NIIs) in SME IPOs would be aligned with the approach followed in main-board IPOs to ensure uniformity

"Further SEBIhas increased the minimum application size for SME IPO to two lots making entry stricter to avoid unnecessary speculation in SME IPO. This would help protect the interest of gullible investors who generally invest looking at the escalating share price," Makarand M Joshi, founder and Partner of corporate compliance firm MMJC and Associates, said. The amount allocated for general corporate purpose (GCP) in SME IPOs has been capped at 15 per cent of the total issue size or Rs 10 crore, whichever is

SME issues will not be permitted to use IPO proceeds to repay loans taken from

parties, whether directly or indirectly.

"Objects of the issue should not consist of repayment of loan taken from the promoter, promoter group or any related party, from the issue proceeds, directly or indirectly," SEBI said

The Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) for SME IPOs must be made available for public comments for 21 days. Issuers will be required to publish announcements in newspapers and include a QR code for easy access to the

Joshi said DRHP pertaining to IPO on the SME segment, which was till now cleared by the stock exchange, would now be available for public comment on the SME exchange, website of the issuer and merchant banker to the issue. The public would be made aware by way of a public advertisement that SMÉ IPÓ DRĤP is available for public comment.

This would allow the public at large to submit comments or raise complaints on draft red herring prospectus of companies going for IPO on small and medium

enterprises segment, he added. SME companies would be allowed to

promoters, promoter groups, or related raise funds through further issues without migrating to the main board, provided they comply with the SEBI (LODR) rules applicable to main Board-listed entities.

"Where the post-issue paid-up capital pursuant to further issue of capital, including by way of rights issue, preferential issue, bonus issue, is likely to increase beyond ₹25 crore, the issuer may undertake further issuance of capital without migration from SME exchange to the main board, subject to the issuer undertaking to comply with the provisions of LODR Regulations, 2015, as applicable to companies listed on the main board of the stock exchange(s)," the regulator said. SME-listed entities will have to comply with related party transaction (RPT) norms applicable to the main board-listed companies.

To give this effect, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has notified ICDR (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirement) Rules.

Driven by the strong performance of India's equity markets, the number of public issues by SMEs has significantly increased over the past two years.

### Goyal to discuss trade issues with export councils

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

ommerce and Industry Minister Pivush Goyal will on Thursday hold discussions with export promotion councils on trade issues amid the threat of imposition of reciprocal tariffs by the US, an industry official said

In the meeting, exporters are expected to raise issues pertaining to the proposed bilateral trade agreement between India and the US, the official added.

The meeting assumes significance as the minister has recently returned from Washington after holding trade talks with his US counterparts.

An industry official said the exporting community is concerned about the threat of the US to impose reciprocal tariffs as it could impact India's exports to America, which is its largest trading partner. However, they added that if the US would give duty concessions under the proposed trade agreement to India, sectors like textiles, handicrafts, leather, and gems and jewellery would get a boost.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick has said that India should open its agri sector also.

India has by and large protected the agri sector in all the free trade agreements as the segment involves the protection of the interest of millions of domestic farmers, who are engaged in sustenance farming. Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal on Monday told a Parliamentary panel that negotiations are still on and no agreement on trade tariffs has been reached so far between India and the US.

The Commerce Secretary briefed the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs on US President Donald Trump's recent claims that India has agreed to reduce its tariffs "way down" while Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri briefed the committee on China and Europe.

India has not committed to anything on trade tariffs to the US, he told the panel.

Last week, US President Donald Trump said India has agreed to cut its tariffs "way down" as he reiterated his claim that the country charges America massive tariffs that make it difficult to sell products there.

### Rupee sinks 36 paise against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

■ he rupee depreciated by 36 paise to close at a week's low 87.31 against the US dollar on Monday due to volatile crude oil prices amid tariff uncertainties worldwide and unabated outflow of foreign funds.

A weaker American currency failed to support the local unit as a sell-off in the domestic equity market hit the sentiment adversely, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened weak at 87.24 and touched the day's low of 87.36 amid intense volatility. The unit touched an intraday high of 87.16 before ending the session at 87.31 against the greenback, registering a loss of 36 paise from its previous closing level.

Earlier, the domestic currency had recorded a steep single-day loss of 47 paise against the dollar on February 25.

On Friday, the rupee appreciated 17 paise to close at 86.95 against the US dolRUPEE ₹ VS DOLLAR \$ 1 USD = 87.33 INR\*

lar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading

lower by 0.15 per cent at 103.65. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.28 per cent to \$70.56 per barrel in

futures trade. Domestic equity markets closed lower with the 30-share BSE Sensex falling by 217.41 points, or 0.29 per cent, to 74,115.17, and the Nifty losing 92.20 points, or 0.41 per cent, to close at 22,460.30. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 485.41crore on a net basis on Monday, according to exchange data.

The latest RBI data released on Friday showed the country's forex reserves dropped by \$1.781 billion to \$638.698 billion in the week ended February 28. The overall forex kitty had jumped by \$ 4.758 billion to \$ 640.479 billion in the previous reporting week.

On the global macroeconomic froth, the US Labour Department data on Friday showed increased hiring activity in February though the unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.1 per cent. Economists say the outlook remains cloudy with President Donald threatening a trade war and purging the federal workforce.

#### **Energy conclave Gridcon 2025 to** discuss issues in power sector



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

n a significant step towards strengthening India's Power Grid and foster-Ling innovations in renewable energy integration, Union Minister of Power and Housing and Urban Affairs, Manohar Lal, inaugurated GRIDCON 2025 - The International Conference cum Exhibition on March 9, 2025.

The grand event was held at IICC, Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi in the presence of Union Minister of State for Power and New and Renewable Energy,

GRIDCON 2025 is organised by the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) from March 9 to March 11, 2025, under the patronage of the Ministry of Power and in association with CIGRE India. The inaugural event was graced by prominent power sector professionals from across the world. It was attended by RK Tyagi, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of POWER-GRID, along with Directors and senior

officials from the Ministry of Power, POWERGRID, and other public sector undertakings (PSUs) in the energy sector.

Over 2,000 conference delegates, 150 technical papers, 150 exhibition companies, and representatives from 30 countries, making GRIDCON 2025 a truly international event. Industry leaders, researchers, academicians, and global experts in power transmission, distribution, and smart energy solutions relted matters were presented in the conclave. The central theme of GRIDCON 2025 is "Innovations in Grid Resilience", focusing ture advancements, and smart solutions that will revolutionise: Renewable Energy Integration, Grid Resilience and Stability, Smart Asset Management, Digital Transformation in the Power Sector.

The event aims to create a collaborative platform where industry experts, policymakers, and researchers can exchange ideas, showcase innovations, and discuss best practices for shaping the future of the

#### **Domestic** commercial vehicle volumes to grow 3-5 per cent: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

omestic commercial vehicle industry's wholesale volumes are expected to grow 3-5 per cent year-on-year in FY26, rating firm Icra said on Monday. This follows a flat volume movement estimated in FY25, marred by the demand slowdown in the first half of the fiscal due to the general elections, it said in a statement.

"Resumption of construction and infrastructure activities, steady rural demand along with higher replacement sales stemming out of ageing fleets and government mandates are the likely driving factors to propel the said volume expansion towards the end of FY2025 and through FY2026," Icra Senior Vice President and Co-Group Head Kinjal Shah said. The sustained push in infrastructure development, a steady increase in mining activities and the improvement in roads/highway connectivity are expected to support volumes going forward, she added. The replacement demand would also remain healthy, primarily due to the ageing fleet, estimated at 10 years for the medium and heavy commercial vehicles (M&HCVs), and is expected to aid the medium term, Shah stated.

Among the various sub-segments, the M&HCV (trucks) wholesale volumes are likely to grow by 0-3 per cent year-on-year in FY26 after seeing a flattish growth or marginal contraction in FY25, Icra said. Wholesale volumes for the domestic light commercial vehicles (LCV trucks) are expected to see a modest 3-5 per cent YoY expansion in FY26.

#### Gold falls ₹150 to ₹88,750

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

alling for the third day in a row, gold prices retreated by ₹150 to ₹88,750 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid a weak trend in the overseas markets, according to the All India 99.9 per cent purity had settled lower at ₹88,900 per 10 grams on Friday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity slipped by ₹150 to ₹88,350 per 10 grams from the previous close of ₹88,500 per 10 grams. Silver prices also declined by ₹250 to ₹99,250 per kg, snapping the four-day winning run. Comex gold futures for April delivery

fell 0.32 per cent to \$ 2,904.80 per ounce in the international markets. Meanwhile, spot gold also fell 0.13 per cent to \$2,905.31 per ounce. "Gold and silver saw profit-taking from recent highs due to a rebound in US

bond yields. The US administration's decision to delay Mexico tariffs by a month added to the cautious sentiment. However, a weakening dollar, which fell to a five-month low and recorded its worst weekly decline since November 2022, provided tailwinds for gold and silver," Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Silver futures for May delivery traded lower at \$ 32.80 per ounce.

### Real money gaming industry bodies issue code of ethics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

ndustry bodies representing online real money gaming companies, AIGF, LEGF and FIFS, have jointly signed a "code of ethics" which their member companies will adopt for promoting user including KYC verification, spending limit etc, a join statement said on Monday. The members of these gaming industry bodies include Dream11, My11Circle, Khelo Fantasy Live, SG11 Fantasy, WinZO, Games24X7, Junglee Games etc. "The All India Gaming Federation (AIGF), the Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS), and the E-Gaming Federation (EGF), today jointly signed a 'Code of Ethics' (CoE)

"The CoE is aimed at enforcing consistent standards of user safety across the industry through the implementation of responsible gaming and advertising policies and mandates annual third-party audits and comprehensive reporting mechanisms to ensure accountability and transparency," the statement said.

The statement claimed that CoE has been created based on global best practices and lays down a strong framework for responsible gaming, such as age-gating, adopting stringent KYC and enabling user-set spending limits and self-exclusion. "It will apply to all online gaming operators who are members of the federations and offer skill-based real-money gaming services in India and safeguard the interests of over 50 crore Indian gamers," the statement said.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT are yet to execute online gaming rules that ased in Apr

Tamil Nadu has earlier banned Real Money Games (RMG) but in February issued stringent rules to regulate these platforms, including a ban on minors from playing on these platforms, spending limit, blank hours from 12 am midnight to 5 am when no login in the games should be allowed.

The CoE signed by the gaming industry bodies includes age gating, no operations in restricted states, and a robust KYC mechanism, safeguarding data, appropriate management of player funds, ensuring integrity and fairness in gameplay. "Through collaboration with other industry federations, we are setting new benchmarks for ethical gaming, strengthening the credibility of India's online gaming sector, and building a sustainable, globally competitive ecosystem." All India Gaming Federation (AIGF) CEO Roland Landers said.

E-Gaming Federation (EGF) CEO Anuraag Saxena said that national interest, consumer interest, and the industry's interest have all suffered too long.

#### Government seeks Parliament nod to spend ₹51,463 Crore extra in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

**¬**he government on Monday sought Parliament nod to spend a net additional ₹51,462.86 crore in the current financial year ending March, with a large chunk going towards pension and subsidy fertiliser.

The gross additional spending sought by the government is over ₹6.78 lakh crore, of which ₹6.27 lakh crore would be matched by savings and receipts. The net additional spending by the government would be ₹51,462.86 crore in the current fiscal, as per the second batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha.

The additional expenditure includes ₹14,100 crore to the department of fertilisers, including subsidies for urea and P&K fertiliser. An additional allocation of ₹13,449 crore has been provided for the pension of government employees, including ₹7,000 crore towards the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).

The total spending also includes a defence pension of ₹8,476 crore and ₹5,322 crore to the Department of Telecommunications.

An additional ₹2,186 crore funds have been allocated to the agriculture department and ₹3,722 crore to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for meeting additional expenditure to meet the VIT-AP UNIVERSITY'S GRAND CONCLUSION OF VITOPIA 2025 ANNUAL SPORTS AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL

**INBRIEF** 

Amaravati: The VITOPIA 2025 Annual Sports and Cultural Festival concluded successfully on March 9, 2025. On this occasion, the University Chancellor, Dr G Viswanathan, emphasised the importance of promoting sports and cultural activities along with academics and expressed the university's support for these initiatives.



#### **GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY WON 1ST RUNNERS UP** TROPHY AT NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL



Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University won the first runners-up trophy of 38th Inter University National Youth Festival 2024-25, held at Amity University, Noida in Uttar Pradesh. This prestigious event, organised under the banner of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), witnessed participation from over 2500 students across 148 universities in India, showcasing exceptional talent in various cultural disciplines.

#### **ADMISSION TO GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY ONLINE COURSES TILL MARCH 31**

Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University has extended the last date for admission to University **Grants Commission – Distance Education** Bureau (UGC-DEB) entitled online programs for the current academic session (Jan-March 2025)

until 31st March 2025, as per the latest UGC-DEB notification

#### **VICE-CHANCELLOR PROF (DR) KARAMJEET SINGH ESTABLISHED THE ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY ON GNDU**



Amritsar: Under the visionary leadership of Prof (Dr) Karamjeet Singh, VC, Guru Nanak Dev University, the university is proud to establish the Animal Welfare Society on campus. This initiative reflects GNDU's commitment to fostering a compassionate and responsible approach to animal welfare while promoting a holistic learning environment.

#### RBI to push payment innovations, says Governor With these regulations, he said the RBI Nexus to enable instant cross-border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

he Reserve Bank will continue to promote innovations in payment systems with soft touch regulations within regulatory guardrails and expand the reach of UPI for more efficient crossborder payments, Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Monday.

In his address at the İnauguration of Digital Payments Awareness Week 2025 here, the governor said apart from the RBI, the government and other important stakeholders like banks and payment system operators have also taken a number of initiatives to encourage the adoption of digital payments.

"While these efforts have produced results, as visible in the huge growth of digital payments, there is still a lot more to be done. Going forward, we will work on three broad areas," he said.

continue promoting innovation, promote access and transparency in cross border awareness generation, and more efficient cross-border payments.

"We will continue to encourage innovation while promoting safety and security through soft touch regulations," the RBI chief said and added that the central bank has adopted a soft-touch approach to regulating the payments ecosystem and fin-

attempts to balance these divergent sets of expectations. "Our approach has been to put in place regulatory guardrails within which all stakeholders are free to operate."

While mentioning that initiatives to encourage the adoption of digital payments have produced results, Malhotra said there is still a lot more to be done.

On cross-border payments, the governor said while in domestic payments, the success of UPI has propelled India to a leadership position with a share of 48.5 per cent in global real-time payments by volume, "we will endeavour to make crossborder payments more efficient".

As per a World Bank report, it has been estimated that in 2024, India received remittances totalling approximately USD 130 billion.

"We need to address the challenges of The areas are soft-touch regulations to high cost, slow speed, and insufficient payments...We will continue to expand the reach of UPI bilaterally by linking UPI with fast payment systems of other countries," Malhotra said.

The RBI will also explore the possibility of linking payment systems other than UPI to facilitate efficient cross-border payments. "We will continue our engagement in a multilateral project called Project retail payments," he added. Malhotra further said though much progress has been made in the development, spread and adoption of digital pay-

ments, there is a lot of scope to further

deepen and expand digital payments in the In January 2025, more than 20 billion payments worth almost Rs 250 trillion were made in India through digital modes. Digital payments have become the pre-

ferred mode of payment for many of us. "However, surveys have shown that nearly 40 per cent of our adult population still do not use digital payments. One of the main reasons for this is the lack of awareness or familiarity with using digital payments," he said.

The 5th Digital Payments Awareness Week (DPAW) is being observed from March 10 to 16. DPAW is an initiative to highlight the

and to create awareness about the safe usage of digital payment products. Under the mission 'Har Payment Digital', the theme for the current year is 'India Pays

impact and importance of digital payments

This theme reflects India's transformative journey toward a digitally empowered citizenry, with the ubiquity and convenience of digital payments, the RBI said.

Lyon 2-0 win at Nice

## Indian shuttlers to face challenge at All England Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Birmingham

rappling with injuries, health setbacks and poor form, Indian shuttlers will face one of their toughest challenges when they aim to capture the elusive All England Championships beginning here

Since Prakash Padukone's historic win in 1980 and Pullela Gopichand's triumph in 2001, no Indian has managed to capture the coveted All England title — one of the sport's most prestigious crowns after the Olympics and World Championships.

In the past two decades, Indian badminton has soared to new heights, with stars like PV Sindhu, Saina Nehwal, and Kidambi Srikanth claiming major titles. However, none have been able to conquer the All England Championships, despite their numerous successes on the world stage. Saina and Lakshya Sen came close in 2015 and 2022, finishing as runners-up, while Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand reached the semifinals in consecutive editions. Every year, the Indian contingent sets its sights on this historic title, and yet, the elusive crown continues to slip through their grasp. This year, the challenge will be even greater as India's top shuttlers arrive in Birmingham with a host of difficulties, including injury concerns and inconsistent



form. After a disappointing Paris Olympics, the Indian shuttlers struggled to get off the mark in 2025. Sindhu faced injury woes, HS Prannoy made a slow recovery from a bout of chikungunya, Lakshya Sen has battled poor form, and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy is coping with the oss of his father who died last month.

Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist, is back after recovering from a hamstring injury that forced her withdrawal from last

month's Asia Mixed Team Championships. The 29-year-old, who hired Indonesian

nis campaign against Japan's Koki Watanabe. A victory could set up a showdown with Indonesia's Jonatan Christie in the second round.

Prannoy, who has slipped to World No. 30 after a tough year, is yet to progress beyond the second round in 2025. The 32year-old, who was hampered by chikungunya ahead of the Paris Olympics, will open his campaign against France's Toma Junior Popov.

In men's doubles, Asian Games champions Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty, who are seeded 7th, have been India's most consistent performers, with strong showings at Malaysia and India Opens this year. The Indian duo will open against Denmark's Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard.

In women's doubles, World No. 9 Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will meet Chinese Taipei's Shuo Yun Sung and Chien Hui Yu, while Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto will face another Taipei pair — Pei Shan Hsieh and En-Tzu Hung. Among other competitors, Malvika Bansod will take on Jia Min Yeo of

In mixed doubles, India will be represented by three pairs — Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde, Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha, and Sathish Karunakaran with Aadya Variyath.

the stands and saw his substitu-✓tions pay off as Lyon won 2-0 at Nice to maintain its push for a Champions League spot.

oach Paulo Fonseca watched from

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Paris

Fonseca began his nine-month touchline ban in Ligue 1 after aggressively confronting referee Benoît Millot last Sunday. He saw his team struggle in the first half as Nice striker Gaëtan Laborde hit the post in the driving rain.

On Sunday, Lyon punished Nice when midfielder Rayan Cherki scored one minute after coming on. He latched onto a pass from Brazilian midfielder Thiago Almada and finished confidently in the 78th minute.

The 21-year-old Cherki has been linked with a move to a big club since breaking onto the scene as a precocious teenager five years ago, and this was his career-high sixth league goal.

The lively Almada then found Ghana forward Ernest Nuamah with a first-time pass and Nuamah - who came on midway through the second half — expertly curled the ball into the top left corner

Sixth-placed Lyon is two points behind Lille in fifth and Monaco in fourth. Third-placed Nice is only four points ahead of Lyon with the top four earning a Champions League spot.

Rosenior's first season

Liam Rosenior's first season in charge of Strasbourg is still going along nicely as the Alsace-based club won 1-0 at Nantes to strengthen its grip on seventh place. The 40-year-old Englishman, whose father enjoyed a career as a bustling striker in the 1980s, played in the Premier League for Fulham, Reading and Hull as a defender. Rosenior's coaching

career started three years ago with a brief stint at English club Derby and he then took charge of Hull. He was among the nominees last season for manager of the year in the second-tier Championship.

Rosenior has turned Strasbourg into a well-organised team which has a strong defense and is dangerous counterattacking down the flanks.

Strasbourg's goal came in the 79th when Félix Lemaréchal turned in a cross from tricky right winger Dilane Bakwa. Other results

At the bottom, strugglers Le Havre and Saint-Etienne drew 1-1 to stay deep in relegation trouble.

Lucas Stassin opened the scoring in the 10th following a scramble and Abdoulave Touré equalised for Le Havre in first-half stoppage time.

Midtable Brest won 2-0 at home to Angers. Forward Abdallah Sima headed home from a corner against his former club, but left the field close to halftime with an adductor muscle injury. He was replaced by Romain Faivre, who scored the second goal.

Reims lost 2-0 at home to Auxerre to stay 15th and one place above Le Havre in the relegation playoff spot. Saint-Etienne is 17th and Montpellier last in the 18-team league.

Auxerre's goals came in the first half from Canada forward Theo Bair and Hamed Traoré with his 10th of season.

All players in this weekend's games have "WO=MAN" written on the back of their jerseys instead of their names as part of the French league's initiative centered around International Women's Day. Runaway leader PSG won 4-1 at Rennes on Saturday and is 16 points clear of Marseille, which conceded a stoppagetime goal in a 1-0 home loss to Lens

### Hockey India announces record prize pool of ₹12 Crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

rockey India has announced a record prize pool of Rs 12 crore for Lits seventh Annual Awards for which 32 players have been nominated across eight categories.

The event is scheduled to be held on Saturday here, to celebrate the finest performances of the 2024 season.

One of the key highlights is the coveted Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of the Year, which will honour the best male and female players.

Young players have also been given the spotlight, with Jugraj Singh Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Men) and the Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Women).

In addition, individual excellence across various positions will be recognised

through awards such as Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year, Pargat Singh Award for Defender of the Year, Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year, and Dhanraj Pillay Award for Forward of

This year's awards will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Indian men's team's historic World Cup victory on the same date in 1975 — the country's first and only world title to date.

Adding to the significance, 2025 marks 100 years of Indian hockey, as the country became affiliated with the International Hockey Federation (FIH) on November 7, 1925. India's Olympic bronze medalwinning team will be felicitated, along with the men and women teams that won the Asian Champions Trophy last year.

The Junior Asia Cup-winning men and women teams will also be honoured during the award ceremony.

The Hockey India 7th Annual Awards 2024 is a celebration of the extraordinary talent we have in Indian hockey. It's not just about recognising individual achievements but honouring the collective spirit of Indian hockey that has shone through in 2024," HI president Dilip Tirkey said in a statement.

coach Irwanshyah Adi Pratama in January,

will face Korea's Ga Eun Kim in the open-

ing round. A potential second-round

clash against China's Han Yue awaits, with

Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung

likely to challenge her in the quarterfinals.

previous edition of the All England but has

struggled in the new season with two first-

the 2021 World Championships, will open

The 23-year-old, who claimed bronze at

round exits and a second-round finish.

Lakshya, who was fourth at the Paris Olympics, enjoyed a semifinal run in the

Nominees for Hockey India Annual Awards 2024 are:

Hockey India Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year 2024: Bichu Devi Kharibam, Krishan Bahadur Pathak, PR Sreejesh, Savita.

Hockey India Pargat Singh Award for Defender of the Year 2024: Sanjay, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh, Údita.

Hockey India Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year 2024: Jarmanpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, Nilakanta Sharma,

Sumit. Hockey India Dhanraj Pillay Award for Forward of the Year 2024: Lalremsiami, Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Navneet Kaur.

Hockey India Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Women -Under 21): Beauty Dungdung, Deepika, Vaishnavi Vithal Phalke, Sunelita Toppo.

Hockey India Jugraj Singh Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Men – Under 21): Arshdeep Singh, Amir Ali, Shardanand Tiwari, Araijeet Singh Hockey India Balbir Singh Sr Award for

Player of The Year (Women): Savita Punia, Salima Tete, Sangita Kumari, Navneet Kaur.

Hockey India Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of The Year (Men): Abhishek, Hardik Singh, Harmanpreet Singh,

## Mumbai City eye ISL play-offs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bengaluru

umbai City FC will need a point against Bengaluru FC to qualify for the Indian Super League (ISL) other here on Tuesday.

Placed seventh with 33 points, Mumbai City need just a draw to edge past the sixthpositioned Odisha FC (33 points) and finish on top-six.

The Islanders, however, are winless in their previous four games, drawing and losing twice each. The Blues have already made the cut for

the top-six, and are presently fourth in the standings with 38 points from 23 games.
The Blues have faced losses in three of their last four encounters against the Islanders, failing to find the back of the net

thrice on the bounce, which are arguably

unwanted records they will want to set

clear before the playoffs begin. Talismanic Sunil Chhetri, who has decided to come out of international retirement to help the national team qualify for the 2027 Asian Cup, has converted four spot-kick this season, and if he scores against Mumbai City FC, he will become the first player to reach 10 goals



against the Islanders in the ISL.

The two sides have played 17 matches so far, with Bengaluru FC winning six games and Mumbai City FC emerging victorious nine times. Two games have pro-

Bengaluru FC head coach Gerard Zaragoza said that the Islanders will present a tough challenge in the coming game.

"Mumbai City FC will play this match like one final. It's difficult to play against teams like this, but we want to win this game," he said.

Mumbai City FC head coach Petr Kratky too acknowledged the strength of Bengaluru FC.

"Bengaluru FC are a good side. They have quality in them and there is a reason why they are in the playoffs," he said.

### **Commonwealth Games** Federation renamed to **Commonwealth Sport**

⊣he Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) on Monday its name to changed Commonwealth Sport, saying it was a transition from being a governing body to becoming a "movement". The decision to change its name was announced on the occasion of Commonwealth Day —

"From Commonwealth Day 2025 onwards, the Commonwealth Games Federation will be known as Commonwealth Sport," the governing body of the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Youth Games said in a media release. "The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) is changing its public brand name to Commonwealth Sport. This brand development signifies the organisation's transition from a Sport CEO Katie Sadleir said, "The

demonstrates a stronger, more unified purpose that resonates with our audience on a deeper level."

The 'Commonwealth Games Federation' will be retained as the name of the legal entity only. Meanwhile, King Charles, the Patron of Commonwealth Sport, will officially launch the inaugural Commonwealth Sport King's Baton Relay for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games at Buckingham Palace on the Commonwealth Day on Monday. King Charles will place his message to the Commonwealth into the first Baton, passing it to the first batonbearer, Sir Chris Hoy, and starting the relay with 500 days to go to the Opening Ceremony of Glasgow 2026.

The Baton Relay will be the longestever relay for a Commonwealth Games, with the Commonwealth Games 'Sports Federation' to a 'Sports Associations in the 74 nations and ter-Movement," it added. Commonwealth ritories each having up to six days to organise their series of activities.

### Sukant, Nitesh win gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

aris Paralympics champion Kumar Paris rarayinpies champion Sulfant Nitesh and Sukant Kadam secured gold medals in SL3 and SL4 cateat the Spanish Para Badminton International 2025 – II in Vitoria, Spain.

Nitesh registered a 21-19 21-19 win over Japan's Daisuke Fujihara in the final of the SL3 category, while Sukant defeated fellow Indian Tarun 21-13 21-10 in the SL4 category on Sunday.

"I'm happy to start 2025 with a gold medal. Every match here was a learning experience, and I'm glad I could perform consistently. This win gives me great motivation for the rest of the season," Sukant said in a press release.

In SH6 category, Nithyashre emerged victorious, defeating Poland's Szmigiel in the final to claim a top podium finish. In men's doubles, Nitesh Kumar and Tarun edged past India's Jagadesh Dilli and Naveen Sivakumar 21-14, 23-25, 22-20. The mixed doubles events also saw a strong Indian presence.

Krishna Nagar and Nithyashre triumphed over England's Shephard and Choong with a dominant 21-14, 21-11



victory to clinch gold in the SH6 category. Nitesh Kumar, pairing with Manisha Ramadass, added another gold to India's tally in the SL3-SU5 category, defeating Sweden's Rickad Nillson and Denmark's Hello Sofie Sagoy with a convincing score of 21-9 and 21-15.

Meanwhile, Alphia James fought hard in the women's singles final but had to settle for silver after going down to Switzerland's Ilaria Olgiati.

### Inter Milan 2-1 victory over Fiorentin in Serie A

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Milan

apoli kept up the pressure on Serie A leader Inter Milan as it finally got back to winning ways with a 2-1 victory over Fiorentina.

Romelu Lukaku on Sunday scored one and set up the other for Giacomo Raspadori to help Napoli move back to within a point of Inter, which fought back from two goals down to beat Monza 3-2 on Saturday.

Atalanta proved it is very much among the fray with a statement 4-0 win at fourthplaced Juventus to close the gap back to three points to Inter.

According to statistics provider Opta, it was the first time Juventus had lost a league match at home by four goals in nearly 60 years — since a loss by the same score to Torino in October 1967.

Atalanta's title credentials will be truly tested next weekend when it hosts Inter. Fiorentina's hopes of making it into the top four diminished after its fourth loss in

five league matches. Napoli also came into the match on a mediocre run, having drawn four of its past five matches and losing the other.

But the hosts took the lead in the 26th minute following great work from Scott McTominay as he cut inside from the left and unleashed a shot that former Raspadori to sweep into the bottom right



Manchester United teammate David de corner. Fiorentina pulled one back six min-Gea could only parry into the path of Lukaku, who tapped in the rebound.

Giovanni Di Lorenzo hit the crossbar for Napoli as Fiorentina had De Gea to thank for a number of impressive saves that kept

it in the match. Napoli eventually doubled its lead on the hour mark with a team move that ended with Lukaku playing a through ball for

utes later as a backheeled flick from Moise Kean released Albert Guðmundsson

#### Head-to-Head

The match in Turin was a head-to-head battle for third place, with just three points separating Atalanta and Juventus.

to drill low into the near corner.

The league's top scorer, Mateo Retegui, Serie A to 12 matches, leapfrogging gave Atalanta the lead in the 29th from the Fiorentina into seventh.

spot after United States international Weston McKennie was penalized for handball. It was Retegui's 22nd goal in Serie A this season — seven more than nearest challenger Kean.

A combination of the woodwork and Juventus goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio prevented Atalanta from doubling its lead on the stroke of halftime but Marten de Roon did get the visitors' second within a minute of the restart after Ademola Lookman's effort was parried.

Davide Zappacosta all but sealed the match in the 66th and Lookman capped a fantastic performance from him and Atalanta 11 minutes later.

That started a mass exodus of Juventus fans and the ones who remained loudly booed the team at full time.

Fast goal Matías Soulé scored after only 22 seconds to set Roma on its way to a 1-0 win at relegation-threatened Empoli.

Opta said it was Roma's fastest goal in a Serie A match (since that data started being collected in 2004). It was a fifth straight win in all competitions for Roma, which visits Athletic

Bilbao in the second leg of the Europa League round of 16 on Thursday. Roma also extended its unbeaten run in

### **Toss-up between Axar, Rahul** for Delhi Capitals captaincy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

eading all-rounder Axar Patel and senior keeper-batter KL Rahul are captaincy in the upcoming Indian Premier League season with the multi-skilled Gujarat man having his nose slightly ahead.

It is understood that the franchise bigwigs will be announcing the name of their new captain in the next few days, having

waited for the Champions Trophy to end. Delhi Capitals will have a short training-cum-simulation camp in Delhi before flying to Visakhapatnam for their first two games. Axar, Rahul, Kuldeep Yadav, South Africa's Tristan Stubbs, Australian Jake Fraser McGurk and Mitchell Starc are set to gather in Visakhapatnam on March 17 and 18. With Rahul and wife Athiya Shetty expecting their first baby, the senior player could miss a game or two depend-

ing on the due date. Into his seventh season with the Capitals, the 31-year-old Axar, who has played 150 IPL games, scored 1653 runs at a strike rate of nearly 131, and took 123 wickets at an economy rate of 7.28, looks a more likely candidate to lead the team than Rahul, who will be donning the Delhi blues for the first time.

However, Rahul has been an IPL captain for some years now and has led Punjab Kings and Lucknow Super Giants in the past. LSG reached two play-offs during his time at the franchise although in one of those, he was injured for the better part of the season.

Rahul, who will turn 33 on April 18, has scored 4683 runs at a strike-rate of 134 plus, the runs coming mostly while batting in the top three. He has also struck four centuries across 132 games.

While his strike-rate in the power plays has often been criticised, Rahul has a phenomenal record between 2018 and 2024, amassing more than 500 runs in six out of seven seasons. The only season he scored less was in 2023 when he got 274 runs in nine games before getting injured. In four of those six seasons, he had sur-

passed 600 runs. Axar's captaincy at the IPL level is not yet proven while Rahul has led for some years. The composition of Delhi Capitals squad is such that it is very difficult to have a foreigner as captain unless one is looking at Stubbs, who will probably be a sureshot pick across conditions.

## I am not retiring from ODI format: Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

ndia skipper Rohit Sharma has dismissed the speculations about his career after winning the ICC Champions Trophy (CT), saying that he is not quitting the ODI format anytime soon. Since the tour of Australia, speculations were rife about Rohit's future in the team as well as his position as captain but a match-winning 76 in the final against New Zealand on Sunday has given him a new lease of life.

"I am not going to retire from this (ODI) format. Going forward please don't spread rumours," Rohit said at the post-match press conference after India beat New Zealand by four wickets to clinch the trophy. He was expectedly quizzed about his future plans and he said that things will remain as it is.

"No future plans. Jo ho raha hain, woh chalta jayega (Whatever is happening will keep continuing)," Rohit added.

Rohit said his aggressive approach in the Power Play segment was a decision taken with a specific aim in mind.

The Mumbai man flew off the blocks in the first 10 overs making 49 before eventually getting out for a 83-ball 76.

"I haven't done anything different today as I have been doing in the last 3-4 matches. I know how important it is to make runs in Power Play because we have seen that tributing to the team's win as a batter was after 10 overs, it becomes very difficult a very satisfying experience. "You get a lot



when the field spreads and spinners come." The nature of the Dubai pitch too played its part in him adopting a quick fire

approach to batting.
"It becomes tough also because the pitch is already slow. So, it is very important for you to take chances from the top.

"I pick the bowler and where I can charge him and where I can play the shot. In that, you may not see that many big runs. Today after that 10 overs, I changed my game a bit. I had to play for a long time," he added.

However, Rohit admitted that con-

of happiness when you win a match and you make a contribution in it, it feels even better. I made a lot of contributions in the 2019 World Cup, but we did not win.

"So, there was no fun in it. Even if you make a sudden run and win the match, you get more satisfaction and happiness. So, I think it was very important for me to do something and contribute and keep the team in a winning position," he noted.

The demotion of KL Rahul to No. 6 has

been discussed threadbare in recent times, but Rohit said the management is delighted to see the wicketkeeper batter making

consistent efforts in his new role. "It is very important for everyone to

contribute in their own way. When we discussed KL's batting position, we discussed quite deeply about how calm he is when he is batting. The pressure doesn't get to

"We wanted that calmness in the middle order. Also, we wanted to use a lefthander (Axar Patel) in the middle. That actually worked out in both ways for us," he said. Rohit said Rahul's contributions have been important for the team despite not scoring any big knocks.

"KL has been doing a lot of challenging work for the team for so many years now. I am very happy with how he managed to pull through this tournament and bat it in the pressure situation — both in the semifinals and this game as well.

'The contribution may not be 70-80, but those 30-40s are very important for the team. When you are chasing, it can get tough. But with KL being there, we know that he has got that mind where he keeps himself calm and keeps the dressing room also very calm," he explained.

The 37-year-old also praised Shreyas Iyer for playing significant knocks from No. 4. "He is very, very important in that middle phase for us. The partnerships with all the batters who were batting with him...That semifinal against Australia, his alliance with Virat was very important. Even against Pakistan and New Zealand, the league game that we played

#### We learned from past defeats in ICC knock-out games: Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

uperstar Virat Kohli says lessons learned from tough defeats in past ICC knock-out games have the paved the way for India's second major title in less than 12 months.

India won the T20 World Cup in June last year and on Sunday, they lifted the Champions Trophy for the third time.

It was a total team effort from Rohit Sharma's men over the course of their campaign in the UAE.

"It's been a long time since we've had a Champions Trophy, and the format is really good. This was our aim. After a tough tour of Australia, we came here and won a big tournament, which has once again boosted our confidence as a team," Kohli told the host broadcaster.

'Throughout the tournament, different players stepped up in different matches. There were moments in past tournaments where we weren't able to finish games or capitalise on crucial situations. But this time, we learned from those experiences."

The experience of Rohit and K L Rahul towards the end got India over the line in the final against New Zealand.

'That's why you back experienced players - they have faced these moments before, and when you apply those learn-

ings and work hard, you get a chance to turn things around," Kohli said.

"The way KL (Rahul) finished in the last two matches is a testament to that experience. When you've been in those situations before and couldn't cross the line, there's always a desire to get another opportunity and overcome it. And that's exactly what we did."

India were by far the best team in the combination. They picked as many as five spinners and that worked well for them on the slow wickets of Dubai. In the playing eleven, India had four spin options.

One thing we kept emphasising throughout the tournament was focusing on our skills - how good we are, not how good the opposition is. Despite all the challenges, this is why you play the game - for these big tournaments.

### **Manchester United draws 1-1 with Arsenal**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Manchester

stunning double save from David Raya denied Bruno Fernandes a dramatic late winner for Manchester United against Arsenal in the Premier

Raya's heroics salvaged a 1-1 draw for Arsenal at Old Trafford but its Premier League title looks all but out of reach with runaway leader Liverpool 15 points clear

at the top of the standings. "I don't want to say that, but today the frustration is that we haven't won our game. We know the urgency and we are obligated to win every single match," Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said after watching his team drop points for a third straight

league game. And it could have been worse for second-placed Arsenal if not for Raya's brilliance. In added time the goalkeeper flung himself in front of Fernandes' effort from close range and then leapt to his feet to claw the spinning ball away just before it crossed the line.

Chelsea moved up to fourth in the standings after a 1-0 win against Leicester and Tottenham battled back from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Bournemouth.

#### United fight

After fan protests in the street, United's players produced one of their most spirit- it finished in eighth place. It is currently ed performances of the season to draw with

Arsenal. Thousands of United supporters marched in unity to protest the club's ownership before kickoff. But on the field Ruben Amorim's team produced a unified display of its own.

Fernandes fired home a free kick from around 20 yards in first-half added time and only a slew of missed chances stopped United from extending its lead after the break, with Joshua Zirkzee and Noussair Mazraoui forcing saves from Raya.

Arsenal leveled through Declan Rice in the 74th, but needed Raya again to prevent Fernandes late on.

Amorim accepted that United, which vas forced to cede possession for much of the game, will have to be more adventurous if he is to achieve his goal of returning the 20-time champion to the summit of English and European soccer.

And he believes there's another way to ring the good times back to Old Trafford. 'What I can say is we need more Brunos, that is clear," the United head coach

"Not just the quality and the character, he makes some mistakes, but in this league the availability is so important and he is so decisive with and without the ball."

The draw moved United up to 14th in the 20-team standings on 34 points. Last season the once dominant United endured its worst league campaign in 34 years when eight points off 10th-placed Fulham.

#### Chelsea rises

Marc Cucurella struck a 60th-minute winner against Leicester at Stamford Bridge after Cole Palmer's first-half penalty was

Victory boosted Chelsea's chances of a return to the Champions League next season, moving it ahead of four-time defending champion Manchester City, which lost -0 to Nottingham Forest a day earlier.

The 2021 Champions League winner has not qualified for European club soccer's top competition for the last two years.

But Enzo Maresca's team took full advantage of City's latest loss by edging out relegation-fighting Leicester and climbing into the top four.

Cucurella's long-range effort was drilled low into the corner to beat Leicester goalkeeper Mads Hermansen.

Earlier, Hermansen had been the visitors' hero when diving low to save Palmer's penalty in the 22nd. It was the first time Palmer had failed to score from the spot in the league in 13 attempts. His 100% record from his previous 12 was a league record, according to the competition's stats provider Opta.

#### **Spurs fightback**

Son Heung-min's late penalty completed an unlikely comeback after Champions League-chasing Bournemouth had dominated the chances at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

### Rohit exceptional knock took the match away from us, says Mitchell Santner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

Tew Zealand skipper Mitchell Santner admitted that his Indian counterpart Rohit Sharma's exceptional knock was the difference between the two teams in the Champions Trophy final, and termed the four-wicket defeat as a "bittersweet end."

Rohit made a fluent 76 off 83 balls as India chased down 252 in a close finish here on Sunday.

"I think the way Rohit Sharma played kind of took it away from us, I think, obviously, India here understood the conditions in Dubai perfectly and played some good cricket. Yeah I guess it's kind of bittersweet at the end," said Santner in the post-match press confer-

Santner said he was "proud" of his side despite the surrender in the title clash.

"I think we came up against a good side in the final. We challenged at times throughout this game, which was pleasing and I think there were proba-

ly to the ICC people responsible for

bly a couple of small moments knew the conditions were where we let it get away from us. "But yeah, incredibly proud of this group the way we've kind of gone about it throughout this tournament," he

Santner said the Kiwis were prepared to tackle the DICS pitch and conditions, which were vastly different from Lahore, the venue of their semifinal win over South Africa. "I guess we just keep coming up against India, which is always a challenge. We going to be slightly different again from the semifinal, but we were ready for that.

"I thought we still put in a pretty good performance, and we took India deep. But I guess there's always a few moments in every game, let alone every final, where you can potentially look back at," he said. Santner also conceded that they missed Matt Henry after he was ruled out of the title clash with a shoulder injury. Pacer Henry was the highest wicket-taker in the event with 10 scalps.

"He's an outstanding bowler. We've seen he seems to be able to nip it on wickets that don't look like they should nip so I guess we missed that today.

"I feel for Matty - he's a massive team man and he looked pretty distraught. You know, we just kind of said, like, let's do it for him. He tried everything he could to be ready for this game and unfortunately for us he wasn't quite there," he noted.

#### **DETAIL NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

No. PM-Shri/CW/Tender/24-25/86/2025/271

Name of work

In continuation to the tender notice No. PM-Shri/CW/Tender/24-25/86/2025/109 dated 17/02/2025, the last date for submission of tenders for the following 5 (five) groups is extended upto 20/03/2025 due to administrative reasons. All other terms & conditions of the tender remain the same.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 10-03-2025 (1100 hours) to 20-03-2025 (1400 hours). The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in

Approximat Time of Tend Farnest Money Deposit

Group	Name of work	Approximat e value of work (in lakh)	Time of completi on (in months)	Tend er fee	Earnest Money Deposit	
no.					General category	Reserved category
Group -16	Major repairing of PM-Shri Dhupdhara High School under Rongjuli block in Goalpara district	86.931	6	1739	173862	86931
Group -17	Major repairing of PM-Shri Abdul Hasib HS School under Hojai-Municipality block in Hojai district	60.183	6	1204	120366	60183
Group -18	Major repairing of PM-Shri Boko High School under Boko block and PM-Shri Bamunigaon High School under Chaygaon block in Kamrup district	66.87	6	1337	133740	66870
Group -19	Major repairing of PM-Shri Borjuri R.K.S High School under Bajiagaon block in Nagaon district	33.435	6	669	66870	33435
Group -20	Major repairing of PM-Shri Barpatradole High School under Gaurisagar block and PM-Shri Banmukh HS School under Sivasagar block in Sivasagar district	86.931	6	1739	173862	86931

Online mode of submission for both technical and financial bid is mandatory.

2. There are 5 groups and one bidder can participate in more than one group. But no bidder will be awarded more than 2 groups of work, even if their financial bids rank at L1. 3.A hard copy of the technical bid submitted online is also to be submitted at the office of the undersigned

on or before 20-03-2025 upto 1400 hours for evaluation purpose. For any discrepancy between the online bid and the hard copy of the bid, the online bid will govern and will be considered for evaluation. 4.Along-with the hard copy of the technical bid, the following documents must also be submitted on or

before 20-03-2025 up to 1400 hrs :a.Original Power of Attorney for signing the bid, if any.

b.Copy of bid security/ EMD submitted online at www.assamtenders.gov.in.

c.Copy of tender fee submitted online at www.assamtenders.gov.in.

5. Bidders are advised to scan their original technical papers at a resolution of 100 dpi (in colour mode) in ".pdf" format for multiple pages with maximum file size of 25 MB. If the file size exceeds 25 MB, the bidders are advised to create multiple files and upload the same in "Upload Additional Document" stage

6.In the event of date of bid opening being a holiday, the activities will take place on the next working day. 7.All the interested bidders are requested to read the bid document carefully before submission of their Sd/-Mission Director.

Janasanyog/CF/3966/24/11-Mar-25



#### It required lot of preparation: Rahul after excelling in new role



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

L Rahul is delighted after successfully migrating to No. 6 batting slot, and termed it as a result of his unrelenting "preparation" and improving his game constantly.

Rahul, who usually bat No. 5, was pushed down a position lower in the Champions Trophy, and made 140 runs in four innings here.

"It's really pleasing for me. The work that I'm putting in to different roles requires a lot of preparation, work outside the cricket field, thinking about how I need to take each game and how I need to perform in different situations and watch some of the players that bat at 5, 6 and how they've been successful," said Rahul following India's Champions Trophy triumph on Sunday.

Rahul said he was happy to take up that new responsibility for the team.

"I've been taught from a very early age by my coaches that cricket is a team game and whatever the team requires of you, you need to be able to accept that and find a way to put in performances for the team and understand what your role is, understand what the responsibility is, understand what it takes to be successful batting in different positions," he

added. True to those words, Rahul adapted well to the situation in the semifinal against Australia and in the final against New Zealand, producing small yet significant knocks.

The Bengaluru man made an unbeaten 42 against the Aussies while his collected 32 not out helped India come out of a tight chase against the Kiwis successfully. Overall, he made just 140 runs but he made it at a strike-rate of 98, indicating the impact those runs had on the course of the game.

Skipper Rohit Sharma indicated as much. "The pressure doesn't get to him with that calmness, we wanted that calmness in the middle. I'm very, very happy with how he managed to pull this tournament and batted in the pressure situation, both in semifinals and this game as well.

"The contribution may not be 70-80, but those 30-40s are a very, very important one," said Rohit. Now, Rahul has a Champions Trophy to show for his efforts, and he was pleased as punch. "I'm very happy at the moment, ICC victories are not so easy to get. It's my first run so I'm very happy over the moon and really happy with the way we've played this entire tournament and it's been a complete team effort," he noted.

### Pak miffed at no representation at closing ceremony of CT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Karachi

The ICC's failure to invite a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official on stage for the closing ceremony of the Champions Trophy has not gone down well with the tournament host. A source said that the PCB's chief executive officer Sumair Ahmed, who was also the director of the tournament, was present at the venue but was not invited for the ceremony. Pakistan hosted an ICC event after 29 years with all India games scheduled in Dubai as part of the competition's hybrid model.

"PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi didn't go to Dubai because of prior commitments as federal minister for interior but the PCB CEO was sent to represent Pakistan at the final and closing presentation," the source said. He said for some reason or misunderstanding, the PCB official called on the podium, from where ICC chairman Jay Shah, BCCI president Roger Binny and secretary Devajit Saikia gave away the medals, trophies, and jackets to the players. The source added that perhaps the CEO might not have been able to communicate proper-

organising the final ceremony and was left out. Pakistan as hosts of the Champions Trophy, thus, didn't have any representative on the podium. The PCB is expected to take up the matter with the ICC as to why its CEO was not invited on stage for the closing ceremony. Meanwhile, former fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar also questioned the absence of PCB officials from the post-match presentation ceremony after the final of the tournament. "India has won the Champions Trophy but I noticed there was no representative from the PCB after the final. Pakistan was hosting the Champions Trophy. I do not understand it," Akhtar said in a video posted on social 'X'. "Why was nobody (from PCB) there to present the trophy? It is beyond me. It is something to think about. This is the world stage, you should have been here. Feeling very down to see that," Akhtar added. BCCI president Binny presented the white jackets to India and the medals to match officials, while ICC chairman Shah handed the trophy to Rohit Sharma and gave the medals to the Indian players. India had refused to play their matches in Pakistan citing security concerns.

#### Harry Brook pulls out of IPL deal with DC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

ngland batter Harry Brook faces a two-year ban from the IPL after pulling out of his deal with Delhi Capitals ahead of the tournament beginning March 22. Brook, who has made himself unavailable for the second straight season, apologised "unreservedly" to the franchise and its supporters. "I have made the very difficult decision to pull out of the upcoming IPL. I apologise unre-

servedly to the Delhi Capitals and their supporters," Brook wrote on social media. "It is a really important time for England cricket and I want to fully commit to preparing for the upcoming series.

"In order to do this, I need time to recharge after the busiest period in my career to date. I know not everyone will understand, and I don't expect them to, but I have to do what I believe is right and playing for my country remains my priority and focus."

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